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**STATEMENT BY
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PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF MALAYSIA
TO THE UNITED NATIONS / VICE-CHAIRMAN
OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE TO INVESTIGATE ISRAELI PRACTISES
AFFECTING THE HUMAN RIGHTS OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE AND OTHER
ARABS OF THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES**

**ON THE REPORT OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE
TO INVESTIGATE ISRAELI PRACTICES AFFECTING THE HUMAN RIGHTS OF THE
PALESTINIAN PEOPLE AND OTHER ARABS
OF THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES
AT THE FOURTH COMMITTEE OF
THE 68TH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS
GENERAL ASSEMBLY
NEW YORK, 8 NOVEMBER 2013**

Mr. Chairman,

As Vice-Chairman of the Special Committee, I would like to align my statement with the statement made by Ambassador Palitha Kohona, the Permanent Representative of Sri Lanka, as Chairman of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories. Malaysia also associates itself with the statement made by the Islamic Republic of Iran on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

Mr. Chairman,

2. I would like to thank the Committee and the Secretariat for the efforts and commitment demonstrated in preparing this report. Malaysia regrets that the Special Committee was again unable to have access to and observe directly the actual situation in the Occupied Territories. Israel's continued refusal to allow the Special Committee to visit the territories under its occupation only confirms the suspicion that it does not wish the international community to know of the actual situation there. Yet, ironically, the Israeli delegation continues to accuse the Special Committee for biased reporting of the situation even when the Committee has taken great care to ensure that its report is as objective and accurate as possible, based on the sworn testimonies of the witnesses appearing before it.

3. Indeed, the findings of the Special Committee are corroborated by the findings of the Special Rapporteur of the Commission of Human Rights and the United Nations High Commissioner of Human Rights during her visit to the occupied Palestinian Territory. They are also supported by the findings of the Human Rights Inquiry Commission established by the Commission of Human Rights to investigate violations of human rights and humanitarian law in the occupied Palestinian Territory, and other reports on the situation there. This clearly shows the objectivity and veracity of the Report of the Special Committee. We therefore urge Israel to allow the Special Committee to have access to the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and occupied Syrian Golan thereby assisting the Special Committee in its important work. The Special Committee was able to visit Gaza in 2011 and 2012 but was unable to do in 2013 due to security reasons. The continued blockade on Gaza has worsened the situation, whereby 80 percent of the population now depends on humanitarian aid.

4. As in the past, the Report provides a very dismal picture of the life endured by the Palestinians and other Arabs living under Israeli occupation. The harsh and repressive rule affecting virtually every aspect of life in the Occupied Territories continued unabated. The regulations governing the movement of people, housing, education, public health and sanitation, and economic and political activity have become more rigid and repressive. In the name of security, the Israeli authorities have devised very harsh measures to keep the Arab population under their firm control.

5. As attested by the witnesses who appeared before the Special Committee, the enforcement of these laws and regulations has been carried out with characteristic heavy-handedness through such acts as, inter alia, discriminatory and punitive actions, curfews, closures and stoppages, house demolitions, uprooting of olive trees, restriction of water supply and inhumane treatment of prisoners and detainees. Following the prohibition by the Israeli Supreme Court on the use of a specific form of torture on Palestinian prisoners and detainees, new and difficult to detect forms of torture or physical force have been reported to have been used. We call on Israel to end these practices and observe the principles enshrined in international law and international humanitarian law, including the Fourth Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilians in time of War of 12 August, 1949 which is applicable to all of the Occupied Arab Territories, including East Jerusalem and occupied Syrian Golan.

Mr. Chairman,

6. The human rights situation is particularly acute in respect of Palestinians living in East Jerusalem. This is due to the policy of the occupying Power to discourage Arab Jerusalemites from continuing to stay in the city. This policy, motivated by Israeli's avowed intention to make Jerusalem its "undivided capital", takes the form of systematic confiscation of Arab property—particularly lands and houses or their demolition for so-called "security or administrative" reasons, confiscation and cancellation of residence permits and disqualification of residence rights and other forms of judicial/administrative measures. The intention, clearly, is for the Judaisation of Arab East Jerusalem by bringing in Jews to replace the Arabs, thereby demographically changing the character

of the city. The rapidly growing population of the Jewish population in Jerusalem is the demographic weapon by which the Arab character of the city will be drastically transformed. In spite of the strong criticism of the international community, including Israel's close friends and supporters, this provocative policy continues unabated through the relentless construction and expansion of the new Jewish settlements.

Mr. Chairman,

7. The human rights situation of the people living in the occupied Arab Territories is not likely to improve for as long as Israel relies on its policy of using force rather than dialogue and negotiations to resolve the problem of its security vis-à-vis its Arab neighbours. It will only aggravate the situation. This policy will not succeed because the issue of the rights of the Palestinians and other Arabs living in the occupied territories cannot simply be wished away. They will have to be addressed and a satisfactory solution found. This shortsighted policy must give way to one of a sincere quest for a long-term political settlement. Israel cannot hope to build a peaceful and prosperous nation upon the misery and haplessness of the Arab inhabitants of the occupied territories. Sooner or later Israel will have to come to terms with the legitimate aspiration of the Palestinian people and accept the reality of Palestinian statehood with all its attributes. It will also have to come to terms with the yearning of the inhabitants of occupied Syrian Golan to be reunited with the Syrian Arab Republic. The sooner Israel does so the earlier the tragic situation could be brought to an end in the interest of peace and security for all the parties concerned.

8. However, a final solution must be based on the two-state solution, living side by side in peace and security with the establishment of the state of Palestine, based on 1967 borders with East Jerusalem as its capital, and Israeli withdrawal from all occupied Arab lands, including occupied Syrian Golan. Confidence cannot be built, or the peace process promoted, on a policy of continued oppression and subjugation of the Arab population living in the occupied territories.

Mr. Chairman,

9. Until a comprehensive political settlement is achieved and Israel withdraws from the occupied Palestinian Territory and occupied Syrian Golan, the work of the Special Committee remains as relevant as when it was first established in 1968. This is because the international community cannot afford to turn a blind eye to the continuing acts of repression and injustice on those who live under foreign occupation. We, members of this Organization, cannot afford to be neutral when human rights of peoples are systematically violated. We cannot take a selective approach by criticizing human rights violations only in some countries but not in others. All relevant organs of the United Nations, including the Security Council, must take immediate and necessary steps to ensure the protection of civilians living under foreign occupation and domination, as is the case in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and occupied Syrian Golan.

10. It is important, therefore, for the Special Committee to continue its work and to bring to the attention of the Fourth Committee and the General Assembly the human rights situation of the Palestinian People and other Arabs of the occupied Territories. To this end, it is necessary that the mandate of the Special Committee be renewed again so that it can continue to monitor the human rights situation of the inhabitants of these Territories. The continued work of the Special Committee is not only appropriate but also necessary for as long as the Occupied Territories, including East Jerusalem and occupied Syrian Golan, remain under the illegal occupation of Israel.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.