



Permanent Mission of
Malaysia
to the United Nations

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STATEMENT BY THE HONOURABLE SENATOR ABDUL RASHID NGAH, MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT, MALAYSIA AT THE GENERAL DEBATE OF THE FIRST COMMITTEE DURING THE 63RD SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY, NEW YORK 9 OCTOBER 2008

Mr. Chairman,

On behalf of the delegation of Malaysia, I wish to extend our warmest congratulations to you on your Chairmanship of the First Committee for the 63rd session of the General Assembly. We are confident that with your experience, knowledge and leadership, you would be able to steward this Committee towards a fruitful conclusion. We assure you Mr. Chairman of our support to work with you in this regard.

2. My delegation associates itself with the statements made by Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) and by Myanmar on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

Mr. Chairman,

3. Malaysia has always maintained a principled position on general and complete disarmament of weapons of mass destruction and its delivery system, and that measures to achieve this goal should be through the multilateral process. In this regard, Malaysia views that the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty sets the standard for weapons proliferation which serves as a threat to international security. We look forward to working with all concerned parties particularly at the NPT States Parties meeting in May 2009 to achieve agreement on all issues of concern towards attaining nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

4. The NPT forms one of the cornerstones for international peace and security and for it to serve this purpose meaningfully, the NPT must become a universal instrument. The present situation wherein India, Israel and Pakistan, in particular, remain outside the NPT somewhat weakens the NPT regime. We therefore call on these countries to join the NPT as Non-Nuclear Weapons States, in order for the NPT to become a truly universal disarmament regime.

5. Malaysia is also concerned with recent developments involving bilateral deals in civil nuclear cooperation with states that do not have a comprehensive safeguards agreement with the IAEA. This development undermines the foundations of the global nuclear

disarmament and non-proliferation regime. These bilateral cooperations are a manifestation of double standards and discrimination, which contravenes the commitments and obligations under the NPT. These selective approaches would lead many non-nuclear weapons states to question the relevance of the NPT itself. Having foresworn nuclear weapons, developing Non-Nuclear Weapons States Parties to the Treaty deserve to be accorded preferential treatment to access to nuclear equipment, material and technology, over Non-States Parties, whether through the Technical Cooperation of the IAEA, or through bilateral arrangements.

Mr. Chairman,

6. Malaysia firmly believes that non-proliferation activities would not succeed if it is not accompanied with efforts to realize the complete elimination of nuclear weapons. Pending the total elimination of nuclear weapons, Malaysia wishes to stress that efforts for the conclusion of a universal, unconditional and legally binding instrument on security assurances to Non-Nuclear Weapon States should be pursued as a matter of priority.

7. In this connection, Malaysia believes that the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones will enhance global and regional peace, strengthen the nuclear non-proliferation regime and contribute towards realizing the objectives of nuclear disarmament. It is essential that Nuclear Weapon States provide unconditional assurances against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons to States belonging to nuclear-weapon-free zones. We continue to urge Nuclear Weapons States to become parties to the Protocol of the Southeast Asian Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone (SEANWFZ) Treaty. Malaysia also fully supports the establishment in the Middle East of a zone free of all weapons of mass destruction.

Mr. Chairman,

8. Malaysia submitted its instrument of ratification to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) on 17 January 2008. Malaysia calls upon all States to work towards the entry into force of the CTBT, particularly the Annex 2 States whose signature and ratification of the CTBT are necessary for the Treaty's entry into force. As reaffirmed at the fourth CTBT Ministerial Meeting on 24 September 2008 in New York, the CTBT would contribute towards the prevention of the vertical proliferation of nuclear weapons by seeking to halt the development of new weapons of mass destruction. Another measure which Malaysia feels would give impetus towards the goal of building a safer world free of nuclear weapons is to reduce the operational status of nuclear weapons systems. In this regard, Malaysia together with Chile, Nigeria, New Zealand and Switzerland will submit a draft resolution on this issue.

9. As further commitment towards nuclear non-proliferation, Malaysia will again submit a draft resolution on the Follow-up to the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice on the Legality of the Threat or Use of Nuclear Weapons. Malaysia is submitting this draft resolution to remind us of our obligation to pursue in good faith and to bring to a conclusion negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament in all its aspects under strict and effective international control. Malaysia calls on all States to fulfil this obligation by commencing multilateral negotiations leading to an early conclusion of a nuclear weapons convention at the earliest possible date.

Mr. Chairman,

10. The need to address through the multilateral framework the threat posed by other weapons of mass destruction is equally as important to that posed by nuclear weapons. Malaysia strongly supports the universal implementation of and adherence to both the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) as well as the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC). In this regard, Malaysia continues to strengthen our existing domestic laws, as well as enact new legislation to deal with the developments in the area surrounding the BWC. In 2007, the Malaysian Parliament passed the Bio-Safety Act 2007 and the Pathology Laboratory Act 2007. The Strategic Goods Bill, Export Control Bill and the Biological Weapons Bill would be tabled next year. These new legislations would strengthen national security and oversight measures on the implementation of the BWC, which would match Malaysia's undertakings in implementing the CWC. Malaysia's Chemical Weapons Convention Act entered into force on 1 September 2006.

Mr. Chairman,

11. Malaysia has put in place adequate and stringent laws, administrative procedures and regulations for the effective control over the production of small arms and light weapons as well as over the exports, imports, transits and re-transfer of such weapons, in order to prevent illegal manufacture and illicit trafficking or their illegal diversion to unauthorized use.

12. Malaysia strongly supports international and humanitarian efforts to ban anti-personnel mines. It is well known that anti-personnel mines cause excessive injury or have indiscriminate effects, especially on civilians. On our part, Malaysia has completed the destruction of its stockpile of anti-personnel mines on 23 January 2001 making it the first anti-personnel mine-free country in Asia. Malaysia calls on other countries to follow suit, particularly those in the Southeast Asian region, in becoming party to the Ottawa Convention.

13. Malaysia also aligns itself with the objective of achieving the total elimination of cluster munitions which also cause excessive injury or have indiscriminate effects, especially on civilians, and which cause massive destruction of property.

14. Let me conclude, Mr. Chairman, by reaffirming Malaysia's commitment for general and complete disarmament. My delegation remains ready to work with you and other Member States towards achieving a positive and successful outcome of this session of the First Committee.

Thank you.