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STATEMENT BY
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OF THE PERMANENT MISSION OF MALAYSIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS

ON AGENDA ITEM 80: UNITED NATIONS PROGRAMME OF ASSISTANCE IN THE
TEACHING, STUDY, DISSEMINATION AND WIDER APPRECIATION OF
INTERNATIONAL LAW
AT THE SIXTH COMMITTEE OF THE SIXTY-EIGHTH SESSION OF
THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY
NEW YORK, 17 OCTOBER 2013

Mr. Chairman,

Malaysia aligns itself with the statement made by Fiji on behalf of the Group of 77 and China as well as that by the Lao People's Democratic Republic on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). Malaysia takes this opportunity to thank the UN Secretary General for his report on the United Nations Programme of Assistance in the Teaching, Study, Dissemination and Wider Appreciation of International Law as contained in document A/68/521. We also wish to commend the Codification Division of the Office of Legal Affairs for their excellent efforts in implementing activities under the Programme of Assistance for the year 2013. Their dedication, professionalism and innovation in carrying out this responsibility have enabled the widest participation in activities and resources of the Programme even in the face of severe budget and logistical constraints.

Mr. Chairman,

2. When the General Assembly decided for the UN to actively play a role in the teaching, study and dissemination of international law, it was with the knowledge that strengthening the foundation of international law directly promoted peaceful relations between states. The Programme of Assistance has provided invaluable opportunities to developing countries and countries with emerging economies to reinforce their understanding of the principles and obligations of international law, both through training programmes and the provision of legal training materials and publications. All Member States agree that fortifying appreciation for the rule of law, as instilled through the Programme, contributes to the overall promotion of peace, economic development and enhanced human rights protections.

Mr. Chairman,

3. Malaysia appreciates the international law training opportunities provided under the Programme of Assistance. We welcome the successful convening of the International Law Fellowship Programme under which 20 fellowships were awarded this year. The high volume of applications to this prestigious fellowship programme every year is a testament to the quality of the teaching and interaction both with leading scholars and legal practitioners as well as with fellow peer participants.

4. There is also increasing demand for the Regional Courses in International Law which provide further training opportunities with a regional focus on contemporary legal issues. We are pleased to note that a regional course for Africa was successfully held in Addis Ababa in April this year and we recognize the role of the Government of Ethiopia as host. Malaysia also commends the countries which have agreed to host regional courses in Asia and Latin America and the Caribbean.

Mr. Chairman,

5. Given the enormous benefit attributed to the Programme of Assistance, Malaysia is concerned by the fact that the lack of sufficient funding threatens the continuity of its activities in the immediate future. We are disappointed with the cancellation of the Regional Course for the Asia-Pacific due to lack of funds. In addition, the Audiovisual Library (AVL), which provides access to a wealth of international law related materials via the Internet to countless users in both the developed and developing world, is also in danger of being discontinued if regular funding is not provided.

6. We recall that the General Assembly in Resolution 67/91 had requested for the UN Secretary General to allocate funding to the Programme in the regular budget to ensure its continued effectiveness and further development. In this regard, we believe that activities of the Programme in the 2014 - 2015 biennium should be supported by funding from the UN regular budget as mandated by the General Assembly. At the same time we encourage Member States to continue making voluntary contributions towards the unhindered implementation of the Programme.

7. In conclusion, we hope for the support of all concerned to ensure that assistance in international law training remains an integral aspect of the UN and that future generations of legal practitioners in all our countries continue to benefit from this excellent Programme.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.