



*Permanent Mission of*  
**Malaysia**  
*to the United Nations*

**STATEMENT BY H.E. HAMIDON ALI, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF MALAYSIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS AT THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL NEGOTIATIONS ON THE QUESTION OF EQUITABLE REPRESENTATION AND INCREASE IN THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL AND RELATED MATTERS IN INFORMAL PLENARY OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, 19 JANUARY 2010**

Mr. Chairman,

May I, at the beginning of this New Year, extend to you in your capacity as Chair of these Intergovernmental Negotiations on Security Council reform, our warm wishes for the future. Malaysia pledges its continuing support to you, Ambassador Tanin, in your quest for further progress in these negotiations. We hope that, bolstered by the spirit of new resolve for 2010, Member States will be able to make important inroads into what has now become a 17-year discussion on the same topic, ever since that day in 1993 when the General Assembly moved to establish the OEWG.

Mr. Chairman,

2. Malaysia was one of the countries which signed the *en masse* letter addressed to you on 23 December 2009. The letter itself was straightforward. The 138 Permanent Representatives of 138 UN Member States, asked that the Chair “present to Member States, before the second exchange of the 4<sup>th</sup> round” – which, incidentally, is this very meeting – “a text with options to serve as a basis for negotiations”. The reasoning behind the request was simple, and done with the best of intentions for this process itself. In any negotiation, particularly one as complex and many-faceted as the question of the reform of the Security Council, there has always been a text which is presented for consideration, subsequently added to, or revised, or amended. And then, while happiness is not always guaranteed, some sort of agreement will evolve among the parties to the negotiation as to what will happen next.

3. But in the case of these intergovernmental negotiations, we have not had this kind of text. So, we are – all of us – working with a mental piece of paper, in which differing perceptions rule, and forgetfulness becomes the norm of the day. Interspersed with that are these bits of paper which different delegations have forwarded for our consideration, making the situation murky and unfathomable. So, a number of us sat down and decided that if we really want to move forward, then a composite text of all the positions that are on the table, as per 63/557, should be in our hands. Then we can start ‘weeding’ out those which we can live with, and those which we cannot. Thus, the composite text which has been requested would in no way prejudge the outcome of the negotiations, nor would it put any particular proposal over another.

Mr. Chairman,

4. When you requested us, through your letter of 13 January 2010, to define “the areas of convergence” between proposals, bearing in mind the five key issues of 63/557, I was hesitant to participate in this exchange. After all, what else could be said that has not been said before? But in the spirit of helping you light these beacons of faith that you have laid in the path towards Security Council reform, I offer the following observations, bearing in mind that my country’s only benefit from these

negotiations would be a strengthened Security Council, reflective of the changes of the times, and fully equipped to deal with the pressing situations we have before us in the world today.

5. First is that all Member States have expressed a desire to see an increase in the number of members of the Security Council. We may differ in the actual figure for this expansion, but the agreement is there, nevertheless. So, Article 23 of the UN Charter will no doubt need to be amended, as it was in 1963. And of all the proposals on the table, there seems to be much agreement on the fact that the working methods of the Security Council will need to be improved.

6. Second, the categories of membership within the Security Council should still have permanent members, and non-permanent members. And even though there are proposals for longer-term non-permanent members, this is merely a deviation of the permanent/non-permanent debate. Malaysia can consider any eventual mix of expansion in both categories when we come to this juncture.

7. Third, in terms of the veto power, only a handful of countries are in favour of maintaining the status quo of the Power of Five. The rest of the membership believe that new permanent members should be given the same courtesy, or the veto should be abolished completely, or limited in its application if still being applied. In this Malaysia sides with the Non-Aligned Movement that the goal of the exercise is the abolition of veto power, and the creation of a more level playing field.

8. Fourth, there seems to be general agreement that a redress in the imbalance of the current geographical representation is desirable. However, whether representation should be region-specific, or country-specific, has yet to be truly explored. All the more reason for a composite text to be negotiated. When we first embarked on this path, it was Malaysia's understanding that representation would be equitably distributed from a geographical perspective. At the same time, we can also see the merits in region-specific seats as opposed to country-specific seats.

9. And finally, the relationship between the Council and the General Assembly. Putting aside the debate on which of these UN organs is higher on the hierarchical side, there is a glimmer of agreement that there should be heightened interaction between the Council and the General Assembly. Malaysia fully subscribes to Article 24's empowerment of the Council by Member States of the General Assembly, as acting "on their behalf".

Mr. Chairman,

10. Seventeen years is a long time to be seized by just one issue, but in something as important as this, the seventeen years might be well worth the investment. But only if we can come to an agreement soon. Discussions in perpetuity has never served any purpose, and is unlikely to begin serving one now.

11. As we turn a new calendar year and embark on the second decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, I wish you, Mr. Chair, all the best in steering us through this process of negotiations and applaud you for your tenacity in staying the course. Malaysia places its trust in your stewardship and looks forward to your determination in concluding this matter.

Thank you.