



# MALAYSIA

PERMANENT MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS

STATEMENT BY  
H.E. AMBASSADOR RAMLAN IBRAHIM,  
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF MALAYSIA  
TO THE UNITED NATIONS

SECURITY COUNCIL OPEN DEBATE ON THE  
PROTECTION OF CIVILIANS IN ARMED CONFLICT

19 JANUARY 2016

Thank you Mr. President,

I join other Council members in welcoming you once again to New York and in congratulating you, Mr. President and the delegation of Uruguay for assuming the Council's presidency for this month. I also take this opportunity to acknowledge the presence of high-level representatives of Spain and Ukraine.

2. Malaysia finds the convening of this open debate as timely for the reasons outlined in the informative concept note circulated by the Presidency.

3. My delegation wishes to express its appreciation to the briefers namely, Deputy Secretary-General Jan Eliasson, ICRC Vice President Christine Beerli and civil society representative Ms. Eveline Rooijmans (*Ruuy-maans*) of OXFAM. Their briefings have brought much valuable insight to the topic at hand.

4. I also wish to associate my delegation with the statement to be delivered by the delegation of Iran on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

Mr. President,

5. Malaysia remains deeply concerned that the deliberate targeting of, and indiscriminate attacks against civilians are increasingly common features of situations and conflicts deliberated by the Council. The fact that incidents of deliberate attacks against humanitarian actors, medical personnel and medical facilities in conflict zones have increased is particularly deplorable.

6. The growing scale of such violations of international humanitarian and human rights law, coupled with unprecedented levels of brutality and barbarism by parties to

various conflicts around the world indicates a concerning trend of flagrant disregard for long established humanitarian norms and standards. This level of impunity must not be left unchecked.

7. Civilians caught in conflict zones are subjected to added suffering and trauma through displacement and denial of basic necessities. Women and children are particularly at risk from sexual and gender-based violence. This culture of impunity only serves to further poison the already toxic atmosphere of conflict.

8. There is no lack of international laws or other applicable norms to regulate the behaviour of States or non-State actors in conflict situations, particularly with regard to the protection of civilians.

9. What is lacking is compliance with such standards by parties to the conflict on the one hand, and political will on the part of the international community on the other to decisively address threats to the safety and security of civilians. In this connection, we believe that the challenges outlined in the HIPPO and Secretary-General's reports remain valid.

Mr. President,

10. As the primary body entrusted with the maintenance of international peace and security, this Council had risen to the challenge by pursuing a robust normative agenda and framework for the protection of civilians. The Council's focus on thematic agendas and frameworks on civilian protection, particularly on children and armed conflict and conflict-related sexual violence reflect its commitment and resolve in this regard.

11. At the same time, we also wish to acknowledge the UN system's response particularly the fact that an increasing number of UN peace operations now contain civilian protection mandates.

12. On this note, we fully endorse the view that in mandating its peacekeepers with ensuring the protection of civilians, the UN must ensure that peacekeepers are adequately trained, equipped and receive the necessary logistical and technological support to enable them to carry out the mandated tasks effectively. My delegation takes this opportunity to pay tribute to the brave men and women who risk their daily lives to uphold and promote this important mandate.

13. In line with principles of inclusivity and national ownership, we also see value in the Secretary-General's recommendations on expanding involvement of local communities and non-governmental organisations as well as enhancing the role of unarmed protection actors in implementing civilian protection mandates.

Mr. President,

14. For the past 5 years or so, the Council and the international community has been seized of the deteriorating situation in Syria. In that time, Council had taken certain innovative steps to ensure humanitarian assistance reaches civilian populations including through resolutions 2139 and 2165.

15. In this regard, my delegation has noted the proposal by Spain and New Zealand concerning the issue of "medical neutrality", which we understand seeks to ensure that the principle of "neutrality" extends to medical personnel and facilities which provide critical services in conflict situations.

16. We believe this to be an important and particularly relevant initiative with potential for wider application and implementation across conflict situations. Malaysia stands ready to work closely with Spain, New Zealand and all Council members towards realising such outcome.

In concluding Mr. President,

17. Malaysia wishes to reaffirm its belief that the vigour in which this Council pursues the protection of civilians in conflict must hold true for all such situations. In this regard, we wish to recall and highlight the plight of civilians in the Occupied Palestinian Territories, who seem to be perceived as being less than worthy of protection by this august Council.

18. Palestine and her people cannot remain the Council's Achilles Heel indefinitely. Malaysia thus reiterates its call for UN protection of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, in line with international humanitarian law, particularly the Geneva Conventions.

19. Such protection will go a long way towards ending impunity in the occupied territory and towards peace and security in the region, pending the final comprehensive settlement to end Israeli occupation.

20. This Council must send a clear message that impunity must be stopped and that all parties, including State and non-State actors, should be held accountable for violations of international humanitarian law.

Thank you, Mr. President.

