



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**

**AT THE UNITED NATIONS ALLIANCE OF CIVILIZATIONS (UNAOC)
GROUP OF FRIENDS (GOF) MEETING
NEW YORK, 3 APRIL 2018**

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

At the outset, let me extend my sincere appreciation to the UN Alliance of Civilization (UNAOC) for its tireless efforts in convening today's important Group of Friends meeting. We join other Member States in our common endeavor to enhance the work of the Alliance and strengthened its global network of partnerships.

2. Malaysia is appreciative of the work undertaken by the UNAOC for the past year as highlighted by HE Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser, High Representative for the Alliance of Civilizations, in particular on initiatives in promoting tolerance, inter-faith, inter-cultural and inter-civilizational dialogues between all stakeholders at the UN and at the international arena.

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

3. The theme of this year's Forum "Preventing Violent Extremism and Sustaining Peace" is indeed pertinent. The identical resolutions on the "Review of the UN Peacebuilding Architecture" adopted at both UN Security Council (Resolution 2282) and General Assembly (Resolution 70/262) had recognized sustaining peace as a goal to be achieved, towards a comprehensive approach to build a common vision of a society that promotes stability, reduces poverty and focuses on conflict prevention.

4. Only by adopting a culture of inclusion can we hope to achieve this goal. What this means is that every individual must feel respected and that they are part of their community. Achieving this goal is not without its challenges. Only inclusive societies enable each member of the community to fully participate and contribute in all aspects of life, including decision making processes. A participative approach to decision-making and how the society is shaped, promotes a sense of ownership. This creates an environment conducive for living together in peace and harmony. Undoubtedly, this contributes to greater progress in development and success in nation-building.

5. A truly inclusive society transcends all forms of differences such as race, faith, culture and gender. It ensures equal opportunity. While sustaining peace may seem a formidable challenge, what it requires to succeed is for all nations to take concrete steps to instil and nurture positive values such as tolerance, acceptance, mutual understanding and moderation. These are important and universal pre-requisites for peace and harmony to flourish.

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

6. Malaysia joins other Member States in promoting initiatives which are aimed at strengthening social cohesion and grassroots-generated solutions, that are aligned with the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) Goal 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions. Promoting social cohesion is also investing in sustaining peace.

7. Education plays a critical role in achieving this goal. It provides the opportunities for individual to learn that diversity is not an obstacle but a source of strength that would enriches life. Such an approach in turn cultivates understanding and appreciation of other societies, cultures and religions. For the young, education provides the opportunity to inspire values of respect and appreciation of diversity. At the same time, education can empower those who are marginalised or excluded from participating in decision-making process.

8. Regrettably, we are witnessing the growing influence of extremists who seek to divide our communities. They breed hate and create disharmony through their extremist ideologies that serve their own agenda. We must not allow them to succeed.

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

9. Malaysia is confident that the strong, united and informed voices of the moderates will be able to denounce and challenge extremist ideologies in an effective, coordinated and credible way. Defeating extremism requires the concerted efforts of peoples and nations around the world and their perseverance to strengthen the multi-racial and multi-faith democracy.

10. This is where we believe that the UNAOC has and can continue to make a difference. Through focusing on its priority areas, particularly youth, media and education, it has created an avenue for moderate voices to come together and work out strategies to counter extremism and radicalization to preventing violent extremism.

11. Following the successful adoption of Resolution 72/129 entitled Moderation on 8 December 2017, we will continue to work with other Member States in applying moderation as an approach, that seeks to bridge differences, and address the various manifestations of extremism, including political and religious extremism.

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

12. Malaysia is convinced that the Global Movement of Moderates (GMM) can complement other like-minded initiatives such as the UNAOC that seeks to promote sustaining peace and the prevention of violent extremism. We are confident that moderation will serve as a platform and guideline in the conduct of international relations and foreign policy towards attaining global peace and harmony.

13. In conclusion, moderation is essential to sustain an inclusive and peaceful society. We firmly believe that it is an all-encompassing approach, not only in resolving differences and conflicts peacefully but also for ensuring sustainable and inclusive development, equitable growth, social harmony and mutual understanding within a country or region. It is a tool to diffuse tensions, negate radicalism and counter extremism.

14. Malaysia looks forward to enhance and bolster its engagement with the UNAOC and the Group of Friends in various areas of cooperation, strengthen existing partnerships and foster new partnerships to further the goals and initiatives of the Alliance, in our collective efforts to strengthen international peace and security.

Thank you.