



# *Malaysia*

*Permanent Mission to the United Nations*

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**STATEMENT BY**

**H.E. AMBASSADOR RASTAM MOHD ISA  
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF MALAYSIA  
TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

**AT**

**THE GENERAL DEBATE OF THE FIRST COMMITTEE  
OF THE 59<sup>TH</sup> SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

**NEW YORK, 8 OCTOBER 2004**

*Please check against delivery*

Mr. Chairman,

I should like at the outset to congratulate you on your election as Chairman of this Committee. I also congratulate the other members of the Bureau on their election. I extend my sincere appreciation to your predecessor, Ambassador Jarmo Sareva of Finland, for the outstanding manner in which he had conducted the work of the Committee during the Fifty-eighth Session of the General Assembly.

2. Developments in the field of disarmament and international security in 2004 can be described as a combination of progress, stagnation and setbacks. The Secretary-General has provided us with an excellent assessment of the state of affairs in multilateral disarmament efforts over the past year in his report on the work of the Organisation, as contained in document A/59/1. He has stated, inter alia, that there remain several challenges which, if left unchecked, could undermine international peace and security as well as may increase the risk of new instances of unilateral or pre-emptive use of force. These include "the slow pace of disarmament, violations of non-proliferation commitments, evidence of a clandestine nuclear network and the threat of terrorism". My delegation concurs with him.

3. It is crucial that favourable conditions be created for the further advancement of the global disarmament process. In this connection, all States should strictly abide by the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations. Any action that ignores these provisions and that is incompatible with the principles of international law would adversely affect genuine and serious efforts in the field of disarmament. Malaysia underscores the vital importance of multilateralism and multilaterally agreed solutions in addressing disarmament and international security issues.

4. As the current Chair of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), Malaysia continues to fully subscribe to the long-held principled position of NAM in the field of disarmament and international security. The pronouncements made by the Heads of State or Government of NAM at their Thirteenth Summit in Kuala Lumpur in February 2003 and most recently reiterated by the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of NAM at their Fourteenth Ministerial Conference in Durban on 19 August 2004 concerning this question shall remain the road map for Malaysia and the Member Countries of NAM. The Non-Aligned Movement will continue to be at the forefront of the global campaign for the total elimination of weapons of mass destruction, in particular nuclear weapons.

Mr. Chairman,

5. In the course of the year, we have witnessed the continued failure of the Conference on Disarmament to launch any substantive work. We hope that the Conference on Disarmament (CD) would be able to resume without delay its important role of negotiating new arms control and disarmament agreements, with an emphasis on the elimination of weapons of mass destruction. The failure of the United Nations Disarmament Commission (UNDC) to agree on an agenda for its session this year is another setback to multilateral disarmament efforts. My delegation is disheartened by all these developments. These two important disarmament machineries must be able to overcome these obstacles so as to move the process forward. Malaysia agrees with your assertion, Mr. Chairman, that the First Committee has the duty to reaffirm the urgent need to make progress on substantive issues and identify specific initiatives to address the security concerns of all Member States.

6. I should like to recapitulate that the Final Document of the SSOD-I underscores that general and complete disarmament under effective international control is the ultimate goal of multilateral disarmament efforts. This goal is far from being achieved. Member States of the United Nations had agreed at SSOD-I that nuclear weapons posed the greatest danger to mankind and to the survival of human civilization. Today, all States remain in full agreement with that conclusion made almost three decades ago. There should not be any doubt that the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction is a threat to international peace and security. But more importantly, we must not forget that the existence of these weapons in the first place is a threat to the survival of mankind and our planet.

7. Disarmament and non-proliferation should be pursued together, in a mutually reinforcing manner. Malaysia reiterates her call upon all nuclear weapons States to fulfill their commitments toward significant reduction in their nuclear arsenals leading to nuclear disarmament. We believe that the issue of non-compliance applies both to nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation. In this connection, the implementation of Article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) by nuclear weapons States is crucial.

8. The thirteen practical steps identified by the 2000 NPT Review Conference in pursuing nuclear disarmament have set out an achievable framework for nuclear disarmament. The implementation of these steps and other outcomes of the 2000 NPT Review Conference is even more important in a security environment in which recourse to weapons of mass destruction materials and technology by terrorists is no longer a remote risk. Malaysia looks forward to the NPT Review Conference next year whereat States Parties should demonstrate, through concrete actions rather than words, that the NPT can indeed stand the test of time in serving the security interests of all its States Parties. The integrity of the NPT must be maintained. All commitments and obligations by the States Parties must be respected and fulfilled. The 2005 Review Conference will offer us with the opportunity to deal effectively with a myriad of issues based on the three pillars under the NPT. Malaysia looks forward to working with other States Parties to the NPT at the 2005 Review Conference to achieve a positive and balanced outcome in a spirit of mutual accommodation and understanding.

Mr. Chairman,

9. Malaysia fully supports the establishment of nuclear weapons-free zones worldwide. Malaysia will continue to work with other ASEAN colleagues in realizing our aspiration for the acceptance of a nuclear weapons-free zone in Southeast Asia. Malaysia will continue to support the establishment of nuclear weapons-free zones in other parts of the world, in particular in the Middle East. In this connection, Malaysia welcomes the recent decision by Libyan Arab Jamahiriya to renounce its weapons of mass destruction programmes.

10. Malaysia also welcomes the recent announcement by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to freeze its nuclear weapons programme as a conciliatory attempt to generate forward movement in the Six-Party Talks. We hope that the parties concerned could favourably respond to this gesture. As a country in the East Asian region, Malaysia wishes to see the successful conclusion of the bilateral and multilateral efforts currently underway to redress the nuclear question in the Korean Peninsula. This will certainly contribute towards ensuring a climate of peace, security and stability in the East Asian region and the world as a whole.

11. Malaysia will continue to work with other like-minded countries to pursue follow-up action to the General Assembly resolution on the Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice concerning the legality of the threat and use of nuclear weapons. We will be presenting a draft resolution in this Committee soon.

Mr. Chairman,

12. On the question of verification and enforcement relating to weapons of mass destruction, Malaysia shares the view of many countries that existing multilateral treaty-based mechanisms, such as under the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), need to be strengthened without resorting to other means, such as calling for action through the Security Council. It is critical that there exists the necessary political will to enable these mechanisms to work in a fair, balanced and non-discriminatory manner taking into consideration the interests of everyone involved. Malaysia believes that full adherence to all provisions of international disarmament treaties and conventions by States Parties are the only sustainable approach towards multilateral disarmament and prevention of proliferation activities.

13. The universalisation of the Comprehensive-Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) is crucial. Pending its entry into force, all nuclear weapon States must maintain the current moratorium on nuclear test explosions. Similarly, Malaysia awaits the universalisation of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) and hopes that the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC) would soon be fortified with a verification mechanism.

14. The challenges and threats posed by the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons should not be taken lightly. These must be our genuine concern collectively, not just limited to the countries or regions where conflicts have occurred or are still raging. In this connection, several ongoing undertakings are critical. We should collectively work towards ensuring the successful implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. We should work towards ensuring the achievement of a favourable outcome of the deliberations of the Open-Ended Working Group on Tracing Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons. And, we should constructively contribute our views to the broad-based consultations on further steps to enhance international cooperation in preventing, combating and eradicating illicit brokering in small arms and light weapons.

Mr. Chairman,

15. Next year as we celebrate the sixtieth anniversary of the United Nations, we should explore new ideas and a fresh outlook concerning international efforts in the field of disarmament and international security. Indeed, international peace and security cannot be fully maintained without significant progress in the area of disarmament. The international community already possesses the necessary tools to advance the disarmament process. What is required is the strengthening of existing disarmament treaty-based mechanisms with the full support and political will of States. Without political will, there cannot be a genuine solution to international disarmament issues. It is about time that we reorient ourselves towards the common objective of achieving general and complete disarmament.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.