

**Malaysia Urge Greater Emphasis, Focus On Protection Of Civilians In Conflict Areas**  
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KUALA LUMPUR, Feb 13 (Bernama) -- Malaysia today urged greater emphasis and focus on reporting and monitoring the protection of civilians, particularly in Palestine and Syria.

Malaysia's permanent representative to the United Nations (UN) Datuk Hussein Haniff said the reporting and monitoring must be based on established benchmark and key performance indicators which could be reported to the Security Council on a regular basis.

Referring to the situation in Palestine, Hussein said it was amongst the worst attacks on innocent civilians by Israel which is proven to have violated Article 4 of the Geneva Convention and the humanitarian as well as human rights laws.

"It has been reported that generally 84 per cent of casualties from the use of explosive weapons in populated areas were civilians," he said in his speech at the Debate on Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict at the United Nations Security Council in New York, yesterday.

His speech text was made available to Bernama here Wednesday.

Hussein said Malaysia also continues to be concerned with the loss of civilians in the 23-month-old conflict in Syria which has so far claimed nearly 70,000 lives.

"Malaysia condemns indiscriminate attacks by the parties concerned on civilian population centres, knowing that these attacks would result in civilian casualties," he said.

On behalf of Malaysia, Hussein urged the parties involved to adhere to the spirit of the Joint Communique of the Action Group for Syria in Geneva on June 30, 2012.

The envoy also said Malaysia concurs that the provision of civilian protection mandates by the Security Council to peacekeeping operations was vital in curbing violence inflicted against civilians.

He said mission leaders should ensure that their missions, in particular those with a civilian-protection mandate, conduct their task without prejudice to that responsibility.

Hussein said Malaysia has been contributing to many UN peacekeeping operations since 1960 such UN Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), UN Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO), UN Mission in the Republic of South Sudan (UNMISS) and UN Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID).

The envoy also stressed that the world cannot turn a blind eye in the issue of protecting civilians in conflict affected area.

"While we deplore the killing of civilians, this Council should ask if we have done enough to protect civilians because the world would judge what have we done and what we did not do to protect innocent civilians," he said.

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