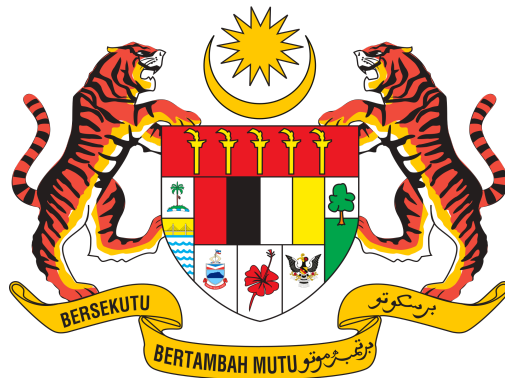


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STATEMENT BY

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**79TH SESSION OF THE
UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY
GENERAL DEBATE**

**“LEAVING NO ONE BEHIND: ACTING TOGETHER
FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF PEACE,
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND HUMAN
DIGNITY FOR PRESENT AND FUTURE
GENERATION”**

**UNITED NATIONS HEADQUARTERS
28 SEPTEMBER 2024, NEW YORK**

1. Excellency President Mr. Philemon Yang, thank you for this opportunity to address the 79th session of the General Assembly.
2. Representing Malaysia, I stand before you today, Mr. President, reiterating our commitment to peace, in line with the values enshrined in our esteemed Charter.
3. 79 years it has been since the founding of the United Nations.
4. From the dust of the Second World War, we emerged, many of us as new nation-states, with a shared goal to build a safer world.
5. Yet, for many of us, it is not a safer world than it was 79 years ago. For many, it has only become a deadlier world.
6. It has become a world in which war can be waged remotely and with impunity. A world in which a drone strike can fatally interrupt a lesson in a school, a surgery in a hospital, or a convoy delivering humanitarian aid.
7. We have laws against these practices, yet our calls for peace are repeatedly ignored and vetoed away.

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8. In other words, it is a world in which the mighty continue to silence the meek, with far greater weapons than before.
9. Nowhere does this ring truer, of course, than in Gaza.
10. We stand at a critical juncture in world history, on the failure of global governance to address the genocide of Palestinians.
11. And it has echoed across the world, on the abysmal response by world leaders to end these horrendous crimes.
12. Yet, there are also many of us who have pursued justice for the people of Gaza. For almost one year now, we have raised our voices in protest and sought to establish a ceasefire.
13. Again and again, our voices have been shot down in the Security Council, through the power of veto.
14. It is clear: the mechanisms of the Security Council have been abused to enable mass atrocities.

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15. Our failure to establish a ceasefire is no longer justifiable. We have run out of excuses.
16. It is time to address the problem. The veto should not be exercised at will. There must be exceptions in cases of crimes against humanity and attacks on civilian infrastructure.
17. We must commit ourselves towards a reformed United Nations. Justice begins with ending impunity and ensuring accountability.
18. For this to be realised, the undemocratic veto must be limited, or abolished altogether.
19. The humiliating paralysis of the Security Council must be corrected through the empowerment of this General Assembly, where the voices of the majority prevail.
20. Understand this: Our willingness to reform is a matter of life and death for countless innocent people. There are children dying between missile strikes, and between the words that we speak today.

Mr. President,

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21. The theme of this General Assembly session is “Leaving No One Behind”. In the spirit of this effort, it fills us with hope to see the State of Palestine seated among us today.
22. Malaysia lauds the 143 Member States for their support in extending the UN’s principle of equality among nations to the State of Palestine this year. And we strongly urge for the remaining minority to join the majority.
23. It is time to realise Palestine’s right to Statehood and full membership in this Assembly.
24. It is only through the elevation of dialogue and diplomacy that we can seek a long-lasting solution. Not through collective punishment, not through man-made famine, and not through impunity and disregard for international law.
25. Indeed, the elevation of dialogue, and respect for international law, has been compromised in this Assembly for some time now.
26. Israel has violated every international law there is, including the Genocide Convention, Geneva Conventions, and core Human Rights Treaties.

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27. Just months ago, the world witnessed Israel's mockery and utter disrespect of the United Nations in this very hall, with the insolent shredding of the UN Charter.
28. Israel's actions, with each passing day, raise our doubts as to whether it actually believes in the UN system, or values its membership in this organisation.
29. Its illegal occupation has entrenched a system of apartheid, and discrimination against Palestinians.
30. The Israeli regime has itself declared its intent to wipe out an entire population. This is, without question, a genocide.
31. The United Nations must not remain idle. We must urgently utilise the existing processes founded by this General Assembly, along with mechanisms developed by the Human Rights Council.
32. Malaysia calls on the international community to reinstitute the United Nations Special Committee Against Apartheid.
33. Furthermore, Malaysia demands that the Security Council invoke the powers under Chapter 7 of the

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UN Charter, and impose an immediate arms embargo against Israel.

34. Therefore, our task is threefold.

a. One: we must limit, or abolish, the veto.

b. Two: we must continue to empower the voices of the oppressed within this General Assembly.

c. And three: we must halt the flow of weapons to rogue states who have proven, a hundred times over, their willingness to commit crimes against humanity.

35. Although the powerful few may behave as though might is right, let there be no question that in the United Nations, the voice of the majority will not go ignored.

36. Indeed, we must empower smaller countries to meet the challenges of our time.

37. The international landscape is in flux, Mr. President.

38. Superpower rivalries. Global economic uncertainties. Climate change. Unequal development, and the many misfortunes that come with it.

