

# **General Debate Of The 77th Session Of The United Nations General Assembly**

By : YAB DATO' SRI ISMAIL SABRI YAAKOB

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## **TEXT OF SPEECH YAB DATO' SRI ISMAIL SABRI BIN YAAKOB PRIME MINISTER**

### **AT THE GENERAL DEBATE OF THE 77TH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

**23 SEPTEMBER 2022 | FRIDAY | 4.00 PM  
NEW YORK**

Assalamualaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakatuh,  
Greetings to the World Family,

1. First of all, I would like to congratulate Your Excellency on your election as the President of the 77th Session of the United Nations General Assembly. I am confident that under the leadership of Your Excellency, this session will be conducted with efficiency and effectiveness. I would also like to express my appreciation to the previous President, His Excellency

Abdulla Shahid, for his excellent leadership at the 76th Session, in the face of various constraints and challenges.

2. Malaysia welcomes the theme chosen for this year's session of the UN General Assembly, which is "A Watershed Moment: Transformative Solutions to Interlocking Challenges". We believe this theme is most apt for the situation that we are going through together.

Mr President,

3. At the last General Assembly, we heard a high level of commitment and pledge to work together. That has given hope to the world. Numerous statements were issued, all giving hope, including for me, that the spirit of a World Family will be able to put aside the differences that exist among us.

4. That commitment enables us to rise from the pandemic and together overcome the challenges that we face. Even so, this spirit of optimism is fading. I am concerned by the challenges that remain unaddressed, and, in fact, are even worsening. Many challenges remain unresolved.

5. A major lesson the COVID-19 pandemic taught us is that we cannot run away from every challenge that confronts us. Being selfish and not caring

about the impact on others will only generate mistrust in international cooperation.

## **International Monetary and Financial System**

6. In an interconnected world, the policies and decisions of some countries can affect other nations. For example, in tackling inflation that the world is suffering from, the monetary policy and determining of interest rates by one country also has an impact on other countries.

7. This is where cooperation and coordination among countries need to be stepped up, so as to achieve the goal of a more just economic wellbeing for all.

8. In an international financial and monetary structure that is still dominated by a few major powers, as well as during the world economic recovery, domestic monetary decisions have to be adjusted by considering the reality and needs of developing countries.

9. In this connection, Malaysia urges the UN Member States to establish an International Monetary Cooperation Mechanism to build a more effective and just system that is able to balance the needs of global development.

## Global Conflicts

Mr President,

10. Peace and stability are crucial in overcoming every major challenge of today; whether it is the climate change crisis, global poverty or the lasting effects of the pandemic. No matter how great our plans may be, they will not measure up to the destruction and waste that come with modern warfare. This is the truth that we should not forget.

11. Conflicts will only result in negative effects for the whole world. It is due to conflicts that we are now facing various problems such as lack of nutrients and food resources.

12. In facing this, Malaysia calls on all countries to emphasise the issue of food security to guarantee sufficient food resources for all.

Mr President,

13. The UN Charter and international laws are there to promote the peaceful settlement of disputes between countries. The charter and the laws set the limits of a country in pursuing its own interests. Based on that

principle, Malaysia opposes violations of international laws, including the principle of sovereignty and territorial integrity of any nation.

14. When a conflict erupts, all parties hold the responsibility of easing tension and giving priority to the safety and lives of civilians. At the same time, the conflicting parties need to return to the negotiating table to stop the conflict as soon as possible.

15. Malaysia does not agree with the isolation of a country from international organisations. Such a measure is against the principle of multilateralism and hinders dialogue.

### **The Situation in Ukraine**

16. The price to be paid for a war is high. This is proven by the situation experienced by Ukraine. The effects are felt not only by the people and the country but also by the world. This conflict has threatened peace, global security and the economy, and undermined food security.

17. Malaysia welcomes the creation of the sea route corridor that allows for the shipment of grain from Ukraine. This is a positive step in addressing the food security problem.

18. In this regard, Malaysia would like to reiterate its insistence that all countries, especially the major powers, refrain from creating isolation blocs that will only push the world towards a cold war. The world needs to realise that peace can only be achieved through dialogue and negotiation.

### **Situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPT)**

19. As for the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPT), Malaysia is disappointed with the brutal occupation by Israel that has been going on for a long time. The Palestinian people continue to live under the shackles of Israel's discriminatory policies. Illegal settlements are becoming more widespread. This is against international law, including Security Council Resolution 2334. The most basic rights of the Palestinian people continue to be denied.

20. Therefore, Malaysia is of the view that the major powers need to be honest in resolving the issue of cruelty faced by the Palestinian people.

21. That firm stand should be taken by the UN, to ensure that the crisis that has been going on in Palestine for a long time can be resolved quickly.

22. What is happening today is that most countries are so quick to act in the case of Ukraine. Malaysia wants the same action to be taken to resolve the issue of Palestine. Israel needs to stop being an Apartheid entity!

### **Living together in a culture of peace**

23. Although we are still threatened by conflicts between countries, we cannot ignore the other crises around the world. The pillar of strength for a conflict-free world is living together in a culture of peace. Malaysia, as a multi-racial, multi-cultural and multi-religious country, always supports and strives for the concept of peaceful co-existence between various races, beliefs and cultures.

