



Malaysia

Permanent Mission to the United Nations

**STATEMENT BY
THE HONOURABLE GOBALAKRISHNAN NAGAPAN
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT AND REPRESENTATIVE OF MALAYSIA**

**ON
AGENDA ITEM 65: PROMOTION AND PROTECTION
OF THE RIGHTS OF CHILDREN**

**OF THE THIRD COMMITTEE
66TH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY
NEW YORK, 14 OCTOBER 2011**

Mr. Chairman,

1. My delegation wishes to associate itself with the statement made by Malaysia on behalf of the ASEAN member countries on the agenda item under consideration.

2. It is Malaysia's belief that the promotion and protection of the rights of children must be among the priorities of every country's development agenda. While serious efforts must be taken at the national level by every State to ensure that children are protected from being the target of abuse and exploitation, many problems faced by children in developing countries are closely related to under-development, poverty and conflict. These cannot be solved unless the underlying developmental issues are seriously addressed and the countries concerned are provided with the required resources and assistance. These are clearly developmental issues, and have to be addressed if we are committed to further the promotion and protection of the rights of children.

Mr. Chairman,

3. Malaysia acceded to the Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1994, and the Government's Technical Committee on CRC continues its task to study the possibilities of withdrawing the remaining reservations made to certain articles under the Convention. On 6 July 2010, Malaysia signed the instrument of withdrawal of reservations to Article 1, 13 and 15 of the CRC. Hence, the remaining reservations are on Articles 2, 7, 14, 28(1)(a) and 37 of the CRC. Additionally, on 7 September 2011, the Government has agreed to accede to the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict, as well as the Optional Protocol to the

Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography.

Mr. Chairman,

4. Malaysia's Child Act of 2001 was promulgated based on the principles enumerated in the Convention, providing for care, protection and rehabilitation of a child without discrimination as to race, colour, sex, language, religion, social origin or physical, mental or emotional disabilities or any other status. Other policies that are in place to safeguard children's interests are as follows:

a. The National Policy on Children and its Plan of Action, focuses on the thrusts of development relating to children's survival, protection, development and participation as provided for in the CRC. A Technical Committee chaired by the Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development will be established in order to coordinate and monitor the implementation of the plan of action.

b. The National Child Protection Policy and its Plan of Action, aims to ensure that children are protected from all forms of neglect, abuse, violence, and exploitation. In addition to that, it encourages all organisations that deal with children to develop guidelines on the protection of the child. The Child Protection Policy focused on aspects of prevention, advocacy, intervention, reporting and giving support services in protecting children. It also provides standard guidelines and procedures in areas related to child protection.

Mr. Chairman,

5. The Government protects the rights of vulnerable children. In this regard, the Department of Social Welfare has established Shelter Homes for neglected, abused, abandoned and orphaned children. Currently, there are 11 Shelter Homes in Malaysia and Community Based Rehabilitation Centres. These centres provide services such as diagnosis, rehabilitation, treatment and special education.

6. Recognising education as an effective tool to enable Malaysians and others to gain equitable benefits of development and enjoy a better quality of life, greater emphasis by Malaysia has been placed on education and training. Providing quality education is essential to ensure that children have the tools necessary for their further developmental progress. As such, education and training development has consistently been given the biggest allocation in the national budget since Independence in 1957, averaging approximately a fifth to a quarter of our total annual budget.

Mr. Chairman,

7. Knowledge is the pillar of civilisation and the foundation for excellence. The education sector thus will be allocated USD 16 billion for the 2012 national budget. To provide a brighter future for all Malaysian children irrespective of their socioeconomic background, the Government will ensure quality and affordable access to education. Towards achieving this aim and in giving the much needed leap, Malaysia for the first time in its history, would provide free primary and secondary education for all its nationals.

Mr. Chairman,

8. Malaysia is pleased to inform that we hosted the inaugural First Ladies Summit in Kuala Lumpur in October 2010 and successfully adopted a Declaration entitled 'A Child Today A Leader Tomorrow'. The Declaration was circulated as a UN Document (A/65/774) on 8 March 2011. The First Ladies made a commitment to undertake among others, initiatives to empower children and build their limitless potential to become resilient leaders, thus strengthening the foundation for nation building and global peace.

Mr. Chairman,

9. Malaysia reaffirms its strong commitment to the efforts in protecting and promoting the rights of its children. Protecting our children is a priority as they are the ones who will be expected to ensure the well being of our community, our nation and our future. It is only fair that we leave them with a world that is truly fit for all.

I thank you Mr. Chairman.