



MALAYSIA

PERMANENT MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS



CANDIDATE
to the
UNITED NATIONS
SECURITY COUNCIL
for the term 2015-2016

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**STATEMENT BY
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PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF MALAYSIA
TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

**VESAK DAY CELEBRATION
AT THE UNITED NATIONS
NEW YORK, 13 MAY 2014**

**Mr. Chairman,
Reverend Monks,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

I would like to congratulate the President of the General Assembly H.E. John Ashe, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, H.E. Ban Ki-moon and H.E. Mr. Nassir Abdulaziz Al Nasser, High Representative for the Alliance of Civilisations for their statements on this auspicious occasion. I also wish to thank Ambassador Norachit Sinhaseni, Permanent Representative of Thailand and Chairman of the Vesak Day Celebration organizing committee and the committee members for hosting this year's Vesak celebration at the UN. Malaysia has been part of the organizing committee for the last three celebrations, and we truly believe that this annual celebration is significant and meaningful to the ongoing efforts of the United Nations in promoting understanding among people of different cultures, religions and civilizations.

Mr. Chairman,

2. There are many similar spiritual values that are cherished by Buddhism and other religions such as love, caring, compassion and so forth, that builds our moral framework and character from at the levels of citizens, community and nation. Vesak day is a celebration of joy, peace and forgiveness as people are seeking blessings for themselves and their loved ones and is celebrated by more than 500 million Buddhists around the world.

3. Malaysia comprises of people from different faiths and cultures. We have learnt to live together in peace and harmony for more than five decades by understanding and respecting each other's values, practices, and beliefs. With approximately 19.2 percent of Malaysians being Buddhists, we join fellow Malaysians of the Buddhism faith in celebrating Vesak day every year, which has been declared a public holiday in Malaysia since 1962. It is a manifestation of Malaysia's long history of close interaction between

peoples of different faiths and cultures. Malaysia takes pride in its diversity, as it brings strength to the nation as a whole in the spirit of 1 Malaysia.

4. One of the key elements in nurturing national unity has been the moderate approach, adopted by the Malaysian government and embraced by its people in addressing with wide ranging issues, including enhancing interfaith and intercultural relations. Our success as a progressive nation today is due primarily to the willingness of the Malaysian people, from all religions and cultures, to work towards a common goal in achieving peace, harmony and prosperity. In this regard, I wish to take this opportunity to call on the international community to embrace the moderation approach, in pursuit of global peace and harmony. In this endeavor, we urge all parties to reject and drown the voices of extremism and move forward towards promoting a culture of peace to resolve differences. The Prime Minister of Malaysia, Honourable Dato' Sri Mohd Najib Razak during his speech in conjunction with the Vesak celebration in Malaysia had stressed the importance of people to not only tolerate one another, but also to set aside their differences and celebrate diversity. Whatever faith one may follow, it is vital to find the goodness of the religion because positive attitudes and good teachings could form good values for the nation.

Mr. Chairman,

5. Malaysia's call for a global movement of moderates is aimed towards promoting an everlasting global peace and harmony. We invite everyone present here today, to join this movement, in their own ways to promote moderation, at the international, regional, national and local levels. I would like to take this opportunity to wish everyone a Happy Vesak Day, and believe that due to the universality nature of the United Nations, the UN is best positioned to be the platform for finding common ground and mutual understanding among the countries, for the betterment of our future. Malaysia stands ready to support this endeavor.

I thank you.