



MALAYSIA

PERMANENT MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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

**ON AGENDA ITEM 60:
PERMANENT SOVEREIGNTY OF THE
PALESTINIAN PEOPLE IN THE OCCUPIED PALESTINIAN TERRITORY,
INCLUDING EAST JERUSALEM, AND OF THE ARAB POPULATION IN THE
OCCUPIED SYRIAN GOLAN,
OVER THEIR NATURAL RESOURCES**

**AT THE SECOND COMMITTEE OF THE
69TH SESSION OF THE
UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

4 NOVEMBER 2014

Mr. Chairman,

At the outset, I would like to thank the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia for the report on the economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan that was presented under this agenda item.

2. Since 1967, Israel has exploited the natural resources of the Occupied Palestinian Authority, including East Jerusalem and other Arab territories, resulting in an increasingly detrimental impact on the socio-economic fabric of the Palestinian people. The construction of the West Bank Wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, for example, would continue to have a negative impact on the Palestinian population in the West Bank and East Jerusalem. The Palestinians in that area are forced to obtain “visitor” permits from Israeli authorities to pass through to their farmland and water resources. The wall would also destruct important agricultural land and destabilize the delicate ecosystem of the surrounding area, with severe negative consequences for both the environment and the livelihoods of the Palestinian people. In addition to

the challenges caused by the separation wall, the Palestinian farmers whose lands are located inside or near settlements areas continue to face regular attacks against them and their properties by the settlers.

Mr. Chairman,

3. We note from the report that while the Palestinians struggle to satisfy their daily minimum water requirements, the Israeli settlers consume six times more water than the Palestinians in the West Bank. The Israeli settlers even have enough water to run farms and orchards, as well as swimming pools and spas. While Israel simultaneously continues to drill deeper and more efficient wells for its own use, wells and springs that are available to Palestinians are generally degraded. In addition, an estimated of 313,000 Palestinians are not connected to a water network. As a result, the Palestinians are at risk of acute water scarcity which they receive through unreliable connections.

4. We note with concern that the Syrian residents of the occupied Syrian Golan continue to suffer from discrimination in term of access to land, housing, basic services and water allocation. Syrian farmers in the occupied Syrian Golan are at an unequal and disadvantaged position due to high levels of taxes and restrictions on the use of water. Moreover, the illegal exploitation of natural resources at the occupied Syrian Golan is further aggravated by the issuance of licence for exclusive petroleum exploration by the Israeli authority.

Mr. Chairman,

5. We further note with concern that poverty rates in the West Bank, Gaza and in particular East Jerusalem are alarming and unemployment continues to be at an unacceptably high level particularly those living in Gaza. The prolonged series of high unemployment and unstable working conditions will inevitably resulted in large-scale deskilling of workers as well as other social and economic related problems.

6. The combination of soaring unemployment, falling purchasing power and recurrent shocks had pushed the majority of effected Palestinian population into food insecurity. The improvement of food security in the occupied Palestinian Territory from 2009 to 2011 was reversed in 2012 where food insecurity levels rose dramatically affecting 1.57 million Palestinians including refugees and those in refugee camps. While we note that a full fledged food insecurity crisis has been prevented by the large-scale humanitarian assistance provided by UNWRA, we are concerned that the situation would deteriorate in the near future.

Mr. Chairman,

7. The reclaiming of the permanent sovereignty of the Palestinians over their natural resources is therefore key in reversing this crisis. Nevertheless, this issue cannot be approached in isolation. Malaysia therefore welcomes the Palestinian decision to accede to various international conventions and treaties earlier this year. The move is a step in the right direction towards making Palestine a responsible member of the international community, bound by the rules and norms of international law.

8. Malaysia is further encouraged by the recent announcements of the Swedish Government to recognize the state of Palestine, and the diplomatic recognition given by the British Parliament to Palestine as a sovereign state. We applaud this historic decisions as we believe that these recognitions will light the path for other countries and parties to follow similar decision for the sake of peace and stability in the region.

Mr. Chairman,

9. We urge the United Nations system to strengthen its programmes of assistance to mitigate the sufferings faced by the Palestinians and the population of the occupied Syrian Golan, through adequate resources and effective operational activities. We also call upon the international community to ensure that the relevant UN agencies, such as the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) are provided with adequate and reliable funding, and financial resources to facilitate their work in reducing the hardships and crisis caused by the infringement of the sovereignty of Palestinians and the population of the occupied Syrian Golan over their natural resources.

10. To conclude, Mr. Chairman, Malaysia strongly believe and hope that the ongoing peace talks will finally pave the way for the beginning of a process of reconciliation, reconstruction, development and ultimately, flourishing of the Palestinian State and people.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.