



Malaysia

Permanent Mission to the United Nations

STATEMENT BY THE HONOURABLE MOHD NAJIB ABDUL RAZAK, PRIME MINISTER OF MALAYSIA AT THE GENERAL DEBATE OF THE 65TH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY, NEW YORK, MONDAY, 27 SEPTEMBER 2010

Mr. President,

Allow me at the onset to congratulate you, on your election as the President of the 65th Session of the United Nations' General Assembly. I am confident that under your very able and astute leadership, the 65th Session will be able to complete its proceedings successfully. In this regard, let me assure you of Malaysia's full support for your Presidency.

2. Let me reaffirm Malaysia's unwavering and continuing support for the United Nations and the multilateral principles, based on international law, which it embodies. Let me also reiterate Malaysia's commitment to doing our part in this collective endeavour. We do so in the strong belief that all nations, no matter how large or small, rich or poor, strong or weak, have a common responsibility towards creating a better world for tomorrow. It is my firm belief that in order to create a better world for our future generations, we need to take into account today's realities as well as learn from the lessons of yesterday.

Mr. President,

3. Among the most important challenges confronting the international community today that needs to be addressed collectively, is the challenge of ensuring a just, equitable and durable peace. Peace not just during our time, but, peace for all times. It is imperative that we have to achieve peace premised upon a covenant of the willing and not one enforced by way of hegemony through fear and coercion. Such peace can only be achieved if we are willing to constructively engage each other through dialogue. Such discussions would help in creating a deeper understanding as well as appreciation and respect of each other in our conviction to create a better future for all citizens of the world.

Mr President

4. As a trade organization, WTO remains relevant to today's economic climate and Malaysia believes that the Doha Round must return to its original objective of ensuring free, fair and equitable trade. Let us put our joint efforts and focus on moving the process forward and build upon the progress and achievement to date. It is urgent that we conclude this as soon as possible.

5. Since the adoption of the MDGs a decade ago, which galvanized the world into collective action; there has been lack of efforts on joint endeavours towards the betterment of humanity. The missed opportunity at last year's climate change meeting in Copenhagen is a

wake-up call for all of us. We need to bridge the gaps towards resolving and addressing the issues of climate change, which affects the lives, and livelihoods of the peoples of the world and our future generations.

Mr. President,

6. On 7 June 2010, the Malaysian Parliament unanimously passed a Resolution condemning the brutal Israeli attack on the humanitarian convoy in international waters. This resolution was premised on humanitarian grounds and demanded that the Palestinians be given their basic rights. This was why the Members of the Malaysian Parliament, regardless of their political alignment, stood together in full support of this Resolution. In this regard, we reaffirm today our solidarity and sympathy with the people of Turkey and to the families for their tragic loss.

7. Malaysia understood the necessity of letting the multilateral system work. We were happy to see establishment of the UN Investigation Panel and the International Fact Finding Mission of the Human Rights Council. We are pleased with the findings of the International Fact Finding Mission of the UN Human Rights Council. The report has found that the conduct of the Israeli military and other personnel towards the flotilla passengers was not only disproportionate but also demonstrated levels of totally unnecessary and incredible violence. This inhumane attack constituted grave violations of human rights law and international humanitarian law. The Malaysian Parliament feels vindicated by these findings.

8. We are now waiting for the UN Investigation Panel to complete its work. We want to see the perpetrators responsible for the attacks be brought to justice and adequate compensation for the innocent victims of the attacks. We want the UN to act justly and decisively, without fear or favour, in a manner that would ensure transgressions of blatant international laws are dealt with and that justice is done.

Mr. President

9. On the Middle East Peace Process, Malaysia is encouraged with the recent development especially the active role by the Obama Administration and the Quartet in seeking a comprehensive and lasting solution. A solution not only to the problem between Palestine and Israel, but also to the region. We welcome the recent initiative by the United States in hosting the direct peace talks between Palestine and Israel. We also call on all parties to support these initiatives and not be detracted from these efforts to achieve the aspiration of creating two sovereign States living side by side in peace with secure and recognized borders.

