



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 70: STRENGTHENING OF THE COORDINATION OF
HUMANITARIAN AND DISASTER RELIEF ASSISTANCE OF
THE UNITED NATIONS, INCLUDING SPECIAL ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE**

**AT THE PLENARY OF THE 68TH SESSION OF
THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY
NEW YORK, 12 DECEMBER 2013**

Mr. President,

Allow me at the outset to thank the Secretary-General for his comprehensive reports. Both reports on International cooperation on humanitarian assistance in the field of natural disasters from relief to development and on Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF), respectively provide a sound framework and further deliberation on issues of strengthening the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations.

2. My delegation wishes to associate itself with the statements delivered by Fiji, on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, and Brunei Darussalam on behalf of the ASEAN. I would also like to take this opportunity to express Malaysia's appreciation to Ms. Valerie Amos, Under-Secretary-General and Emergency Relief Coordinator and the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs team, for the leadership and unwavering efforts in coordinating the provision of humanitarian assistance to those who need them the most.

Mr. President,

3. Resolution 46/182 on Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian emergency assistance of the United Nations adopted on 9 December 1991 was instrumental in setting the fundamental structure to the coordination of the United Nations emergency humanitarian assistance. Malaysia noted the progress made in further improving the humanitarian assistance and responses, including in reducing disaster risks and mortality. With the uncertainties caused by climate change,

environmental degradation, population growth and rapid unplanned urbanization, disasters all around the world are anticipated to increase and no country is immune from the impact of these global environmental changes. These uncertainties require the need for us to be constantly alert and further enhance our preparedness and responses, as well as the need to build a more inclusive global humanitarian system, with stronger cooperation at the global, regional and national levels.

4. Malaysia welcomes the recommendations as contained in the report of the Secretary-General on International cooperation on humanitarian assistance in the field of natural disasters from relief to development. Malaysia fully supports the recommendations for Member States, the United Nations and humanitarian and development organizations, among others:

- 4.1 to build up their national capacity and increase efforts to strengthen the resilience of people to endure, manage to maintain basic functions and structures and bounce back from stresses and shocks;
- 4.2 to establish partnerships in disaster risk management and work more strategically with a wide array of partners, such as affected people, civil society, local government, the private sector, military actors, academia and the scientific community; and
- 4.3 to coordinate their joint country-level efforts to support national disaster risk management processes

5. Some of the recommendations are in line with Malaysia's continuous efforts as Malaysia believes that building resilience over the long-term, supported by development programming is the responsibility of the government. Malaysia also continuously encourages all Member States to work closely with the private sector, national institutions, academia and non-governmental sector to ensure the appropriate implementation plans towards Disaster Risk Reduction and building resilience.

Mr. President,

6. From the report of the Secretary-General on CERF, Malaysia noted that the Emergency Relief Coordinator's allocated grants to 49 countries and territories, the highest amount disbursed in one year in the Fund's history, due to the pressing needs for life-saving operations in the Syrian Arab Republic and its neighbouring countries, as well as to further boost the fund for other chronic crises in South Sudan, Pakistan, and in the African and Asian regions.

7. Malaysia takes note the Report's nineteen recommendations to various stakeholders, namely the Emergency Relief Coordinator, CERF secretariat, Office of the Controller, donors, agencies including clusters-lead agencies to further improve its effectiveness, coordination and utilization of the Fund. Acknowledging that the CERF secretariat plans to implement all recommendations by the second quarter of 2013,

Malaysia hopes to learn more on the progress achieved by the CERF secretariat as well as challenges it currently faced at this implementation stage.

Mr. President,

8. 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. Malaysia reiterates our support on the important work done by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) in assisting the Palestinian people in the occupied territories. The regular budget of UNRWA is crucial in order to enable the Agency to implement its activities effectively.

9. Malaysia is concerned with a reported budget shortfall of USD 353.3 million as this alarming financial situation had adversely affected the Agency’s ability to carry out the various fields of operations of UNRWA especially in the area of education, health, social services, youth engagement, microfinance, and infrastructure and camp improvement to 5 million Palestinian refugees. Malaysia supports the continuous efforts by the Agency to mobilize contributions from the international community. In this regard, my delegation notes that UNRWA continues to examine closely its programmes, priorities and needs, and to explore further options to widen the donor base. Concerned that the level of response has stagnated, Malaysia appeals Member States to continue to support the work of UNRWA by enhancing their contributions to the Agency, as it is crucial to the well being of the Palestine refugees.

10. Malaysia has been a strong supporter of the Palestinian cause, and in this regard we have continuously supported the work of UNRWA. My delegation is pleased with the excellent relations between the Government of Malaysia and UNRWA. We warmly welcomed the visit of the Commissioner General to Malaysia in September 2013, a testament that both Malaysia and UNRWA share the common goal in upholding the welfare of Palestinian refugees. Last year, Malaysia contributed USD1.2 million to UNRWA in response to the Agency’s appeal. This year, we are pleased to pledge a contribution of USD250,000 to UNRWA, to assist the Agency in helping the Palestinian refugees affected by dire situations in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. Malaysia believes in the continuous efforts of the United Nations towards the realization of a just, lasting and comprehensive peace in the Middle East.

Mr. President,

11. 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 houses the United Nations Humanitarian Response Depot Network (UNHRD) at the Subang Military Base in Selangor, Malaysia, in which the Malaysian Government contributes USD1 million annually in the form of grant to cover the operating cost of the centre.

12. 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 UNHRD was recently utilised in providing assistance to the victims of typhoon Haiyan that affected the Philippines, Viet Nam and China and also flood that affected Kuantan, a district in Pahang, Malaysia.

Mr. President,

13. The Government of Malaysia is of the view that dealing with disasters not only require 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 would lessen the burden faced by some of the victims and assists them in their hour of need.

I thank you Mr. President.