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STATEMENT BY
H.E. AMBASSADOR HUSSEIN HANIFF
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF MALAYSIA
TO THE UNITED NATIONS

ON AGENDA ITEM 64: REPORT OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL
AT THE PLENARY OF THE 68TH SESSION
OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY

NEW YORK, 13 NOVEMBER 2013

Mr. President,

My delegation warmly welcomes His Excellency Ambassador Remigiusz Achilles Henczel, President of the Human Rights Council, to address the General Assembly and to present the report of the Council.

2. Malaysia together with the international community, places high expectations on the work of the Council. Malaysia believes in a non-confrontational approach to the issue of human rights, pushing instead for constructive dialogue and cooperation.

3. The current international trend of politicization of human rights by some has not served the cause of human rights. Some countries continue to emphasize political and civil rights to the virtual exclusion of economic, social and cultural rights. Malaysia is of the view that civil and political rights cannot be separated from economic, social and cultural rights, as both are two sides of the same coin.

Mr. President,

4. Allow me to touch on a few matters relating to the Council.

5. Firstly, the Universal Periodic Review (UPR). The UPR is a primary human rights mechanism, premised upon equal treatment of all countries. Malaysia is pleased to inform that the country has successfully undergone the second review of its UPR in October 2013. A total of 104 Member States participated in the interactive dialogue on Malaysia's UPR. As a result, Malaysia received a total of 232 recommendations on how to further promote and improve the human rights situation in the country. Recommendations addressed to Malaysia will be thoroughly studied and considered by the relevant ministries/agencies. Malaysia will announce its decisions on the recommendations received when its final report is presented for adoption at the Human Rights Council at its 25th Session in March 2014.

6. Malaysia had taken full advantage of the opportunity afforded by the UPR to update Member States on the positive developments pertaining to the measures that have been undertaken by the Government to improve and enhance human rights in the country. During its UPR, Malaysia did not attempt to hide any shortcomings on its part by openly admitting

the challenges faced by the Government in its efforts to further promote and protect human rights.

Mr. President,

7. To ensure the full participation of all countries to the UPR process, Malaysia is of the view that the Voluntary Fund for Financial and Technical Assistance, established by the Council in its resolution 6/17, should be strengthened and put to work in order to provide a source of financial and technical assistance to help countries. This, in particular, will benefit the least developed countries and will help them to implement the recommendations emanating from their review.

8. Secondly, while there has been some progress to address poverty eradication brought about by widening inequality, high and volatile food and fuel prices and menacing environmental risks, this progress continues to be held hostage to the impact of the global financial and economic crisis. Malaysia is of the view that despite the bleak world economic situation, developed countries should, to the best of their ability, fulfill their pledges made in terms of official development assistance (ODA). Even without the current economic crisis, developing countries have struggled to ensure the economic and social rights of their people are upheld. Thus, they, including the poorest and most vulnerable sections of society, are now even worse off with the knock-on effect of the crisis.

9. Thirdly, Malaysia welcomes the Council's continued attention to the human rights situation of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Territory. We must never forget that the core issue for the Palestinians is their inalienable right to statehood. In this instance, Malaysia calls for the realization of the Palestinians' right to self-determination through a final solution to the conflict, which would see the creation of two States living side-by-side in peace and security based on the 1967 borders with East Jerusalem as the capital for the Palestinian State. We urge the Council to continue to press on this issue and to ensure that the Palestinians are afforded their basic rights as human beings including their right to an independent state.

10. Fourthly, on the process of strengthening and enhancing the effective functioning of the human rights treaty body system, in view of the complexity of human rights issues, Malaysia believes that the intricate responsibility to promote and protect human rights necessitates deeper cooperation among stakeholders. While human rights treaty bodies are in place to keep a check and balance over States Parties' compliance and efforts to improve related human rights situation, it is apparent that there are still significant issues to be addressed to assist human rights treaty bodies to fulfill their objectives. Malaysia remains committed to continue supporting efforts aimed at strengthening the human rights treaty bodies.

Mr. President,

11. To conclude, we hope that the Council will carry on its good work in promoting and protecting human rights for all. It should not yield to the agendas of certain quarters. The many achievements to date, among which include the successful implementation of the UPR mechanism, put the Council in good stead especially in its mandate to ensure greater promotion and protection of human rights for all. However, Malaysia believes that more can always be done to enhance and uphold the rights of victims of human rights violations. Malaysia is committed to this end and will continue to strongly support the work of the Council.

Thank you, Mr. President.