



Malaysia

Permanent Mission to the United Nations

STATEMENT BY H.E. MR. HAMIDON ALI, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF MALAYSIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ON AGENDA ITEM 108: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY GENERAL ON THE WORK OF ORGANISATION AT THE 65th SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY, NEW YORK, 5 OCTOBER 2010

Mr. President,

I would like to thank the Secretary General for his report A/65/1 which he presented to this august body last 23 September. The thrust of the Report this year is more positive than in the previous year's, indicating that the Organisation has managed to achieve more in this past year despite the ever-present global challenges. We congratulate the men and women of the United Nations who have been able to ensure delivery in the Organisation's mandate.

2. One obvious addition to the United Nations family in this past year, and one which my country is pleased to welcome, is the establishment of a dedicated entity for gender equality and the empowerment of women, or UN Women for short. Women's empowerment is nothing new for Malaysia, which has had such a policy ever since the days leading up to our independence. Women have always been a major part of the Malaysian workforce, rising up through the ranks to hold positions such as Governor of the Central Bank, Attorney General, Solicitor General and Accountant General even as early as the 1980s. Then, of course, there were the Ambassadors, the heads of departments, and the CEOs of companies. But for some reason, there has never been an abundance of women in politics with national figures only hovering around the 10 percent mark, and well below the 19 percent internationally.

3. When Member States voted unanimously to establish UN Women in July of this year, it signaled a significant milestone in the work of the Organisation. It meant that global movement for the empowerment of women had finally arrived, and the goal of achieving true gender equality was inching closer and closer. It also meant that the streamlining of women's participation within the United Nations would be even greater than before. The Secretary General has done a commendable job in naming to his Cabinet, and to the posts of Under Secretaries General, a number of competent, prolific and dynamic women in recognition of their work and capabilities.

Mr. President,

4. This past year also saw a number of historic events taking place both in the work of the Organisation, and in the mandate with which the Organisation was entrusted. In the final month of 2009, Copenhagen welcomed climate change negotiators from near and far, but failed to deliver on its promise of a better future. Even though expectations of a breakthrough agreement in Copenhagen were high, these expectations were in no way unrealistic, particularly for those nations already in jeopardy of their very survival. This year, we have another chance at making a real change for the future, when we converge on Cancun. The Organisation can play a lead role in ensuring that we do not waste yet another opportunity to have a sustainable and satisfactory post-Kyoto world.

5. The second historic event to occur this past year with regard to the United Nations is the regular budget of the United Nations itself. This year, the UN regular budget topped the \$5 billion mark for the first time since the Organisation's establishment. Only two cycles ago, during the regular budget of 2006-2007, the figure stood at \$3.8 billion, meaning that in a mere

four years, the United Nations has expanded its budget by 30 percent. While the figures in themselves are not particularly earth-shattering, in a world of increasingly limited resources, where sustainability is key, the United Nations must find innovative ways in which to halt this budget expansion. For one, the duplication of work within the UN system, resulting in the creation of posts of the administrative kind must be stopped. It has to be remembered that this amount is not including the nearly \$8 billion for peacekeeping activities alone.

6. Third, the deployment of UN peacekeeping personnel in 2009 reached, as the Secretary General put it, “unprecedented” levels, rising to 124,000 deployed personnel. As one of the main cornerstones in the work of the United Nations, the deployment of UN personnel in the maintenance of peace and security remains an important aspect of the overall UN work. But it is hoped that these are figures that will see a significant decrease with the scheduled withdrawal or drawdown of the United Nations in three of its current 16 peacekeeping missions. We hope too that the integrated approach being introduced will help bring about greater efficiency in the way the United Nations conducts its presence on the ground.

7. The fourth milestone for the Organisation this past year is the number of new humanitarian emergencies with which the United Nations has had to handle. A total of 43 new emergencies within a period of some 12 months would mean that an overstretched United Nations would be under even more pressure, resource-wise, to respond effectively and efficiently to these emergencies. Malaysia notes that the number of natural disasters continue to rise on a yearly basis, and believes that this may to a certain extent be attributable to the climate change phenomenon. The only solution to this growing incidence of natural disasters would be to address the problem of climate change, and address it now, making it more imperative than ever that we find the collective will to tackle this global challenge.

8. Still on the issue of humanitarian assistance, Malaysia is deeply concerned with the rising attacks on humanitarian workers under the United Nations banner. These attacks, while in no way excusable nor acceptable, must surely have some grounding in perceived grievances or distrust in the Organisation as a whole. In the short term, the Secretary General’s proposal to review and adjust security arrangements would enable the Organisation to carry out one of its mainstay activities. However, in the longer term, we need to re-think the way in which we do business. Long-term programmes must be put in place to ensure the safety and security of UN workers on the ground, including through embarking on a favourable public relations exercise. It was not so long ago that those who wore the UN blue helmets, or worked under the UN banner were given deference enough to be able to go about their tasks. We need to reclaim that level of respect for the work of the Organisation, which would be more effective than flexing our military might or cocooning ourselves in a bubble. The two cornerstones of UN work that of peacekeeping and humanitarian assistance must not be compromised.

Mr. President,

9. Every year, all of us here in this room look forward to the Secretary General’s report on the work of the Organisation. We do so because, as Member States of this Organisation, we have a stake in its success, its shortcomings, and most of all in the work that this Organisation carries out for the global village we live in. As so many people have put it, including the Secretary General himself, the United Nations is more than just a collection of buildings, or of principles, or of ideas and ideals. The United Nations, working together, is more than just the sum total of its members. It is an Organisation, which is bolstered by the multiplier effect of its members’ strength.

10. Which is why so many nations are committed to making this Organisation work, and to ensuring the continuity of the good work, which this Organisation does around the world. For

many small or developing countries around the world, the work of the United Nations fills the capability-gap, which individual nations alone cannot hope to fill. Even though the United Nations cannot be everything for everyone, it is still the best hope we have of building a better, just and secure world.

Thank you.