



# Malaysia

Permanent Mission to the United Nations

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**STATEMENT BY  
MR. SAIFUL AZAM ABDULLAH  
DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF MALAYSIA**

**ON**

**AGENDA ITEM 27 (A): IMPLEMENTATION OF THE OUTCOME OF THE WORLD SUMMIT  
FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND OF THE TWENTY-FOURTH SPECIAL SESSION OF  
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

**AGENDA ITEM 27 (B): SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT, INCLUDING QUESTIONS RELATING TO  
THE WORLD SOCIAL SITUATION AND TO YOUTH, AGEING, DISABLED PERSONS AND  
THE FAMILY**

**AND**

**AGENDA ITEM 27 (C): FOLLOW-UP TO THE INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF OLDER  
PERSONS: SECOND WORLD ASSEMBLY ON AGEING**

**OF THE THIRD COMMITTEE**

**OF THE 66TH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
NEW YORK, 3 OCTOBER 2011**

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Mr. Chairman,

The goals and objectives of social development require continuous efforts to reduce and eliminate major sources of social distress and instability for the family and for society. The World Summit for Social Development in Copenhagen in 1995 stands as one of the achievements of contemporary international governance, with the aim to address the current challenges of social development. It recognized, among others, that national development, the development of the intrinsic value of people as a whole and individuals as its components, were interrelated, mutually dependent and absolutely necessary. The follow-up to this Summit, the 24<sup>th</sup> Special Session of the General Assembly, further expanded the views on the protection and promotion of social development and provided specific targets and strategies in setting and achieving social development objectives.

Mr. Chairman,

2. While there has been some progress in the implementation of what was agreed at the WSSD and the 24<sup>th</sup> Special Session of the General Assembly, such achievements continue to remain hostage to contemporary instability in global and national financial markets, as well as to challenges brought about by the fuel and food crisis. These challenges delay, and at times, derail, the main policy efforts of national governments needed to achieve long-lasting social development – economic growth, employment generation and productivity growth. Additionally, the free-for-all of financial liberalization has not been accompanied with the requisite safeguards of corporate and market responsibility and discipline.

3. It is due to the above that we should reexamine the policy prescriptions, which the Third Committee can recommend to the General Assembly. Firstly, we need to reinforce our steadfast commitment to the larger political goals of the WSSD and relevant social development fora. Second, for countries to achieve the objectives of social development, the structure of the global financial and economic environment has to be addressed to ensure that it is fair and equitable. Third, in funneling our work into specific streams, we need to be clear, committed and honest towards achieving our goals and helping the vulnerable groups. Finally, since economic growth and social development are interrelated, we must be prepared to make preliminary assessment of the impact of these crises, and propose remedies.

Mr. Chairman,

4. Allow me to touch on questions relating to disabled persons, family, youth and ageing.

5. In February 2011, voluntary registration of persons with disabilities (PWDs) in Malaysia stands at 317,363 persons. The Malaysian Government firmly believes that PWDs are entitled to the same rights as all other citizens in the country and to equal opportunities to partake in the country's development.

6. In 2007, Malaysia formulated the PWDs Policy and National Plan of Action as well as PWDs Act which was drafted based on the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). The PWDs Act 2008, which came into force on 7 July 2008, is an act to provide, among others, for the registration, protection, rehabilitation, development and wellbeing of PWDs. The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which was ratified by Malaysia on 19 July 2010 is also a testimony to the Malaysian Government's commitment to ensure that PWDs enjoy their rights to protection, prevention, rehabilitation, development and integration in the society.

Mr. Chairman,

7. With regard to family, Malaysia recognizes the family as a natural and fundamental social unit that provides valuable human resource and forms the backbone for solidarity, security and nation building. The roles and functions of the family has become integral and central in the national development agenda at the international level, including in the Asia

Pacific region. Malaysia hosted the 4<sup>th</sup> East Asia Ministerial Forum on Families (EAMFF) in Kuala Lumpur from 7 to 10 November 2010.

8. In order to maintain centrality of family aspect in social development, a National Family Policy has been finalised. The policy, among others, aims towards the realisation of a caring, strong and resilient family system. The proposed family policy provides a framework for the implementation of measures designed to better meet the changing needs of Malaysian families to ensure the well-being of families and improve their quality of life. Specifically, it hopes to incorporate family wellbeing, based on universal and multicultural values, in all family development programmes.

Mr. Chairman,

9. On the issue of youth, Malaysia was one of the earliest States to formulate the National Youth Policy back in 1985, which was subsequently enhanced to become the National Youth Development Policy in 1997. This Policy encompasses areas such as youth empowerment, human resource development, youth leadership and youth enterprise development.

10. The Government continues to engage with the younger generation through national scale events. For example, in May 2011, Putrajaya, which houses the Federal Government Administrative Centre, was turned into a sea of youth, where National Youth Day was celebrated to honour the youth of the country. The celebration included a youth convention, which discussed the direction for youth transformation. Putrajaya has also been officially declared as a Youth Friendly City.

Mr. Chairman,

11. The Political Declaration and the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing 2002 reestablished the focus of international community on the agenda on ageing, emphasizing development and international cooperation and assistance in this area. Since its adoption and endorsement by the General Assembly in its resolution 57/167, the Madrid International Plan has been the point of reference of policy-making and programme-designing at the national level. It has also become the inspiration for the development of national and regional plans and provided a strong foundation for international dialogue.

12. According to the Department of Statistics of Malaysia, percentage of persons older than 60 years old in Malaysia will reach 9.0 per cent in the year 2015 and 9.9 per cent in the year 2020. Moreover, in the year 2035, 15 per cent of the total population is expected to be at the age of 60 years and above. In Malaysia, average life expectancy is 71.7 years for male and 76.5 for female. Therefore, the Government realizes there is a need in harnessing pool of resources from the older persons.

Mr. Chairman,

13. Malaysia became one of the earliest countries in the Asia Pacific region to have its own policy for older persons which aims "to ensure the social status, dignity and well-being of older

persons as members of the family, society, and nation by enabling them to optimize their self potential, have access to all opportunities and have provisions for care and protection". The strategies put in place to fulfill this policy statement are based on the UN Principles for Older Persons 1991 and in line with the Shanghai Implementation Strategy for the Madrid and Macao Plans of Action on Ageing.

14. In addition, the Tenth Malaysia Plan, with its mission towards becoming a progressive and high-income nation, continues to emphasize and ensure the health and well-being of older persons so that they are able to age with dignity and respect, as well as lead independent and fulfilling lives as integral members of their families, communities and country. The Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development is currently reviewing the National Policy and its Plan of Action for the Older Persons with a view to revise the development and reintegration of the older persons in society.

Mr. Chairman,

15. The well-being of our societies, and the people who constitute that society, no matter whatever differences or vulnerabilities they have, remain the prime motivator for the work of the Government of Malaysia. The Malaysian Government remains committed to ensure that continuous efforts and initiatives are taken to promote equal opportunities and full participation of all segments of the society.

I thank you Mr. Chairman.