

## **YAB Prime Minister's Address on the Situation in Palestine**

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Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim

Assalamualaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakatuh and Peace Be Upon You.

1. Alhamdulillah, all praises be to Allah SWT by whose grace and blessing have enabled us to celebrate Eidul Fitr this year peacefully together despite the new norms and challenges brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic.

2. Nevertheless, we in Malaysia feel very sad and devastated with the plight of our brothers and sisters in Palestine. They continue to live a very difficult, tough life. Their lands in Jerusalem and the West Bank continue to be occupied for so long, with all forms of oppression and violence by the Israeli Zionist regime.

3. The Palestinians in Gaza continue to be bombarded with heinous incursion and attacks by the Zionist regime while they are fasting and celebrating Eidul Fitr. Indeed, this is a very inhumane and hostile act. Buildings that serves as their homes were bombed. Many Palestinians have lost their lives and been injured. Women and children are no exception.

4. As widely known, the Zionist regime has once again mounted atrocious aggressions, incursions and violent attacks on the Palestinians, starting with the attacks on the Al-Aqsa Mosque, the third Muslim holy site, since May 7, 2021, followed by military airstrikes on the Gaza Strip since May 10, 2021.

5. Malaysia has been closely following the latest developments taking place against our brothers and sisters in Palestine, especially the inhumane and hostile aggressions by the regime in the Gaza Strip and atrocities committed against the Palestinians in the West Bank.

6. To date, more than 119 Palestinians have been reportedly killed while hundreds more injured as a result of the Zionist regime's escalation of violence. These brutal and vicious attacks are very disturbing to Muslims all over the world especially since they were mounted not only in the holy month of Ramadan but continues till the month of Syawal where Muslims around the world are celebrating Eid.

7. Indeed, these heinous acts by the Israeli military, in particular the ruthless bombing, shelling and destruction of properties, without any compassion and mercy for the Palestinians, must be strongly condemned by the rest of the world.

8. Malaysia has issued a statement through our Minister of Foreign Affairs in condemning Israel's disproportionate and atrocious aggression on May 8, 2021. I, myself, have issued a statement in relation to this dire situation on May 11, 2021.

9. Israel's escalation of violence and widespread bombardment on Palestine is an act that violates international law, human rights law, international humanitarian law, the Charter of the United Nations (UN) and is a war crime under the 1949 Fourth Geneva Convention.

10. I believe that peace-loving Malaysians remain firm to the principle that there are no credible reasons for any disproportionate, arbitrary and excessive use of force on Palestine, and strongly reject Israel's terror acts against the Palestinian people.

11. In our show of undivided support and solidarity for Palestine, we must stand firm together in voicing out Malaysia's stance on Israel's inhumane actions against the Palestinians.

12. Today, I had a discussion over the phone with His Excellency Joko Widodo, President of the Republic of Indonesia, regarding the current situation in Palestine. In our conversation, President Joko Widodo and I agree that the regime's despicable actions should cease immediately. We were of similar views that the international community, especially the United Nations (UN) Security Council, should act swiftly to cease all forms of violence committed by Israel, and save the lives of Palestinians.

13. In this regard, Malaysia will take the lead, together with Indonesia and Brunei, in issuing a joint statement to strongly condemn Israel's oppressive attacks on the Palestinians.

14. The Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) will hold a virtual Emergency Meeting of the OIC Executive Committee at the foreign ministers' level to discuss the latest developments in Palestine that is expected to take place on May 16, 2021. The Malaysian Government will be represented by the Minister of Foreign Affairs who will reiterate Malaysia's firm stance on the situation in Palestine.

15. Like the rest of Malaysians, I am saddened and disappointed by the inability of the international community, especially, the UN Security Council, to immediately halt Israel's escalation of violence against the Palestinians. To date, the UN Security Council has not issued any statement on the current situation in Palestine due to opposition from the United States of America. Nevertheless, Malaysia will continue with our efforts in urging the international community, especially the UN Security Council, to act swiftly in compelling Israel to stop its attacks on the Palestinians.

16. I would like to reaffirm the Malaysian Government's principled stand in consistently giving strong support to Palestine and the struggles of its people whether in terms of politics, economy, and moral. The best solution to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict can only be reached through negotiations in ensuring lasting regional peace, security and stability.

17. Malaysia is all for a fair and equitable settlement through the Two-State Solution based on the pre-1967 borders, with Jerusalem as the capital of Palestine as the only viable solution to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict.

18. Malaysia will continue to support all efforts for a just and lasting solution, in particular, through negotiations involving all the relevant parties based on international laws and the relevant UN resolutions.

19. Malaysia will continue to make bilateral contributions towards Palestine in addition to making contributions to other international bodies.

20. Through the Akaun Amanah Kemanusiaan Rakyat Palestin (AAKRP) or Humanitarian Trust Fund for People of Palestine supervised by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Malaysia has contributed USD10,000 to the Al-Aqsa Mosque in 2020. The contribution has been channelled to the Jordanian Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs.

21. In fighting the COVID-19 pandemic, the Malaysian Government has provided assistance to the Palestinians in the form of medical products including, one million face masks, 500 face shields and 500,000 rubber gloves. The products were sent via a special chartered plane to Amman, Jordan on May 10, 2020.

22. Last year, Malaysia has also contributed USD120,000 to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency in the Near East (UNRWA) to cover the cost for its operations and programs for the year 2020. Malaysia has been consistently providing strong support and contributions to UNRWA since 1978. Since 2015, Malaysia has contributed USD600,000 to UNRWA.

23. I would like to thank the non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in Malaysia and Malaysians on the whole who have always been supportive of the Palestinian people. I hope you will continue making contributions for the Palestinians through legitimate charitable funds created for this purpose. All your efforts and contributions are very meaningful for them.

24. Let us all pray for the well-being of Palestinians who are now being victimised and oppressed by the Zionist regime. May the Palestinians be protected from cruelty of this tyrannical regime and Israel's occupation of Palestine land will soon end.

Wabillahi Taufik Walhidayah Wassalamualaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakatuh.

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