



Malaysia

Permanent Mission to the United Nations

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**Statement by H.E. Ambassador Hussein Haniff, Permanent Representative of Malaysia,
on Agenda Item 70: Strengthening of the Coordination of Humanitarian and Disaster Relief
Assistance of the United Nations, Including Special Economic Assistance,
at the Plenary of the 67th Session of the United Nations General Assembly,
New York, 13 December 2012**

Mr. President,

Allow me at this outset to thank the Secretary-General for his comprehensive reports, which provide a sound framework for the further deliberation on the issue of strengthening the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations.

2. I would also like to take this opportunity to express our appreciation to Ms. Valerie Amos, Under-Secretary-General and Emergency Relief Coordinator (USG/ERC) and her team, for the leadership and unwavering efforts in coordinating the provision of humanitarian assistance to those who need them the most.

3. Malaysia commends the Secretary-General's action agenda, which provides a five-year timeline for humanitarian organizations to agree and implement measures to increase their effectiveness and transparency. We also support the transformative agenda process led by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee in improving the quality of leadership, strategic planning, accountability and coordination mechanisms in humanitarian response. Indeed, the current challenges of the global situation of increased climate-related natural disasters, conflicts and complex emergencies, require dynamic adjustments and urgent attention of the United Nations and its Member States.

Mr. President,

4. It has been over 20 years since resolution 46/182 was adopted, which sets a fundamental structure in the coordination of the United Nations emergency humanitarian assistance. However, as humanitarian needs evolve over time, the current system has not adapted quickly and flexibly enough to meet new realities. There is thus a need to build a more inclusive global humanitarian system, with stronger relationships at the global, regional and national levels.

5. Malaysia's involvement in the humanitarian and disaster relief assistance is based on a three-pronged approach, namely, government-to-government, either through bilateral assistance or cooperation at multilateral fora, involvement through NGOs, and people-to-people participation. At the multilateral level, Malaysia is one of the hubs that house the United Nations Humanitarian Response Depot Network (UNHRD) at Subang.

6. The UNHRD is a preparedness tool supporting the strategic stockpiling efforts of United Nations, international, governmental and non-governmental organizations, and reinforcing the capacity of the humanitarian community to respond to emergencies. It also serves its purpose as the "first line response" to emergencies by having an efficient mechanism able to provide flexible, sustainable and scalable

facilities and services for the timely and cost effective delivery of items and assistance to humanitarian organizations in the Southeast Asian region. The Malaysian Government has agreed to contribute USD 1 million annually in the form of grant to cover the operating cost of the centre.

Mr. President,

7. Malaysia welcomes the recommendations as contained in the report of the Secretary-General to improve response to natural disasters. Lessons learned from the response to recurrent humanitarian crises have underscored the need to build communities' resilience to shocks, by addressing the physical, social, economic and environmental elements that make large numbers of people vulnerable. We concur that a resilience approach is key to addressing recurrent crises.

8. The importance of a resilience-based approach was set out in the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters. Malaysia is committed to disaster risk reduction and will continue its efforts towards implementing the priority areas of the Hyogo Framework for Action. We are aware that building resilience over the long term is a Government responsibility that is supported by development programming. Malaysia thus will continue to work closely with the private sector, national institutions, academicians and non-governmental sector to ensure the appropriate implementation plans towards disaster risk reduction and building resilience, as outlined in the Secretary-General's report.

Mr. President,

9. Let me now turn to the report of the Secretary-General on "Assistance to the Palestinian people", and wish to reaffirm Malaysia's commitment to provide assistance to the Palestinian people to meet their needs. We take note that additional support is urgently needed for the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees (UNRWA) core budget, which faces a shortfall of USD 70 million for 2012. As such, Malaysia has made a one-off contribution of USD 200,000 to UNRWA in November 2012. Taking into account the latest appeal and acute financial situation of UNRWA, the Malaysian Government has pledged an additional USD 1 million to help the Palestinians affected by Israel's recent military aggression in Gaza. This additional contribution was announced by the Honourable Prime Minister of Malaysia in Kuala Lumpur on 3 December 2012, and is part of the country's long history in our continued assistance to Palestine and its people, following over 30 years of annual contributions to UNRWA.

10. Malaysia reiterates our support on the important work done by UNRWA in assisting the Palestinian people in the occupied territories. Malaysia also urges donor countries to continue their financial assistance to UNRWA in order for UNRWA to effectively carry out their developmental activities in the region. The continued political commitment by the international community requires a complimentary show of solidarity through financial commitments.

11. As stated in the Secretary-General's report, United Nations will continue to work towards the realization of a just, lasting and comprehensive peace in the Middle East. Malaysia similarly hopes and prays for a quick and lasting resolution to this historical injustice.

Mr. President,

12. The Government of Malaysia is of the view that dealing with disasters requires a holistic, full-spectrum approach at the response stage, but also preceding from effective disaster risk reduction strategies. Notwithstanding the above, Malaysia will continue to extend its humanitarian assistance in terms of monetary, in kind or deployment of humanitarian and emergency relief teams within its means to disaster affected countries. Malaysia hopes that this form of humanitarian assistance would lessen the burden faced by some of the victims and assist them in their hour of need.

I thank you Mr. President.