



Malaysia

Permanent Mission to the United Nations

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**Statement by H.E. Ambassador Hussein Haniff,
Permanent Representative of Malaysia to the United Nations,
on Agenda Item 36: The Situation in the Middle East,
New York, 30 November 2012**

Mr. President,

Developments over the last few weeks, in particular the attack by Israel on the people of Palestine in Gaza, have sparked an international crisis that almost caused instability and turmoil in the whole region. What deeply concerns my delegation is that despite the gravity of the situation, the Security Council was rendered powerless not just to bring about an immediate cessation to hostilities, but even to decide on whether to act or not. We, the international community, cannot allow this to happen again. We cannot remain unwilling to act, as failure to do so would demonstrate the ineffectiveness of the current multilateral system, particularly the Security Council and the United Nations. Time and again, we are faced with the situation in the Middle East, especially on the Question of Palestine. Malaysia believes that in order to avoid being faced with a similar situation in the future, we need to address the crux of the issue and resolve the conflict, once and for all.

2. Today, we are still nowhere closer to resolving the Question of Palestine. In fact, if we were to take a closer look, we are now much further away in coming to a peaceful settlement than anytime before. This is because the situation on the ground has deteriorated. Israel has continued to take all measures to change the demographic features of the Occupied Territory, systematically displacing Palestinians from the West Bank and East Jerusalem. At the same time, the illegal blockade of Gaza continues to suffocate the people. When will this end? Don't the people of Palestine deserve a better future, to live in dignity?

Mr. President,

3. Israel has continued to violate international law, including humanitarian and human rights laws, for far too long. It has continued to ignore international calls to respect, adhere to and abide by the Geneva Conventions and all the relevant Security Council resolutions. The international community has not been able to hold Israel accountable for all its deliberate acts of violence. Instead, Israel continues to act aggressively against Palestinians civilians and this, it does so, with impunity. I wonder why.

4. The only way forward is for Israel to respect international law, including humanitarian and human right laws. It should cease all its illegal settlement activities and restart negotiations in good faith, which demonstrates its intention to actually bring an end to the conflict. It must realize and accept that a lasting and just solution to the Question on Palestine not only benefits the Palestinians, but would contribute to Israel's own safety and security.

5. For our part, the international community must reject any further delay in the resumption of Peace Talks. We must ensure that the parties return to the negotiation table without further delay. We must continue to uphold the principles for the establishment of a Palestinian State under the two-State solution based on the pre-1967 borders, with East Jerusalem as its capital. Only then can Israel and Palestinians have any chance for a stable and better future. In this connection, I call upon the Security Council and the Middle East Quartet to do what they have been mandated to, that is to find a just and lasting solution to the Question of Palestine. Further inaction is not a choice and time is not with us.

Mr. President,

6. Malaysia continues to be concerned with the situation in Syria. The fate and future of Syria lay in the hands of Syrians themselves. With thousands of civilians perished and more displaced, we call upon all parties to stop this senseless violence. We urge the parties to come to the negotiations table and engage in a meaningful way in finding a lasting solution to the situation in Syria. All parties must abide by international law including international humanitarian and human rights laws. We stress again that a solution to the conflict in Syria must be a Syrian-led process in order to ensure that it is viable and permanent.

7. Malaysia is also deeply concerned that the conflict in Syria has spread into the borders of Turkey, Lebanon and Jordan. In this regard, we hope that these countries refrain from resorting to measures which may further aggravate the situation.

Mr. President,

8. Malaysia is fully aware of the situation in the occupied Syrian Golan. Malaysia will continue to support the restoration of Syrian sovereignty over the occupied Syrian Golan. We urge Israel to withdraw from the occupied Syrian Golan to the line of 4 June 1967. All measures and actions undertaken by Israel, including the construction and expansion of illegal settlements in the occupied Syrian Golan since 1967, constitute a flagrant violation of international law, the UN Charter and relevant UN resolutions.

9. The same can be said for the territories of Lebanon under Israeli occupation. We condemn the continued violations and aggression by Israel. We strongly urge Israel to fully implement UNSC Resolution 1701(2006), which called for a permanent ceasefire and for the complete withdrawal of Israeli troops from Lebanon, with full respect for the Blue Line. Israel must withdraw from the Sheba'a Farms, Kfarshouba Hills and the Lebanese part of Al Ghajar village up until behind the blue line.

Mr. President,

10. Yesterday, we celebrated the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People. Palestine has also been accorded the status of an Observer State in this august assembly. It is something that we can celebrate although the full membership of the United Nations is the ultimate aim. Malaysia believes that this marks the first step for Palestine to become a sovereign State. In moving forward, we call on all Member States, including the permanent members of the Security Council, to support the admission of Palestine as a full member state of the United Nations, as this is a legitimate aspiration shared by an overwhelming majority of Member States.

I thank you, Mr. President.