

PM: UN remains last hope of Palestinians

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monised and sidelined, when we all know that the second "intifada" was precipitated by the provocation of Sharon.

The United Nations, notably the Security Council, remains the last hope for the Palestinian people. They look to the United Nations as the champion of the oppressed and guarantor of their rights as a people.

Malaysia strongly believes in the value of the Security Council becoming fully engaged in the effort, along with others who are prepared to do so, to stop the violence, and to join in the search for a lasting peace between the Arabs and the Israelis.

The quartet's road map and the Arab peace initiative can form the basis. The

council must help to give substance to the vision of a Pales-tinian state contained in Security Council Resolution 1397. If the Security Council of the United Nations cannot intervene at this critical time, when — one may ask — will it be allowed to fulfil its responsibility in this critical matter?

I suggest that the United Nations can and must intervene effectively by establishing a UN mission or authorising an international presence to monitor the situation, ease the tension and maintain peace and security on the ground.

This is the way to end the bloodshed and bring about a modicum of calm to a situation steeped in mistrust and antipathy.

The United Nations must persevere and not give up. We do not wish to see the

credibility and prestige of the Security Council further undermined.

I also believe that the time is ripe for all caring, ordinary people of the world to do their part for Palestine. Repeating what I had already said before in another forum, there is now an urgent need for everyone to manifest solidarity with Palestine by starting a global, people-based campaign in support of the continuing struggle of the Palestinian people and their elected leadership.

Such a global campaign had been successfully carried out before against apartheid in South Africa. It led finally to the freeing of Nelson Mandela from incarceration and the liberation of the coloured people of South Africa from the racist regime of apartheid.

I think this is a challenge awaiting a response from our civil society within NAM.

There is need for a movement to champion, in a more focused and cohesive way, and in the name of justice, the cause of the Palestinian people.

I am certain that during its short meeting here today, the NAM ministerial committee on Palestine will consider the appropriate strategies and approaches, as well as concrete and practical measures that could be taken under its mandate, or by NAM as a whole.

I trust the committee will be able to arrive at a quick consensus so as to ensure equally quick follow-up action. I wish all delegates a fruitful deliberation on this very important issue. I also wish all of you a very pleasant stay in Malaysia.