



# MALAYSIA

PERMANENT MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS



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**STATEMENT BY  
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PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF MALAYSIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

**SECURITY COUNCIL MEETING ON SITUATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST  
(INCLUDING THE PALESTINIAN QUESTION)**

**NEW YORK, 16 DECEMBER 2016**

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Mr. President,

1. My delegation is grateful to His Excellency Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, for his presence and briefing today. We thank him for his frank assessment and strong message, and we appreciate his untiring efforts to facilitate peace in the Middle East, specifically, on the Palestinian question.

2. I also acknowledge the presence of His Excellency Foreign Minister Mr. Murray McCully of New Zealand. Malaysia appreciates New Zealand's persistent commitment to push for Council action to create the necessary conditions for peace in the region.

3. My delegation decides to take the floor today, to echo the views expressed around the table on the urgent need for the Council to take decisive and concrete action on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, in line with the Council's responsibility under the UN Charter.

Mr. President,

4. For far too long, the Council has been in a state of inertia when it comes to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, which belies the worsening situation on the ground. Malaysia reiterates the need to create the necessary conditions for peace, and to push the parties towards the right direction in order to salvage the two-state solution.

5. Clearly, doing nothing is not an option for the Security Council, as an organ entrusted to maintain international peace and security. We must take urgent effective actions to halt and reverse illegal settlement activities and end the illegal occupation, which are fuelling radicalisation in the region and beyond.

6. Over the years, we had heard repeated warnings from the Secretary-General and Special Coordinator Mr. Mladenov about the expansion of settlement activities that threatened to bury the two-state solution. And yet, Israeli settlements activities kept growing, despite their undeniably illegal nature under international law, clear recommendations of the Quartet report, and widespread condemnation by the international community.

7. Recent developments have led to a new sense of urgency, especially the unprecedented attempt by the Israeli Parliament to pass a bill to legalise outposts, including on private Palestinian lands. Furthermore, just last week, Israeli authorities have decided to proceed with the plan to build 770 housing units in the illegal Israeli settlement of "Gilo" in East Jerusalem.

8. As we have heard from the speakers at the Arria-formula meeting on settlements last October, the impact of settlements on the Palestinians are far-reaching. Settlement expansion has led to an increase in settlers' violence, demolitions of Palestinian homes and structures, confiscations of Palestinian lands, discriminatory policies, as well as denial of development, infrastructure and natural resources. Palestinians are even prevented from burying their dead relatives in a Muslim cemetery adjacent to the Al-Aqsa Mosque, because Israeli authorities have seized the cemetery land.

9. Since the beginning of this year, Israel has demolished 866 Palestinian structures in Area C of the occupied West Bank, affecting over 5,000 Palestinians, of whom over 1,200 have been rendered homeless, including 586 children. The widespread anger, frustration, and despair, inevitably fed into further radicalization of the oppressed population who has nothing more to lose.

Mr. President,

10. Settlement activities constitute the single biggest threat to peace and the two-state solution. This threat has multiplied and became entrenched over the decades because of Council's inaction. It is long overdue for the Council to assume its responsibility under the UN Charter to maintain international peace and security, and strive to reverse the negative trends that are threatening peace and the two-state solution.

11. The Council is responsible for the current predicament in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. But we can also undo it, if we stay true to the values and principles of the UN Charter and uphold international law and international standards of human rights.

12. I reiterate that the Council has various tools at its disposal, which it has not shy away from using in various conflict areas in the world. The Israeli-Palestinian conflict should be no exception.

13. We have seen how providing incentives, whether in the form of the comprehensive Arab Peace Initiative, or billions of dollar in military aid to safeguard its security, did nothing to persuade Israel to move in the right direction for peace. It has not led to Israel granting any concession to uphold the two-state solution. Instead, it has further embolden Israel into intensifying its settlement activities and entrenching its repressive occupation.

14. We need to stop rewarding illegal behaviors that threaten peace and security in the region and beyond. We need to stop shielding those who has continually violated Council resolutions, international law, and human rights standards.

15. The Council has a moral, legal and political responsibility to end the repressive Israeli occupation, to sanction settlement activities, the apartheid policy and gross violations of human rights, as well as to ensure accountability, and to support fundamental right to self-determination.

I thank you, Mr. President.

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