



# Malaysia

Permanent Mission to the United Nations

## STATEMENT BY

**THE HONOURABLE DATUK WIRA HAJI IDRIS BIN HAJI HARON,  
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT AND REPRESENTATIVE OF MALAYSIA**

ON

**AGENDA ITEM 11 (a): SPORT FOR PEACE AND DEVELOPMENT: BUILDING A  
PEACEFUL AND BETTER WORLD THROUGH SPORT AND THE OLYMPIC IDEAL**

**OF THE PLENARY MEETING**

**66TH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
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Mr. President,

We are all from different nationalities, languages, background and cultures. We each have distinct modalities and approaches in making our world and our communities safe, content and dynamic, ensuring education and employment, health and social services, and most importantly, creating peaceful communities, where we may live without conflict and without fear. Despite our diversity, we come together, recognizing that there is one language that we all speak. There is one tool that is simple to use, yet powerful. And that tool is sport.

2. Sport has a unique power to attract, mobilize and inspire. By its very nature, sport is about participation. It is about social inclusion, stands for human values – such as acceptance of binding rules, discipline, team work and fairness. But, it can be more than that. Sport plays a significant function as a promoter of social integration and economic development in different geographical, cultural and political contexts. Sport is an influential instrument to strengthen social ties and networks, and to promote ideals of peace, fraternity, solidarity, non-violence, tolerance and justice.

Mr. President,

3. Malaysia considers itself as a young nation, and it is fair to attribute sport as the agent of change which is a catalyst of our successful nation-building process. Since independence, sport has been seen as a means in contributing to the development of the spirit of nationalism and national integration among

the multi-racial group. In sports, nationalism formed the natural framework into which people unite and structures the valuable consolidation in Malaysia's multi racial society. To fully harness sport's potential in this context, appropriate national government policies, investment, and capacity are needed to support programmes and, where appropriate, to scale-up these programmes on a nationwide basis. At the national level, governments need to be aware of the power of sport to help them meet their domestic development goals, and the importance of integrating sport into their development strategies and approaches.

4. Based on this foresight and the belief in the transformational potential of sports, our Honourable Prime Minister, Dato' Sri Mohd Najib bin Tun Haji Abdul Razak, who was then the Minister of Culture, Youth and Sports in 1988, spearheaded the formulation of the National Sport Policy to bring about implementation of various projects which inculcate patriotism in its citizens. Sports programme and cultural activities were planned to create deeply rooted national feeling of unity among multi racial groups that were applauded as the extension of feeling of togetherness and unity on a large scale. As the way forward, the Sport Development Act 1997 was enacted to further stipulate guidelines and in relation to sports development in order to promote and mainstream the development and administration of sports in Malaysia. These initiatives have only one aim – developing a healthier, prosperous and united community.

5. Malaysia appreciates that promoting and raising awareness of disability sport is a crucial step in changing attitudes and building community support. In Malaysia, many local projects include an element of community education and this is also important at the international level. With regard to public awareness on the issue of inclusivity, paralympics are not about disability – they are about opportunity and fierce competition. It is about solidifying friendship, about sincerity, about camaraderie and about being humane. Malaysia has been taking part in international disability sports competitions since the 1970s, including multi-sports and multi-disability competitions, single-disability competitions as well as single-sport competitions. We have hosted various international events including the first ASEAN Para Games in 2001 and the 9<sup>th</sup> Far East and South Pacific Games for the Disabled (FESPIC) Games in 2006. Malaysia is also honoured to be one of the founders of ASEAN Para Sports Federation (APSF) in 2000 and the Asian Paralympic Council (APC) in 2002. The secretariats for both organizations are based in Kuala Lumpur.

Mr. President,

6. Malaysia is a strong believer that achieving success at the international level will be inspirational and it extends to the international community the message of advancement of solidarity, global social cohesion and peaceful coexistence. In this regard, Malaysia is proud to mention here that year 2010 and 2011 have been extraordinary for the Olympic Council of Malaysia (OCM) and to the overall Malaysian sports arena. Malaysia participated in five (5) Multi-sports Games, namely the 1<sup>st</sup> Youth Olympic Games in Singapore, the 19<sup>th</sup> Commonwealth Games held in New Delhi, the 16<sup>th</sup> Asian Games organized in Guangzhou, the 2nd Asian Beach Games in Muscat and the 7th Asian Winter Games 2011 in Astana. Malaysian contingent had achieved very encouraging results – especially during the 19<sup>th</sup> Commonwealth Games in New Delhi in October 2010, where Malaysia garnered 12 gold medals, 10 silver medals and 14 bronze medals, surpassing the record of 10 gold medals won at the Kuala Lumpur 1998 Commonwealth Games. Riding on the success of the Commonwealth Games in New Delhi, the Malaysian contingent to the Guangzhou 16th Asian Games in November 2010, won 9 gold medals, 18 silver medals and 14 bronze medals, bettering the record of 8 gold medals won at the Doha 15th Asian Games 2006.

7. The next nine (9) months will be another challenging and exciting period for Malaysia, as the main focus of the Olympic Council of Malaysia and Malaysian elite athletes will be on qualifying for the London 2012 Olympic Games. To celebrate the countdown to the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympics Games, The Malaysian Government has since 2009 launched the campaign 'Road to London 2012' to spread nationwide promotional campaign to create widespread awareness and exposure for the programme.

Mr. President,

8. While sport alone cannot prevent conflict or build peace, it can assist in peace-building interventions. Peace-building is a continuous process ranging from the prevention of violence, to humanitarian relief and early recovery, to the long-term construction or reconstruction of society. Raising awareness and building support among political, community and civil society leaders and senior government officials are critical first steps in mobilizing government action around sport for development and peace. Through collaboration and cooperation, governments should strengthen their efforts to use sport to overcome development challenges and, in turn, to achieve the Millennium Development Goals.

9. In short, Malaysia believes the concept of sport for development and peace – has faith in its attributes in transcending socio-cultural and political boundaries, the capacity of sports as a powerful global communication platform, and the potential to empower, motivate and inspire natural ability to draw on, develop and showcase individual strength and competence.

I thank you, Mr. President.