



Malaysia

Permanent Mission to the United Nations

(Please check against delivery)

**STATEMENT BY MR. JAMAL SHARIFUDDIN JOHAN, REPRESENTATIVE OF
MALAYSIA, AT THE FIRST MEETING OF THE AD HOC WORKING GROUP ON THE
REVITALIZATION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY
27 MARCH 2012**

Co-Chairs,

At the outset, I wish to congratulate Your Excellencies on being appointed as co-facilitators of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Revitalization of the General Assembly for its 66th session. I believe that with your stewardship as well as commitment by all concerned, the Ad Hoc Working Group would be able to see greater progress in our common desire to revitalize the General Assembly in every aspect, including its role, authority, effectiveness and efficiency.

2. I also wish to thank the efforts of the two previous Co-Chairs, the Permanent Representatives of Lithuania and St. Vincent and the Grenadines, for their dedication, able leadership and hard work in discharging their duties over the past year, which resulted in the adoption of resolution 65/315. It is hoped that the Group can build on the success achieved thus far in moving forward on a number of areas of revitalization.

3. On this note, I wish to align my statement with that made by Algeria on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM).

Co-Chairs,

4. The President of the General Assembly has made UN reform and revitalization as one of his four areas of focus for the 66th session of the General Assembly. We believe that Member States should take the cue accordingly and show greater commitment in taking meaningful steps towards resolving key issues of revitalization. While the emphasis on 'reform and revitalization' is much welcomed, it is also a signal that all Member States need to redouble their efforts in order to move ahead.

5. It is without a doubt that the General Assembly is the chief deliberative policy-making and representative organ of the United Nations. It is the highest authoritative body of the United Nations as it represents all 193 member States. However, there is still much more that needs to be done for it to reclaim its central role in the UN system.

Co-Chairs,

6. My delegation appreciates the updated annex to the report of the Ad Hoc Working Group, document A/66/730, which has allowed member states to be kept abreast of the implementation of previous resolutions on revitalization. We welcome the efforts made by the Secretariat on providing such updates. This allows Member States a better understanding of the reasons behind any lack of implementation of such resolutions. Although the continuation of reviewing the inventory of resolutions on revitalization is a step in the right direction, the process should not just stop there. The next logical step would be to find ways to address underlying causes and overcome them accordingly, which would pave the way for eventual implementation of those resolutions.

7. At this juncture, my delegation wishes to reiterate its position that no other weakness of the General Assembly undermines its relevance or effectiveness more than the failure to implement resolutions. As such, should we fail in the implementation of resolutions on the revitalization process itself, what hope would we have in other General Assembly resolutions?

8. My delegation is mindful of financial constraints and other considerations that would result in a bumpy journey ahead. Nevertheless, we remain hopeful that there would be considerable progress on this front. For its part, Malaysia would adopt an open mind and constructive attitude in working with Member States on the matter.

Co-Chairs,

9. Various articles in the UN Charter have clearly defined the roles and mandates of the principal organs of the United Nations. The fact that the Chapter on the General Assembly appears before those on other principal organs is a reflection of the views of the United Nations' founding fathers of the primacy of the General Assembly.

10. There is a need for all principal organs, especially the leading two organs – the General Assembly and the Security Council, to faithfully respect each other's mandates in accordance with the UN Charter. Both organs must work together in consultation and cooperation to create a more harmonious working relationship for the betterment of all peoples of the world. Encroachment by one organ onto the mandate of the other would severely affect, not only the functioning of the organ alone, but the entire United Nations system as well.

11. I need not explain the reasons why the General Assembly has, in accordance to the UN Charter, been entrusted to deliberate on issues pertaining to the development of international law; economic, social, cultural and health issues; as well as, administrative and budgetary matters just to highlight a few. It is quite obvious that revitalization of the General Assembly and in the wider context, reforming the United Nations, would need to be done by ensuring that the General Assembly regains and retains its primacy among other organs of the United Nations, as envisioned by its forefathers.

Co-Chairs,

12. My delegation recognizes the importance of procedural improvements and enhancing the working methods of the General Assembly. We stand ready to look into issues such as rationalizing the list of agenda items and the possibility of biennialization or triennialization of agenda items.

13. While we are open to discuss such issues, this would, however, constitute merely “improvements” and not actually the “revitalization” of the General Assembly. Therefore, it is equally, if not more important, to focus on substantive aspects of the revitalization process, that is, ensuring that the General Assembly continues its role as the principal policy making and norm-setting organ of the United Nations.

Co-Chairs,

14. I have just touched on a few aspects out of many of the revitalization process. Progress need to be made on other aspects as well. The issue of the ‘Revitalization of the General Assembly’ has been the subject of the plenary debate since 1991. Due to the number of years this issue has been considered, it is high time that all Member States approach the issue with openness and the necessary political will in order to realize tangible and substantial progress. I fear that should pace of reform continue the way it has over the years, we would be awkwardly left with the agenda of ‘revitalizing’ the revitalization process itself.

15. I wish to reiterate my delegation’s commitment in working constructively with you and other members of the Ad Hoc Working Group in the weeks and months ahead.

I thank you.