



MALAYSIA

PERMANENT MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS



CANDIDATE
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**STATEMENT BY
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MALAYSIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS
INFORMAL MEETING OF THE PLENARY
OF THE 68TH SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY
ON THE HUMANITARIAN SITUATION IN THE SYRIAN ARAB REPUBLIC,
25 FEBRUARY 2014, NEW YORK**

Mr. President,

I thank you for convening today's meeting, and my delegation expresses our appreciation to the United Nations high officials for their important briefings.

Malaysia reiterates our deep concern on the deteriorating humanitarian situation in Syria, which has developed into a complex emergency setting for almost all forms of humanitarian assistance. We are appalled that the escalating crisis continues to claim tens of thousands of innocent victims. All parties should refrain from acts that would not only prolong the conflict but also contribute to further violence and human rights violations in Syria.

We recognise the developments which have led to better access for aid and personnel, including the delivery of convoys and airlifts to hard-to-reach, cross-line and contested areas. Amidst humanitarian pauses, Syrian children are being vaccinated to stem the spread of the wild polio virus. Such pauses have also proved vital in negotiating evacuations for the extremely vulnerable population, as in the case of the Old City of Homs. Yet these measures are tragically insufficient in addressing the humanitarian needs of the Syrian people.

Mr. President,

My delegation welcomes the Security Council's unanimity in adopting Resolution 2139 on 22 February, but immediate action must be taken to ensure its implementation results in positive changes on the ground. The dire food security situation alone underlines the urgent need for rapid, safe and unhindered humanitarian access. Schools and medical facilities must also no longer be turned into battlegrounds.

We call for an end to methods of warfare which are particularly disturbing, such as the sieging and starvation of civilians in populated areas, as well as indiscriminate heavy

weapon fire. I wish to also reiterate Malaysia's grave concern on the unspeakable human suffering faced by the Palestinian refugees in Syria, especially in the Yarmouk camp which is still in critical need of supplies despite earlier deliveries of assistance.

We are also greatly saddened at the increasing number of Syrians who were forced to flee their homes as refugees and internally displaced persons. In this regard Malaysia commends the noble efforts of the neighbouring host countries, Lebanon, Jordan, Turkey, Iraq and Egypt. However, my delegation remains concerned that there is no end in sight to this exodus, what more since prices of goods have hiked and basic commodities are becoming scarcer. In this regard we also take note of one particular concern reported by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) in the Syrian Humanitarian Assistance Response Plan 2014, and I quote "The unilateral economic and financial sanctions have impeded procurement of essential humanitarian supplies from outside Syria while availability of supplies declines domestically".

Mr. President,

In support of the urgent humanitarian needs of the Syrian people, Malaysia participated in the Second International Humanitarian Pledging Conference in Kuwait last month. Our contribution of USD500,000 aims to bring to a ray of hope to the Syrian people. Our message to parties to the conflict is clear - resolve your differences and seek peaceful reconciliation for the sake of the people of Syria.

Malaysians empathize with the suffering of the Syrian people, and it is our view that only the Syrian people can decide their own destiny. My delegation underlines that moderation, compromise, understanding, rejection of extremism, and peaceful dialogue are the keys to resolving the conflict between the parties in the country.

Malaysia remains hopeful that peace can be restored in Syria, and we urge all parties involved to work in the greater interest of the Syrian people.

Thank you, Mr. President.