



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
AT THE SECURITY COUNCIL DEBATE ON
THE SITUATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST, INCLUDING THE PALESTINE QUESTION
15 OCTOBER 2012**

Mr. President,

I wish to extend my sincere congratulations to you, and your country, Guatemala, on assuming the Presidency of the Security Council for this month. I would like to express my appreciation to Mr. Filtman, Under Secretary for Political Affairs for his briefing to the Council today. My delegation associates itself with the statement made by Iran on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

2. The situation in the Middle East, especially the unresolved conflict on the Question on Palestine, continues to be the central issue in the maintenance of international peace and security. The intransigence of Israel on the Question on Palestine, the Arab Spring, the situation in Syria and Libya are issues that have drawn our attention to the region. The Middle East continues to witness incidents of violence and hostility. The recent distasteful and insulting film 'Innocence of Muslims' has caused widespread protests across the Muslim world and aggravated cultural and religious forces in confrontation.

3. Malaysia condemns the irresponsible actions of those that incite hatred; we equally condemn the violent reactions that followed. The destruction and violence displayed offer no solution to the problem but created further rifts and divisions with more damage and loss of innocent lives. Malaysia reiterates its condemnation on the killing of US Ambassador John Stevens and his colleagues in Libya. We are equally saddened with the loss of innocent lives, including women and children during that fateful incident. These incidents only exemplify the need for those who made the film be held accountable. Action must be taken against them. No religion should be denigrated by anyone in the name of freedom of expression. Freedom must come with responsibility. Those extremists that resorted to violence should be brought to justice. The international community should not tolerate these types of acts any longer. With one concerted voice, we must tell extremists that there is no place for them in the civilized world. The majority of peace loving people must drown the voices of extremism. This is essentially

what Malaysia continues to call for, which is, for a Global Movement of the Moderates to reclaim the centre stage and push extremism to the periphery.

Mr. President,

4. It is without a doubt that the deadlock in the talks on Palestine is diminishing the possibility of a return to the negotiating table for a two-State solution. With more Israeli settlements created, the probability for a resumption of mediation is even more remote. But the world cannot sit idly as the situation in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank continue to deteriorate with no hope of recourse. We, collectively, should demand that Israel lift the blockade on Gaza immediately.

5. Israel must cease all its illegal settlement activities. Malaysia has been consistent in its view that the continued occupation of Israel over Palestinian land and territory are unlawful and against international laws. On the same token, Malaysia is also extremely concerned with Israel's intention to divide the Al-Aqsa Mosque which is also a holy site for Muslims and Christians. Such act would further undermine international law and aggravate the situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory.

6. Just a few weeks ago, world leaders gathered in New York to participate in the High Level event on the Rule of Law. Our leaders adopted what is considered a 'landmark' declaration. The provisions contained therein should be implemented. These include applying the rule of law to all States equally and to resolve disputes by peaceful means in conformity with the principles of justice and international law. World leaders also committed themselves to uphold the right to self-determination of peoples, which remain under foreign occupation and to end impunity for violations of international humanitarian and human rights law. Many delegations questioned the inclusion of paragraph 28 during the initial discussions, which states that *"We recognize the positive contribution of the Security Council to the rule of law while discharging its primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security"*. They felt that the paragraph was undertaken with selectivity. Malaysia hopes that the Security Council would uphold the agreement adopted in the outcome document.

7. The plight of the people of Palestine cannot be ignored by the international community. It is our moral responsibility to uphold their aspirations for freedom and liberty. Their ambitions for self-determination are legitimate aspirations. With 132 UN Member States recognising Palestine as a state, it is an irony that we, the people of the world, cannot make this aspiration a reality. 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 and with East Jerusalem as its capital. Only then can Israel and Palestinians live side by side in peace and security.

Mr. President,

8. The situation in Syria continues to be our collective concern. Malaysia joins the international community in welcoming the appointment of Mr. Lakhdar Brahimi as the Joint

Special Representative for Syria. We believe that his appointment would enable the Parties involved in the conflict to engage in a meaningful way in finding a solution to the situation in Syria.

9. We are appalled with the death of thousands of civilians and thousands more displaced and have taken refuge in surrounding neighbouring countries. The unabated violence and destruction of properties must end and the loss of lives must be stopped and due process of law must resume. We call upon all parties in Syria to cease hostilities immediately and abide by international law including international humanitarian and human rights laws. We believe that a solution to the conflict in Syria must be a Syrian led process in order for it to be sustainable in the long run.

10. In this connection, Malaysia joins the international community in urging restraint between Turkey and Syria regarding the recent shelling incidents along the common borders. We believe that resorting to military action would worsen the situation. Both nations should find the courage to resolve their differences amicably, without the need for any military action.

11. Malaysia strongly supports 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 its illegal settlement construction and expansion activities in the Occupied Syrian Golan since 1967 constitute a flagrant violation of international law, the UN Charter and relevant resolutions.

12. Malaysia also reiterates its support for Lebanon in its efforts to complete the liberation of all its territories and condemns the continued violations and aggression launched by Israel. We 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. We insist on the necessity of Israel's withdrawal from Sheba'a Farms, Kfarshouba Hills and from the Lebanese part of Al Ghajar village up until behind the blue line, in accordance with relevant international resolutions, in particular Resolution 1701.

Mr. President,

13. The situation in the Middle East needs our collective attention and solution. Malaysia urges the main players to show political leadership and impartiality in order to improve the deteriorating situation in the region. We also wish to remind this Council that failure to enforce many of the Council's resolutions on the Question of Palestine, in some ways, has encouraged the Occupying Power to continue in defying world opinion. The time has come for us to make some difficult decisions, for the good of the region and the world. It has been a year since Palestine made an application to be a member state of the United Nations. How long more does the international community has to wait for the Council to take a decision, when the majority has agreed to admit the State of Palestine as a member of the United Nations.

I thank you, Mr. President.