



MALAYSIA

PERMANENT MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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**STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR RAMLAN IBRAHIM
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SECURITY COUNCIL QUARTERLY OPEN DEBATE ON THE MIDDLE EAST

NEW YORK, 26 JANUARY 2016

His Excellency Mr. Rodolfo Nin Novoa,
Foreign Minister of Uruguay and President of the Security Council,

2. On behalf of my delegation, I warmly welcome Your Excellency to the Council and I thank you for chairing this meeting.
3. We highly value your presence, and the high-level representations today from Senegal, Ukraine, and Angola. Your participation in this Open Debate provides prominence to the topic that has long been marginalised at the Council.
4. We are appreciative of the briefing by Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and we acknowledge the clear message of the Secretary-General on the unsustainable situation in Occupied Palestine.
5. Malaysia also associates itself with the statements to be delivered by Iran and Kuwait on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and the OIC respectively.

Mr. President,

6. For the purpose of today's meeting, I wish to focus my statement on the plight of Palestinian children, and on the issue of illegal settlements.
7. Since the start of the latest wave of violence last October, children consisted of almost a quarter of the total Palestinian casualties. According to UNICEF, in last month alone, nine Palestinian children were killed and more than 205 were injured by Israeli forces and settlers in the West Bank and East Jerusalem. In comparison, UNICEF reported no Israeli child fatalities or injuries during the same period.

8. The intention to cause maximum casualties was evident, as Palestinian civilians, including children, were deliberately shot with live ammunition or rubber-coated bullets by Israeli forces. In some cases, they were denied medical treatment and left to suffer agonising death.
9. The indiscriminate and disproportionate approach of the Occupying Power towards Palestinian civilians was captured in a horrifying video last October. In the video, an Israeli military vehicle entered the Palestinian Aida refugee camps and an Israeli soldier threatened over a loud speaker, and I quote: *“As long as you throw stones, go home or we will gas you, we will gas you until you die.. The children, the youth, the old people, you will all die.. We won’t leave any of you alive.”*
10. Arbitrary arrests and detentions of Palestinian children also continued. Since last September, close to 400 Palestinian children have been arrested or detained by Israeli forces. Many of these children have been violently seized from their homes at night, beaten, blindfolded, strip-searched, interrogated without legal counsel, held in incommunicado from their parents, and placed in solitary confinement.
11. Even schools were not spared from attacks. Last November, over 70 Palestinian school children suffered from tear gas inhalation as Israeli forces fired tear gas canisters and sprayed skunk water at a school in Hebron.
12. The illegal practice of brutally executed collective punishment also persisted, as Israeli forces demolished the homes of Palestinians, rendering Palestinian families, including children, homeless and in destitution.
13. Meanwhile, in the Gaza Strip, health care professionals at the Gaza Community Mental Health Program reported a sharp increase in the number of children with post-traumatic stress disorder, except that in Gaza, there is no such thing as “post”. The traumatic stress disorder has sadly become a daily reality.
14. Even after the July 2014 Israeli disproportionate aggression in Gaza, Palestinians continued to suffer under repressive Israeli occupation and inhumane blockade. Children in Gaza who were once top students and cheerful, suffered from psychological trauma and now became aggressive, withdrawn, and had persistent nightmares and terrified of loud noises.
15. Bearing in mind all the illegal Israeli practices against children, in violation of international law, we must search our conscience and ask ourselves: What kind

of future have we shaped for the Palestinian children, who grew up knowing only injustice, oppression, anger, and violence throughout their life?

16. Clearly, the lack of accountability for Israel, including on the issue of the protection of children, has emboldened it to commit further violations with impunity. With our continuing inaction, we run the risk of igniting a ticking time bomb, with grave repercussions for the region and the world.

Mr. President,

17. Last year was yet another lost opportunity for the Council to make progress on the Palestinian question. Despite promising initiatives by some Council members, in the end, we were back to square one - dashing dreams and hopes of those who suffered far too long that their miseries had once again been ignored.
18. We were told to wait. And while we complied and waited, Israel insatiable appetite for land grabbing, seized even more lands from the Palestinians, snubbing the two-state solution. Just last week, the Israeli government declared 370 acres of land in occupied West Bank as "state land", effectively confiscating more Palestinian land and robbing the Palestinians of their future.
19. This month alone, the Israeli authorities continued to demolish housing structures belonging to Palestinian Bedouins in the Occupied East Jerusalem, rendering over 40 Palestinians homeless, half of them children. The forced displacement was part of the Israeli plan to build illegal settlements in the E1 corridor for thousands of Israeli settlers.
20. The fact these actions are illegal and contrary to international law is without a doubt, including the Fourth Geneva Convention and the Rome Statute of the ICC. Furthermore, the illegal settlements constitute the single most damaging factor that endangers the two-state solution.

Mr. President,

21. The Council must stop turning a blind eye to these violations and start holding Israel accountable based on international standard of human rights and international law.
22. We can no longer accept excuses that any action against Israel, even if to uphold international law and human rights standard, is either anti-Semitic, or will jeopardise the possibility for peace talks. Instead, we must expose these excuses

for what they are – farcical pretexts to perpetuate the illegal Israeli occupation of Palestine.

23. In the short term, pending a final and comprehensive settlement to the Palestinian question, we need to seriously consider the option for international protection for the Palestinian people, including children. Such protection, which has numerous precedents at the UN and could constitute a confidence-building measure, would go a long way in ending impunity, and ensuring stability and security in Occupied Palestine and the region.
24. The international community should also pursue all legal, diplomatic and economic channels to step up its pressure on the Israeli government to make it too costly for Israel to continue with its illegal settlement policy.
25. In the long run, we still aspire for a two-state solution – for the states of Israel and Palestine to live side-by-side in peace and security based on the pre-'67 borders.
26. However, the prospect for a peaceful coexistence is diminishing by the day, especially due to Israel's settlement policy, and our inaction. And if we continue to do nothing, this will feed into the agenda of those who seek to destroy the prospect of the two state-solution. And the two-state solution will eventually become a delusion.
27. The consequences will be grim, not only for the region, but for all humanity. We must not allow ourselves to watch helplessly for this to happen.

I thank you, Mr. President.
