



Permanent Mission of
Malaysia
to the United Nations

STATEMENT BY H.E. MR. HAMIDON ALI, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF MALAYSIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ON AGENDA ITEM 107: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY GENERAL ON THE WORK OF THE ORGANIZATION AT THE PLENARY OF THE 64TH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY, NEW YORK, 6TH OCTOBER 2009

Mr. President,

Change is upon us. This past year, this Organization and the international community at large went through some of the darkest periods in global economic history. And as we recover from the impact of the global crises, we have learned to change how we accomplish things. More cooperation is evident among members of the United Nations itself, just as the Organization itself has learnt that adapting to change is the only way in which it can maintain relevance. And relevance is important for a 60-odd year old body.

2. The Secretary General's report on the Work of the Organization, contained in document A/64/1, makes mention of this process of adapting which the Organization has undergone not only this past year, but also in previous years. We commend the ongoing efforts of the Secretary General in this regard. However, the reform of the United Nations as an organization should not be a stand-alone project, limited only to the approval of the Chief Administrative Officer of the United Nations.

3. Member States of the United Nations must also have a fair amount of say in the goings-on of the Secretariat, other UN organs, bodies, agencies and programmes. Especially when these reforms involve the creation of new mandates, or an expansion around current and existing mandates. There should also be restraint on the part of the organ of the Secretariat in proposing and then embarking on activities which would be detrimental to the work of the Organization, particularly when the views and opinions of Member States have not been gleaned.

4. After many years of Member States belabouring the point, this year, the Counter Terrorism Implementation Task Force was finally formally institutionalised, and placed under the Department of Political Affairs. For four years, since its establishment in 2005 by the Secretary General, the CTITF was free to establish Working Groups. These nine Working Groups existed without any kind of mandate from the Member States, something which we – like many countries of the developing world – viewed with much concern. And to have unmandated, unapproved working groups on the issue of terrorism, which is one of the prolific high politics issues of the UN, is simply baffling to this Member State.

5. Of concern particularly to a developing country such as Malaysia is the practice of appointments within the UN system itself. Appointments to top-notch posts within the UN system, or as advisors to the Secretary General, more often seem to be the exclusive purview of the Permanent Five. The rest of us Member States only find out about the appointment when it is a done deal. While we do not challenge the Secretary General's prerogative to appoint members of his team, a little transparency, consultation and dialogue will no doubt go a long way towards contributing to the "inclusion" factor that is in the spirit of the United Nations.

6. As an Organization with universal membership, the United Nations is well-primed to play a lead role in studying impacts or consequences of events through the gathering of information. However, before the System is fully locked into place, we welcome the recent efforts of the Secretary General to brief Member States of its the possible implementation of the Global Impact and Vulnerability System (GIVAS) which he has proposed. We believe that further discussions are needed in order to fine-tune the system, ensuring the optimization of the Organization's resources and further ensuring that the core business of the Organization is not jeopardized.

7. Malaysia welcomes the establishment of the UN Dispute Tribunal and the UN Appeals Tribunal under the new system of justice for the Organization. The UNDT, after a few hiccups, was able to meet during summer of 2009, and as of last week were still meeting. For Member States to be able to assess the effectiveness of this new system of justice, a report on the work of the UNDT thus far, should be forthcoming.

Mr. President,

8. For many around the globe, the United Nations is a beacon of hope. The United Nations has always been central in the areas of peacekeeping and development. The past year was no different. It is heartening to note, in a sense, that despite the shrinking global economy, the Organization's commitment to these two areas has not diminished. In both peacekeeping and development, the Organization saw an increase in the budget allocated.

