



Permanent Mission of
Malaysia
to the United Nations

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**STATEMENT BY
THE RIGHT HONOURABLE WEE CHOO KEONG
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT OF MALAYSIA
ON
AGENDA ITEM 104: CRIME PREVENTION AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE
AND
AGENDA ITEM 105: INTERNATIONAL DRUG CONTROL
OF THE THIRD COMMITTEE
OF THE 64TH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY
NEW YORK, 8 OCTOBER 2009**

Mr. Chairman,

It is Malaysia's position that investment by countries in their basic crime prevention efforts brings about benefits that can extend from the local to the national, regional and even international levels. However, as we expand the scope of this investment, continued international co-operation in the forms of exchange of information, capacity-building, technology-transfer as well as confidence-building measures need to be enhanced to allow countries to gain trust and capability. This will also allow countries to better integrate their work in more practical and operational aspects.

2. In combating transnational crime, Malaysia believes that bilateral cooperation between countries on issues of similar concerns and interests remain an important and effective method. In this regard, the sharing of information, and also intelligence, needs to be done on a needs and reciprocal basis, within the limits of the domestic legislation and regulations of a particular country, and with respect to the sensitivity of that information. Through our experience, bilateral agency-to-agency contact remains the most effective way at sharing information. The challenge for all countries hence is to allow this information to be shared on a wider scale for practical uses. In this regard, legal mechanisms through conventions, treaties, regional arrangements, or bilateral agreements or memorandums of understanding may be required.

Mr. Chairman,

3. We are heartened to note the growing number of States that have ratified the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organised Crime, which currently stands at 149 countries. This is a positive movement towards our common goal of universal ratification and implementation of this instrument.

4. The issue of trafficking in persons has received much attention in recent sessions of the Assembly, especially with regard to discussions on a possible 'global plan of action'. Trafficking in persons is a blatant, and one of the most heinous forms of the abuse of human rights and the dignity of an individual. Malaysia condemns human trafficking and we remain committed in combating this problem in an effective and comprehensive manner. Malaysia is a State Party to the Transnational Crime Convention, and we had recently ratified its Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children on 26 February 2009.

5. The multifaceted and complex nature of trafficking in persons requires international attention and resources beyond the current focus on a criminal justice response, and which addresses the underlying developmental and security issues within countries of origin that lead to people being exploited. Malaysia continues to prosecute those found engaging in human trafficking, and we would welcome further initiatives by the countries of origin to strengthen their own self-regulation measures. Unfortunately, the focus on a criminal justice response to trafficking in persons has limited in-depth discussions on the socio-economic aspects that lead to individuals becoming vulnerable.

6. While steps were undertaken during the last session of the Assembly to begin the process of informal consultations amongst member states on a possible 'global plan of action', there was a lack of time which prevented significant movement on the issue. We need to be cautious to ensure that the increased attention to the issue of trafficking in the context of a global plan of action does not unnecessarily divert resources and attention from practical cooperation and addressing the underlying issues.

7. On this matter, it needs to be asked: have sufficient resources and commitment been given to ensure the success of the existing frameworks and institutions, before we proceed to creating a global plan of action? And, if deficiencies in coordination among non-state actors are among the main reasons stated for requiring a global plan, how would a global plan ensure such coordination among these non-state actors and in their relationship with state actors, while avoiding an inherent top-down approach to the issue that would be created? And how would regional initiatives, which have been very helpful, be practically reconciled as needs and the specificities of the cause of the problem vary from region to region?

8. With regard to piracy, my delegation is happy to note that the UNODC has taken a larger interest on this issue and also on establishing an internationally recognized procedure for the prosecution of pirates. We look forward for the agency's expertise in various fields, including on legal matters, to assist countries in dealing with this crime.

Mr. Chairman,

9. Turning to the issue of drugs, Malaysia welcomes the Political Declaration and Plan of Action on International Cooperation towards an Integrated and Balanced Strategy to Counter the World Drug Problem adopted at the fifty-second session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, and we look forward to the adoption of these documents by the General Assembly in this Session.

10. We remain concerned at the increase in the consumption of synthetic stimulants identified in various reports from the UNODC and the Secretary-General, especially amongst younger people, and particularly in our region of the world. There needs to be concerted international efforts to stem the supply and demand of illicit drugs, including the provision of technical assistance and capacity building to alternative sources of income in drug-producing countries.

11. Malaysia has consistently called for stringent measures to be adopted to curb illicit drug trafficking. Strict enforcement at the national level by the law enforcement authorities has helped to suppress drug trafficking into the country. Taking heed of adopting a health perspective into drug control, and with the majority of HIV/AIDS infection in Malaysia attributed to injecting drug use, 60% of our overall budget made available to HIV/AIDS response is through the Harm Reduction Approach. In reducing vulnerability among injecting drug users and their partners, harm reduction initiatives are being implemented consisting of drug substitutions therapy, a needle and syringe exchange programme. We continue to scale up the drug substitution program, namely Methadone Maintenance Therapy (MMT), with the aim of reaching out to at least 25,000 opiate dependent among injecting drug users by the year 2011. We have also approved the provision of MMT in closed and incarcerated settings, specifically in prisons. Additionally, 2008 saw scaling-up of our Needle and Syringe Exchange Program with the participation of Government Health Clinics in addition to the Drop-in Centres managed by community based organizations through government grants.

Mr Chairman,

12. While the international community has had many achievements in combating transnational crime, there are many areas that we need to continue to work on and improve. Malaysia acknowledges the important work done by the UNODC and lauds the work that has been undertaken by the UN, its agencies and member states. Malaysia will continue to give its support, cooperation and commitment in the prevention and fight against all forms of crime and in upholding criminal justice.

Thank you.