10. For this to happen, the following pre-requisites should be addressed:

- First, Israel must heed the high expectations of the international community to end this long standing conflict. We call on the US and other members of the Quartet to persuade Israel to end the construction of new settlements in the West Bank and Jerusalem.
- Second, reconciliation efforts must bear fruits. The achievement of political unity among the Palestinians is vital in moving the peace process forward and the reconstruction of the Gaza Strip.

- Third, both parties must eschew violence and ensure the protection of civilians and respect for international humanitarian and human rights law.

Mr. President,

11. While harnessing our efforts to promote international peace and harmony we are concerned with the increasing trend in some parts of the world to perpetuate or even fuel Islamophobia. Attempts to demonize Islam offend the one and a half billion adherents of the religion. It intensifies the divide between the broad Muslim world and the West. The real issue is not between Muslims and non-Muslims but between the moderates and extremists of all religions, be it Islam, Christianity or Judaism. Across all religions we have inadvertently allowed the ugly voices of the periphery to drown out the many voices of reason and common sense. I therefore urge us to embark on building a “Global Movement of the Moderates” from all faiths who are committed to work together to combat and marginalize extremists who have held the world hostage with their bigotry and bias. We must, and I repeat, we must urgently reclaim the centre and the moral high ground that has been usurped from us. We must choose moderation over extremism. We must choose negotiations over confrontation. We must choose to work together and not against each other. And we must give this effort utmost priority for time is not on our side.

12. In this regard we are heartened to note that a group of American Evangelical Christians had worked tirelessly to prevent the threatened burning of the Quran with the compelling argument that it is in fact un-Christian to burn the Quran. This is a clear example of what can be achieved when moderates in each faith stand up to the extremists that are trying to hijack the universal values of our religions.

Mr President,

13. We commend President Obama and Mayor Bloomberg for rising to the challenge by affirming the rights of supporters of the Cordoba House to be located near the site of the World Trade Centre. This project will include a mosque and a Multi-Faith Community Centre open to all. We support the objectives of the Cordoba Initiative, an organization that focuses on promoting peace, understanding and moderation, both between Muslims and non-Muslims and within the Muslim communities. All countries should encourage and support initiatives that promote mutual respect, peaceful coexistence and reject the extremists who divide us all with issues that have in the past brought misery and hatred.

Mr. President,

14. Allow me to share my country’s own experience in managing issues of diversity. Malaysia is a multi-racial, multi-religious, multi-cultural and democratic society that has benefited from the positive interaction and synergy between the various communities. Mosques, temples, churches and other places of worship co-exist in harmony. Although Islam is the official religion, we honour other religions – Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism – by making their religious and cultural celebrations as national holidays and celebrate them as

national events. It is this equilibrium that leads to moderation or “wasatiyyah” in the Islamic tradition of mutual justice.

15. Malaysia stands at the geographical cross roads of major civilisations and religions of the world. We are therefore well poised to play our part in promoting religious understanding, harmony and tolerance. To further strengthen our process of national unity, I have introduced a philosophy known as 1Malaysia . 1Malaysia is a vision that seeks renewal and rejuvenation to bring all our people together in a just and harmonious relationship. 1Malaysia calls for the acceptance of diversity as a source of greater unity. We seek to celebrate our multi-ethnic and multi-religious society for strategic strength and harmony.

Mr President,

16. It is time for moderates of all countries, of all religions to take back the centre, to reclaim the agenda for peace and pragmatism, and to marginalise the extremists. This “Global Movement of the Moderates” will save us from sinking into the abyss of despair and depravation. This is an opportunity for us to provide the much needed leadership to bring hope and restore dignity for all. With greater will and collective determination, we will build a more peaceful, secure and equitable world.

Thank you.