9. In an environment where allocations are seeing a drop in funding, however, the UN expenditure on peacekeeping alone is simply staggering. This year's forecast sees the figure for peacekeeping at \$7.8 billion, up from \$5.3 billion nearly a year ago – a figure which is more than half of the whole UNHQ budget of \$13.9 billion. This is not including the nearly \$600 million which will need to come from the budget of the UNHQ. While Malaysia is as committed as any other Member to having UN peacekeepers on the ground, we will need to carefully weigh each and every peacekeeping mission, and the viability of still continuing a mission which should be turned over for peacebuilding, not peacekeeping purposes. The practice of clustering all peacekeeping funding together as a group, for approval of Member States, without a critical analysis of the need for specific missions needs to be stopped.

10. Since the United Nations has shown that it can work in cooperation with regional partners, such as the European Union and the African Union, this may be one way of managing the staggering costs of UN peacekeeping. It would also allow regional partners some measure of ownership over the maintenance of peace and security in their region, with the United Nations standing by to offer technical and strategic support.

11. The global economic crisis has put a damper on the international community's momentum towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals in general, and the problem of eradicating poverty specifically. The UN's assessment that more than 100 million people have regressed to a state of extreme poverty is sobering, to say the least. The Organization will need to work even harder to fulfill the Secretary General's promise of delivering to those most in need.

12. But the Organization has done well in its coordinated efforts and cooperation with other entities in responding to international calamities. Buoyed by the success of its 2006 reform initiatives, the Organization must be commended by its efforts to fully mobilize the resources at its disposal for quick and effective humanitarian responses. But the Organization must not be complacent. The increase in the total funding for humanitarian operations received from Member States in 2008 must be matched in

this year and the next so that worldwide humanitarian assistance provided by the UN will be able to continue.

13. At this juncture, allow me to express the condolences of my Government and its people to the people of Indonesia on the devastating quake which hit the island of Sumatra recently. I understand that this Friday, a UN assessment team will be in Padang to determine the extent of the humanitarian assistance that will be needed in the weeks and months to come.

Mr. President,

14. On 24 September 2009, the United Nations took a big step towards the issue of nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament. The Summit, particularly, put the issue clearly in the international spotlight. If ever there was a time to capitalize on the public spotlight created on this issue, it is now. The Secretary General must do all he can to keep this issue on the agenda, while at the same time creating a conducive environment for Member States to pursue this particular issue. The Organization's most recent push in this area will hopefully hasten the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty.

15. Another important area in which the Secretary General has not shown any hesitancy to pursue is climate change. The problem becomes more grave with every passing year, and this year's Copenhagen meeting needs to deliver results. The UNFCCC is, as it should be, the main fora in which climate change is addressed. All other meetings held outside of the scope of the UNFCCC should supplement the work of the Framework Convention, not duplicate it. The Organization as a whole has been able to assist national governments in implementing the agreements related to climate change, and we laud UNEP's move to launch the Green Economy Initiative, and Global Green New Deal which it announced in Pittsburgh in September 2009. These are the kinds of deal which the UN in its capacity, should always try to seal.

16. As we start the work of the Committees in this 64th General Assembly, Malaysia notes that the 2010-2011 biennium budget of the UN will be negotiated this year. Given today's difficult economic situation, we call upon Member States to provide the necessary resources to the Organization for the functioning of its work. For the Organization, we urge that it prioritizes its areas of responsibility and allocate these resources accordingly. Cutting corners is a must, but not at the expense of the core business of the United Nations.

17. Finally, pursuant to the Report of the Ad hoc Working Group on the Revitalization of the General Assembly in A/63/959, more must be done to raise the profile of both the United Nations and the General Assembly itself. The Department of Public Information must be tenacious in their efforts to have wider media coverage of the issues being debated at the General Assembly. And because the UN should not stand in isolation, Malaysia welcomes the initiative of the Secretary General to reach out to different segments of society through programmes such as the Global Compact, and the recently launched Academic Impact. Multi-stakeholder approaches are very much the norm now, and any effort which would advance the causes which we as Member States hold dear to our hearts must be supported.

18. The delegation of Malaysia stands ready to strengthen the Organization's capabilities to function effectively and efficiently, so that it may in turn do its job in fulfilling the needs of the peoples of the world most in need.

Thank you.