### **The situation in Myanmar**

Mr President,

24. In the Southeast Asian region, Malaysia has played an important role in conflict resolution. For example, Malaysia has been involved in the peace process between the Philippine Government and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) since 2001. In addition, Malaysia has always been proactive in helping to resolve various regional crises and conflicts.

25. However, Malaysia is disappointed with the situation in Myanmar since the coup in February 2021. It is very saddening when the Security Council does not take any serious action in dealing with this situation. Some even see the Security Council as having washed its hands off and handing the matter over to ASEAN.

26. Malaysia is disappointed that there is no meaningful progress in the implementation of the ASEAN 'Five Point Consensus' especially by the Myanmar junta. In its current form, the ASEAN 'Five Point Consensus' cannot continue any longer. Therefore, this consensus needs to be given a new lease of life and refined based on a clearer framework, timeframe and end goal. Indeed, what is more important is that the aspirations of the people of Myanmar must be fulfilled.

27. The political crisis in Myanmar has also worsened the situation of millions of Myanmar refugees, including the Rohingya refugees. Although Malaysia is not a signatory to the 1951 Convention on the Status of Refugees and the 1967 Protocol, Malaysia, on humanitarian grounds, accepted nearly 200,000 Rohingya refugees.

28. Therefore, it is the responsibility of all countries, including the countries participating in the convention, to take in more refugees to be resettled in their respective countries. At the same time, Malaysia strongly emphasises the importance of the world addressing the root cause of the

Rohingya crisis. I believe that this issue will not be resolved as long as the crisis in the country continues.

## **Reform of the United Nations**

Mr President,

29. The conflicts and crises that occur in the world, including in Ukraine, Palestine and Myanmar, cannot be resolved due to the debility of the global governance system and the UN.

30. The biggest problem in the UN is the Security Council. The power of veto is often misused to favour the world powers that have it. It is not democratic and violates the principles of human rights. This makes it impossible for conflicts to be resolved by any of the permanent members of the Council.

31. In line with the principle of one country one vote, now is the time to abolish the veto power. As an organisation that brings the spirit and symbol of democracy to the world, the UN needs to return to its foundation.

## **Climate Action**

Mr President,

32. Climate change is a universal problem that affects us all. Last year alone, Malaysia was struck by the most serious floods in its history, resulting in losses estimated at USD1.4 billion (RM6.1 billion).

33. Many lives were lost and almost 100,000 people had to be moved to temporary evacuation centres. This situation happens not only in Malaysia but in several other countries as well. Clearly, mitigation and adaptation measures need to continue.

34. The fact remains that developed countries must bear the responsibility of increasing aid for developing countries by fulfilling their commitment to providing a yearly allocation of USD100 billion unconditionally. This will help realise actions taken against climate change that should have been implemented since 2020.

## **Sustainable Development**

Mr President,

35. COVID-19 has slowed our efforts in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). I stand here on behalf of developing countries in asserting that the implementation and success of a greener and more sustainable socio-economic development will be achieved with fair and inclusive response to that pledge.

36. The fact is that new technology is an incentive for nations to switch to renewable energy. However, this new technology must first be affordable for developing countries.

37. In this regard, Malaysia is committed to carrying out its responsibilities and roles to ensure environmental conservation and sustainability. In this context, various measures have been implemented by Malaysia. For example:

(i) In the oil palm industry, Malaysia has introduced the Malaysian Sustainable Palm Oil (MSPO) standard to meet requirements for the purpose of sustainable development;

(ii) Malaysia is committed to reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 45 per cent based on the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) by 2030. In this regard, Malaysia has set a target of achieving 31 per cent renewable energy use by

2025. Malaysia is also committed to achieving its goal of net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050.

(iii) The National Energy Policy 2022-2040 was implemented in Malaysia on September 19, 2022, to build macro-economic resilience and energy supply security;

(iv) Malaysia has agreed to establish a National SDG Centre to intensify SDG programmes and monitor their progress.

38. As one of only 17 bio-diverse countries in the world, Malaysia is aware of its responsibility to maintain and preserve its natural resources for future generations. During the Earth Summit in 1992, Malaysia pledged to maintain at least 50 per cent of its land mass under forest and tree cover.

39. Three decades on, Malaysia today still has 54 per cent of forested areas in the entire country. This percentage will increase following ongoing aggressive reforestation measures.

40. Not only Malaysia, but the world also needs to be sensitive to efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals 2030. In this regard, Malaysia welcomes the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) on Sustainable Development next year. This effort is timely because it gives us the

opportunity to look back at what has been achieved and what can be improved for the benefit of the World Family.

Mr President,

41. We all share the same concerns on all the issues I have raised.

42. Malaysia remains optimistic. I call on Member States to play their respective roles in overcoming the challenges we face. However, we have to do it together as one big family – the World Family.

43. “United we stand, divided we fall”, and as long as we are united and strong together in shouldering this burden, I am sure we will succeed.

44. Today, I invite the international community to work together by practising the spirit of the World Family in facing global challenges.

With Bismillahirrahmaanirrahim,

Mr President,

Malaysia will continue to give its full commitment.

Thank you.

Wabillahi Taufik Wal Hidayah

Wassalamualaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakatuh.

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