



MALAYSIA

PERMANENT MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS



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**STATEMENT BY MRS SITI HAJJAR ADNIN
DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF MALAYSIA
AT THE
UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL MEETING ON YEMEN**

NEW YORK, 31 OCTOBER 2016

Thank you Mr. President.

2. My delegation is very grateful to Special Envoy Ismail Ould Cheikh Ahmed, Under-Secretary-General Stephen O'Brien, and Mr. Muhannad Hadi of the World Food Programme for their briefings.

3. Malaysia is gravely concerned by the very bleak picture of the situation on the ground, with the escalation in violence, the attacks on civilians and civilian infrastructure, the threat of famine, the collapse of the health system, and the threat of cholera outbreak. Regrettably, unlike other crises in the region, the humanitarian crisis in Yemen has remained largely under the radar.

4. Last week, a side event on Yemen was held at the UN, where we were shown a documentary by the BBC on the threat of famine in the country. While the international community's attention is focused on deaths due to ongoing fighting, we largely overlooked slow but widespread deaths brought about by starvation and lack of medical treatment.

5. Mothers had to watch their children and babies wither away before their very eyes due to the lack of milk, food, and medicine. Even bringing their children to the hospital did little to improve their situation due to the collapse of the country's health system and the dire lack of food, fuel, and medicine. The situation is simply unacceptable.

Mr. President,

6. As we have heard today, a staggering 14 million people in Yemen are suffering from hunger and malnutrition, over 3 million people driven from their homes and 21

million people in need of humanitarian aid. We call on all parties to agree to a lasting and permanent ceasefire that would facilitate the flow of desperately needed food, fuel and medical supplies into the country. We also urged the parties to open up Yemeni airspace to commercial aircraft and to evacuate those in need of urgent medical treatment.

7. We join others in strongly condemning all attacks against civilians and civilian infrastructure in Yemen, including the recent attacks on a marketplace, a water well, and a funeral ceremony. We also condemn attacks on Saudi's territory by the Houthi militias, particularly the recent targeting of the Holy City of Makka Al-Mukarramah.

8. We support calls by the UN Secretary-General for full and independent inquiries to investigate gross violations of international humanitarian and human rights law, to ensure justice and accountability.

9. The continuing conflict has also led to a marked increase in the number of children being recruited by parties to the conflict. About 2 million children currently are out of school due to the ongoing fighting and insecurity, and are being deprived of their right to education. This situation has been exploited by armed militias, who are actively going to villages to recruit children. Some estimated that up to one-third of fighters in armed groups are children. Many of them are guarding checkpoints but they are also on the front line fighting.

10. Malaysia urges all parties to the conflict to adhere to their obligations under international law, including international humanitarian and human rights law. All parties must make every effort to protect children, civilians, and civilian objects, and in ensuring immediate and unimpeded humanitarian access.

Mr. President,

11. With the breakdown in the talks in Kuwait, the conflicting parties in Yemen seemed further and further away from the promising steps they had taken towards peace several months ago.

12. The recent cessation of hostilities, while a welcomed respite, is far from sufficient to address the humanitarian disaster in Yemen. We fully concur with the assessment by USG O'Brien that the best humanitarian relief is to end the conflict.

13. Malaysia echoes the view held by the international community that there is no military solution to the conflict. However, the conflicting parties themselves need to believe in the need for a political solution. Prolonging violence will not benefit either side

and will only be exploited by terrorist groups and lead to further catastrophic humanitarian situation.

14. A peaceful resolution of the conflict in Yemen hinges on the political will of the conflicting parties themselves. But the Security Council has an important role in bringing about the desired outcome by exerting its authority and its influence on the relevant parties, and by utilising the various tools at its disposal. The Council must also send a clear signal to the conflicting parties on the need to cease fighting and return to the negotiating table, to protect civilians and civilian objects, to ensure immediate and unimpeded humanitarian access, and to adhere to their obligations under international law.

15. We need to continue to support the tireless efforts of Special Envoy Ahmed to secure peace in Yemen. We urge all parties to engage constructively in negotiating the road map proposed by Mr. Ahmed, with the aim of ending the conflict and reaching a political agreement for the sake of peace and stability in Yemen and the region.

I thank you, Mr. President.
