



Permanent Mission of
Malaysia
to the United Nations

STATEMENT BY MR. DZULAZHAR MUSA, REPRESENTATIVE OF MALAYSIA ON AGENDA ITEM 31: "UNITED NATIONS RELIEF WORKS AGENCY FOR PALESTINE REFUGEES IN THE NEAR EAST" AT THE GENERAL DEBATE OF THE FOURTH COMMITTEE, 64TH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY, NEW YORK, 3 NOVEMBER 2009

Mr. Chairman,

I would like to first thank the Commissioner-General and associate Malaysia with the statement by Egypt delivered on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

Mr. Chairman,

2. UNRWA must be commended for their outstanding contributions to the Palestinians who had lost their homes and livelihood as a result of the prolonged conflict and occupation by Israel. Despite trying conditions, UNRWA's dedication in providing essential services to 4.6 million Palestine refugees under its mandate is testimony to its commitment to the cause of the Palestinian people.

Mr. Chairman,

3. The root cause of the sufferings of the Palestine refugees is the unlawful occupation of Palestinian territory by Israel. Throughout this time, Israel has frequently violated international law, including humanitarian and human rights law. It has no qualms in using indiscriminate violence and has initiated collective punishment against civilians. What is more, it does this with impunity.

4. The findings of the Board of Inquiry (BOI) set up by the UN Secretary General and the UN Fact Finding Mission on the Gaza Conflict set up by the Human Rights Council is further evidence of brutality of Israeli practices. Most notably, these findings include the breach of the inviolability of UN premises and personnel. The Israeli government must be held accountable. We therefore urge the Government of Israel to commit itself to reparations for the damages done to the UN properties and facilities in Gaza.

Mr. Chairman,

5. Israel's military action against Gaza between 27 December 2008 and 18 January 2009 had further exacerbated the situation in this area. With a large population of refugees cramped into a tiny strip of land with no natural resources, the prospects of the people of Gaza were never bright to begin with. At the same time, the blockade imposed by Israel at the borders had

restricted the movement of persons, essential goods, and construction materials to the vulnerable groups in this area.

6. It is sad to note that almost a year had passed since the war on Gaza and the situation in the territory remained unchanged. In this regard, we urge that immediate steps to be taken in accordance with the Security Council Resolution 1860 (2009) and the relevant provisions of the Fourth Geneva Convention, in order to ensure the free flow of humanitarian aid and other essential and commercial supplies, and the very much needed construction materials to Gaza, which will alleviate the suffering of the people there.

Mr. Chairman,

7. Given the present dire situation, it is disheartening that UNRWA continues to be woefully financed. This situation requires international attention in order to prevent further undermining of the Agency's ability to discharge its mandate fully.

8. Bearing in mind the importance of the works of UNRWA to the Palestinian people, Malaysia has been making regular contributions to the Agency on an annual basis. In light of the difficult situation in Gaza, Malaysia also made an additional contribution this year through UNRWA's Gaza Ramadan Appeal. It is our sincerest hope that our humble contribution could help alleviate the plights and sufferings of the people in Gaza. In this connection, we also call on Member States who are in a position to do so, to kindly consider increasing the contribution to UNRWA in order to enable the Agency to continue to undertake its task in an effective manner.

Mr. Chairman,

9. In conclusion, I would like to reiterate the support of the Government and the people of Malaysia to UNRWA and its work. I would also like to express our appreciation to Mrs. Karen Koning AbuZayd for her sterling leadership and dedication to her work as Commissioner-General. We wish her well in her future endeavours.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.