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39. Countries situated in Southeast Asia are not exempt from these worries.
40. Yet through the decades, we have not only endured, but overcome, many of our shared hurdles together. We have achieved this together the ASEAN way.
41. Through ASEAN, we have propelled ourselves forward within the international architecture by bolstering peace, security, economy, and regional identity.
42. Yet, the years ahead will profoundly test us. ASEAN resilience, ASEAN shared norms and identity, and ASEAN processes and mechanisms.
43. Malaysia stands ready to assume the Chairmanship of ASEAN in 2025. And we are fully cognizant of reasserting ASEAN, in the driver's seat of the Asia Pacific region.
44. Our Chairmanship will focus on the region's drive for future-readiness. We will emphasise reinforcement of global aspirations; inclusive and people-driven policies; and future-oriented mechanisms.

45. We will aim to fortify ASEAN centrality, amid the emergence of multilateral pacts affecting the region. This is a key step to prevent the region from becoming entrapped in unnecessary geopolitical rivalry, or possible escalation.
46. ASEAN centrality must also involve managing the most critical issue of the South China Sea.
47. This body of water, rich in resources and carrying vital shipping lanes, has become a flashpoint of rising geopolitical tensions.
48. Escalation of rhetoric is a dangerous path to follow. We must not allow the situation to become dominated by growing distrust. This benefits no one. It only further undermines security, and destabilises global trade.
49. We must collectively pursue a different vision of the South China Sea: a future in which this region is a zone of peace, stability, and cooperation.
50. We must adopt a collaborative approach, embedded in diplomacy and dialogue.
51. Thus, I call upon all countries to abide by the UNCLOS in the conduct of maritime governance. We must prioritise peaceful coexistence.

52. This is also one of the many reasons that the member states will continue to work together, with regards to Myanmar. We will push for stronger humanitarian assistance, and adherence to the ASEAN Five-Point Consensus, to seek solutions.

53. We will do it as one. The diversity of our region, far from being an obstacle, is symbolic of our power to build bridges.

54. It goes without saying, Mr. President, that our stewardship of ASEAN will therefore emphasise continuous dialogue with our partners, as well as the adaptability needed to engage with different challenges and stakeholders.

55. Malaysia will strive to realise our common desire, and collective will, to live in a region of lasting peace, security and stability; sustained economic growth; social progress, and ultimately, shared prosperity.

56. “Shared prosperity”. This is the ghost of geopolitics – often spoken about, but never seen.

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57. The countries of the Global South have continued to be marginalised, and remain under-represented on many fronts: global socioeconomic development, climate mitigation efforts, education, health, and infrastructure development.
58. International mechanisms fail to adapt to current realities, often isolating and penalising developing countries, placing the burden of environmental guilt onto them, while disregarding our very real needs.
59. The lack of infrastructure, technology, and resources has prevented developing countries from fully engaging in international systems and aspirations.
60. One of the primary challenges is equitable access to financing for development.
61. Innovative and new models of financing for development, that drive sustainability, conservation, climate action, and achievement of SDGs, should be part of new multilateral solutions.
62. The climate crisis may be the most pressing challenge of our time. It is no longer a distant threat, it has flooded our doorsteps. It transcends borders by disrupting economies, and displacing entire communities.

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63. The scientific data has spoken. We are witnessing unprecedented levels of warming, extreme weather, and devastating impacts of rising sea levels.
64. National efforts alone will not suffice. The climate crisis requires global solutions, in the form of climate financing, technology transfer, and capacity building.
65. We must continue to push for a just and equitable approach in meeting the development needs of the Global South.
66. At the same time, Malaysia advocates the importance of Global South Unity.
67. We have a broader vision of promoting peace, development, and a stable multipolar order, through the empowerment of the voices of the south.
68. The countries of the Global South hold massive potential to further the pursuit of peace and justice around the world. Through solidarity among developing nations, and through mutual support and understanding.

69. This is fundamental to ensure fair and equitable progress for all. The Global South demands your attention. We must not leave anyone behind.
70. Unfortunately, global trends are pointing in the opposite direction.
71. Around the world, we are witnessing an upsurge in hate speech and violence towards minorities. The past few years have been shadowed by the rise of Islamophobia in particular.
72. We are appalled by the alarming trend of hatred, intolerance, and acts of violence against Muslims.
73. This cannot continue. In the era of globalisation, there is room for everyone to coexist. And it is our job, under the banner of a united world, to ensure that peace will prevail.
74. We must take action now. Malaysia urges for the prompt appointment of the UN Special Envoy to Combat Islamophobia.
75. We stand ready to support any efforts undertaken by the UN, towards nurturing dialogue between communities, that will promote worldwide acceptance and understanding.

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76. While Islamophobia is a threat to Muslims, a broader issue of hatred against the followers of any religion will undermine the universal values of justice and peace that we all vowed to protect.

Mr. President,

77. We stand on the eve of eighty years of the United Nations. We have achieved wonders together. Ours is a story of the modern successes of humankind.

78. Together, we have delivered food to the starving. We have eradicated diseases. We took decisive action against apartheid in the 20th century, and we must do it again now.

79. Let our commitment to justice never fail, no matter how formidable the task.

80. Let there be no doubt: the question of Gaza is a direct test of the capability of the United Nations. Let this 76-year-old issue not age into a century of our failure to uphold justice.

81. We strongly call for an end to the occupation, and for the Israeli regime to comply with the decision of the International Court of Justice.

Mr. President,

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82. Let our dreams of a free Palestine live beyond today, and beyond the words that we say.

Thank you.