



Malaysia

Permanent Mission to the United Nations

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STATEMENT BY H.E. AMB. HUSSEIN HANIFF, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF MALAYSIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS, ON AGENDA ITEM 37: QUESTION OF PALESTINE, AT THE PLENARY SESSION OF THE 66TH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY, NEW YORK, 30 NOVEMBER 2011

Mr. President,

My delegation wishes to align itself with the statement by Egypt, delivered on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

Mr. President,

2. For more than half a century, the international community, through the United Nations, has undertaken intensive and extensive efforts to address what is known as the "Question of Palestine". Despite all these efforts, we are concerned that the peace process is facing a bleak impasse with no clear sight of progress.

3. Israel's illegal policies and inhumane practices, which continue with impunity, has and will detract the efforts to realizing the aspiration of creating two sovereign States living side by side in peace. Israel's intransigence are evident from:

One : The continuation and expansion of illegal settlement activities in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, with the recent plans to construct 1,557 settlement units in parts of East Jerusalem, and 673 in other areas the West Bank;

Two : Forced evictions of the Palestinian people, demolition of Palestinian homes and other infrastructures, and confiscation of Palestinian lands, including through the building of the illegal Separation Wall, which till today continues to be built, despite the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice to stop its construction, and revocation of residency rights of Palestinians living in Jerusalem;

Three: The increased violent attacks by extremist Israeli settlers towards Palestinians civilians, Palestinian properties and agricultural produce,

as well as places of worship and holy sites. Such brutal acts continue unabated;

Four : The imprisonment of approximately 5,000 Palestinians, including Palestinian women and children, in Israel who are subjected to ill treatment and torture by the Israeli authorities;

Five : Imposition of measures that constitute a form of collective punishment, which is strictly forbidden by international humanitarian law. Such measures include the illegal blockade of Gaza that has restricted the passage of essential goods and construction materials much needed for the reconstruction of Gaza, and the imposition of hundreds of checkpoints and roadblocks, the permit system as well as other obstacles that violates the Palestinians' right to freedom of movement; and

Six : The withholding of VAT and customs revenues, which amounts to approximately 100 million dollars per month that is collected on behalf of the Palestinian Authority, pursuant to the Paris Protocol. The withholding of these funds, which represent two-thirds of the Palestinian Authority's annual revenues, debilitates the latter's state-building gains. Israel should heed the calls of the UN Secretary-General and the international community to release these funds pursuant to existing agreements that it has entered into.

Mr. President,

4. It is obvious that such exploitations are not only illegal and immoral, but are also counter-productive to the aim of achieving genuine and lasting peace. Israel cannot cloud the eyes of the international community by simply enumerating actions undertaken to lessen the sufferings of the Palestinians.

5. Instead, Israel needs to pay due attention to the views and sentiments of the people of 166 countries that voted in favour of the draft resolution "*The right of the Palestinian people to self-determination*" to end this long-standing conflict, by stopping all provocative acts and improving the situation on the ground by immediately and without any conditions, to immediately stop the construction of illegal settlements, lifting the blockade in Gaza, addressing humanitarian needs and improving the atmosphere for negotiations, among others. In this connection, the Quartet must compel Israel to stop its intransigence, particularly the construction of settlements in Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem.

6. Having said that, we also believe that the achievement of political unity among the Palestinians is equally important in moving the peace process forward and to further accelerate the reconstruction of the Gaza Strip.

Mr. President,

7. Yesterday, we observed the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People. I wish to take this opportunity to pay our highest tribute to all Palestinians who have suffered through the years, in their just struggle to live in freedom and in dignity, in a state they can call their own. The people of Palestine can count on Malaysia's unwavering support, in their efforts to create an independent and sovereign state of Palestine, based on 1967 borders with East Jerusalem as its capital.

Thank you.

