MALAYSIA
PERMANENT MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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STATEMENT BY
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PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF MALAYSIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS
ON AGENDA ITEM 16: INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES
FOR DEVELOPMENT

AT THE SECOND COMMITTEE OF THE 68th SESSION OF THE
UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY
NEW YORK, 23 OCTOBER 2013

Mr. Chairman,

Malaysia wishes to align itself with the statements made by the distinguished representatives of Fiji, on behalf of G77 and China, and Brunei Darussalam, on behalf of ASEAN, under this agenda item. I also would like to thank the Secretary-General for the report presented under this agenda item.

2.   As highlighted in the Secretary General's report document A/68/65-E/2013/11, the ICT sector and the role of ICT in social and economic development have experienced tremendous growth since the convening of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS). More than a third of the world's population now uses the Internet. Mobile technology and services continue to be the key driver of the information society and the number of mobile subscriptions worldwide is expected to reach 6.8 billion by the end of 2013. Smartphones have transformed mobile telephones into multi-purpose devices. Broadband networks which have already pervasive in developed countries are being rapidly deployed in emerging markets. Governments and businesses increasingly use ICT applications to deliver public services and meet consumer needs while social networks, file sharing and micro blogging have had profound impacts on the ways people interact with one another, as citizens and as consumers.

3.   Malaysia recognizes the potential role of ICT in accelerating growth, eradicating poverty and promoting sustainable development, which would help accelerate the achievement of the MDGs that are still off-track. ICTs are critical enablers of economic development and investment, with consequential benefits for employment and social welfare. Many innovations have occurred which were not anticipated at the time of WSIS, including the growth of mobile Internet, social networking and cloud computing. In this regard, Malaysia welcomes the first 10-year review of WSIS outcomes (WSIS+10) which was held in February this year and the positive developments in the

global ICT sector as illustrated in the Secretary General's report. Allow me to share some of Malaysia's initiatives in integrating ICT with the development agenda.

Mr. Chairman,

4.   In recent years, the telecommunication and multimedia industry saw rapid growth and contributed to the development of technology and competitiveness in the national economy. Such rapid growth is expected to provide a strong fundamental in supporting the further growth of the ICT sector in Malaysia. From initiatives like the Multimedia Super Corridor (MSC), the National Broadband Initiative and Digital Malaysia, which were launched from 1996 to 2010, the Government has been continuously driving change and innovation to ensure that Malaysians would have a high standard of living and be competitively relevant on the global stage. One of the aims of MSC is to spearhead the development of the ICT industry in Malaysia, while the National Broadband Initiative implementation plan would enable Malaysians from all walks of life, in both urban and rural areas, to enjoy broadband services at affordable cost. *Indeed,* these existing initiatives are already expected to contribute USD 67 billion (RM220 billion) to Malaysia's Gross National Income (GNI) by 2020*.*

5.   In February this year, Malaysia under its Multimedia Development Corporation (MDeC) launched a new initiative called "ICT Development by Community for Community" (POKOK) under its Digital Malaysia programme. This initiative aims to improve the quality of life of the 2.4 million underprivileged Malaysian households by 2020. This initiative is a platform to match the B40 (bottom 40% of the community) grassroot issues and needs with contributions from non-governmental organisations and private sector to provide solutions via programmes, products and services as well as facilitate societal uplift targeted at the B40 group.

6.   Malaysia believes that ICT innovation in particular the broadband and ICT technologies could create digital dividends for the wider community. Through the National Key Economic Areas (NKEA) particularly on Content Communication and Infrastructure (CCI) initiated by the Government, Malaysia is determined to ensure that all Malaysians have access to communication facilities, be able to bridge the digital divide, have easy access to government services, and have the opportunity to improve their efficiency, productivity and business performance and drive the development of new technologies and applications. In fact, we are proud with our own success stories in connecting the people through broadband and Internet where our penetration rate from the mobile aspect is more than our population of 29.7 million.

7.   Mobile broadband access is now more affordable for consumers than fixed broadband. In Malaysia, for example, initiatives to reduce broadband access costs are an integral part of the country's National Broadband Initiative, under which, for instance, young people aged 21 to 30 have been able to apply for a rebate off selected smartphones. This initiative targets young people in the lower-income bracket and aims to reduce the price barrier for those who do not yet use smartphones. Another flagship endeavor under the Malaysian National Broadband Initiative is the 1 Million Netbooks

programme, under which 1 million computers are distributed to low-income groups to ensure that they have the opportunity to access the Internet and also to increase broadband usage throughout the country.

Mr. Chairman,

8.   At the international level, Malaysia has been an active international development partner, mainly through the Malaysian Technical Cooperation Programme (MTCP), which has been a modest, but meaningful contribution to South-South cooperation, providing technical and capacity development support in various sectors, including ICT related fields to over 141 developing countries since 1981. Malaysia will continue to strengthen its South-South cooperation programme, including sharing its ICT experience with fellow developing countries, in order to respond to new and emerging global and regional challenges, as well as the needs of developing countries, in particular the least developed countries.

9.   At the regional level, the Economic Transformation Programme and Digital Malaysia initiatives, that promotes the pervasive use of ICT in all aspects of the economy to connect communities globally and interacting in real time, has allowed Malaysia to play an active role in ASEAN in adapting its regulatory environment to a changing global economy. Malaysia will continue to support ASEAN efforts in jointly developing Information and Communications Technology principles to guide policymakers on issues like cross-border information flows, localization requirements, the role of regulatory bodies, the supply and cost of knowledge workers and enabling SMEs and entrepreneurs easier access to ICT products and services.

10.   To conclude, Mr. Chairman, Malaysia will continue to leverage on the capability of ICTs and innovation to help achieve tangible improvements in the living standards of the people, create high-value employment, broaden productivity gains and wealth accumulation and maintain sustainable growth as Malaysia moves forward to achieve a fully developed nation status by 2020.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman