

Statement by Malaysia

General Statement, 10th Regular Session of the HRC
Wednesday, 4 March 2009

Mr. President,
Madam High Commissioner,
Distinguished Delegates,

1. A few months ago, we celebrated the 60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Over the years much has been achieved in the protection and promotion of human rights, but much more remains to be done.
2. The international community has made tremendous strides in trying to forge consensus on human rights. Finding consensus on common core values has not been an easy task, as it is subjected to different priorities and interpretation both between and within member states. The realities and challenges of our times as well as our diversity, different civilizations, cultures and levels of development have made all our efforts to promote and protect human rights even more significant.
3. We are encouraged to note that the Human Rights Council, since its inception, has strived hard to contribute to the effort of implementing human rights agenda in a non-selective, impartial and universal manner. This Council, through the establishment of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) has managed to provide a forum in which members could engage constructively, enhance dialogue and cooperation and to broaden understanding on the basis of mutual respect.
4. It is important to note that the review process clearly demonstrates that all States face challenges in the implementation of their obligations and commitments in the human rights area.
5. As for Malaysia, the recent review process has provided us the avenue to assess and reflect on our own achievements and shortcomings in the promotion and protection of human rights. We have also benefited from the many

constructive suggestions and recommendations raised during the review. These, to us are positive recognition and acknowledgement of our approach to the protection and promotion of human rights.

Mr. President,

6. We must also continue to be vigilant of major crises and egregious human rights violations taking place around the world, some of which have been addressed by the Special Sessions of the Council. Perhaps it is timely for us to seriously address the means of how some of the decisions adopted at the Special Sessions can contribute truly to the protection and promotion of human rights. This includes the decisions of the four previous Special Sessions of the Council on the Occupied Palestinian Territories. We join all those who have called the Council to remain committed in ensuring respect for human rights in the Occupied Palestinian Territories.

Mr. President,

7. The current global economic and financial crisis cannot be ignored as it impacts negatively not only on economic, social and cultural rights but also on civil and political rights. The current crisis is reversing progress achieved in the reduction of poverty in many parts of the world and has impeded efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals.

8. No nations will be spared the painful effects of these global problems. The governments now have less resources for public expenditure meant for socio-economic development for the poor. The risk for social tension is growing. We are pleased with the convening of the recent Special Session of the Council to address this issue. We believe that the current financial and economic crisis, if left unresolved, will be tomorrow's humanitarian crisis. The international community must find a solution to this crisis urgently so as to ensure that governments' capacity to carry out their responsibilities in the realization of human rights would not be diminished.

Mr. President,

9. The indivisibility and progressive realization of the socio-economic, as well as political and civil rights in the UDHR should be upheld as they are inalienable for all of us. We continue to believe that human rights and development are, and ought to be, complementary as it is a key strategy for achieving the progressive realization of human rights. The right to development for the people of a nation as a whole should be viewed as no less important than individual liberties. Accordingly, we would like to see fair and balance treatment attached to all human rights components, including the right to development. Certainly, this Council has a role to play, inter alia, through promoting more dialogues and collaborations on this aspect, among states and between states and the Office of the High Commissioner of Human Rights.

10. In the recent years, we have witnessed the worrisome re-emergence and consolidation of racism, xenophobia, racial discrimination, and defamation of religions in various parts of the world. In this regard, the Durban Review Conference is of vital importance. All countries have the responsibility to make the Durban Review Conference a success.

11. In concluding Mr. President, we would like to reiterate our commitment to working constructively, through dialogues and cooperation, in promoting and protecting human rights throughout the world.

I thank you Mr. President.