



# Malaysia

Permanent Mission to the United Nations

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**STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR HUSSEIN HANIFF  
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF MALAYSIA  
ON AGENDA ITEM 27: SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT  
OF THE THIRD COMMITTEE**

**67TH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
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Mr. Chairman,

At the outset, I wish to congratulate you on your election as the Chairman of the Third Committee for the 67th Session of the General Assembly. I would also like to extend my congratulations to the other Members of the Bureau. I am confident that under your leadership, the Committee will be able to complete its work with successful outcomes.

Mr. Chairman,

2. My delegation wishes to associate itself with the statement delivered by the distinguished representative of Algeria on behalf of the Group of 77 and China and the statement made by Malaysia on behalf of the ASEAN member countries on the agenda item under consideration. We would also like to express our utmost appreciation to Mr. Wu Hongbo, Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, Ms. Daniela Bas, Director, Division for Social Policy and Development, DESA as well as Ms. Jordi Llopart, Chief of the UN Volunteer Program Office in New York for the presentation of the reports.

3. The goals and objectives of social development require continuous efforts to eliminate poverty, ensure full employment and the fostering of stable, safe and just societies. The World Summit for Social Development in Copenhagen in 1995 stands as one of the achievements of contemporary international governance, with the aim of addressing the challenges of social development. The 24<sup>th</sup> Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly in Geneva in 2000, further expanded the views on the protection and promotion of social development and agreed on a series of measures to achieve social development objectives while mitigating the adverse effects of globalization.

4. While there has been some progress in the implementation of what was agreed at the Social Summit and the Special Session, such achievements continue to remain hostage to the impact of the current global financial and economic crisis, as well as to challenges to poverty eradication brought about by growing inequalities, insufficient employment creation, low agricultural productivity and the impact of climate change. We concur with the recommendations put forth in the Secretary-General's report, that countries should be encouraged to accelerate efforts and devote additional resources to creating employment opportunities, with a particular focus on youth, towards inclusive, equitable and sustained economic growth.

Mr. Chairman,

5. In line with this, the Tenth Malaysia Plan 2011-2015 emphasizes on raising the skills of Malaysians to increase employment, where more balance will be sought in developing technical as well as soft skills. The Government has allocated USD 65.36 million under the 'Strategic Action Youth (SAY) 1Malaysia' solely for skills training of youths who are out of the academic schools system. Another USD 65.36 million was allocated under the 'My Creative Venture Capital' for youths to venture into new and innovative businesses. A macro loan scheme through 'Amanah Ikhtiar Malaysia' is in place to encourage female youths to go into business while various housing and loan schemes allow home ownership among the younger generation.

6. Malaysia was one of the earliest countries 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. The principles of engagement, participation and empowerment would always be applied in all youth programs and smart policies to tap the potential of 12.5 million youths in Malaysia.

7. The Government continues to engage with the younger generation through national scale events. In May 2012, Putrajaya, which houses the Federal Government Administrative Centre, was turned into a sea of youth, where the 'Gathering of Millions of Youths 2012' was held in conjunction with National Youth Day. The event was a manifestation of the Government's recognition of the younger generation, who represent 45 per cent of the population, as a national development partner.

Mr. Chairman,

8. Malaysia welcomes the Secretary-General's report on the implementation of the follow-up to the Second World Assembly on Ageing to ensure that the aim of integrating

older persons in social development is right on track. Realizing the importance of fostering a society for all ages, the Government of Malaysia in January 2011 approved the new National Policy for Older Persons and Plan Of Action for Older Persons. The policy and plan of action were drafted based on the three priority areas in the Madrid Plan of Action.

9. By the year 2035, Malaysia is expected to attain the 'Ageing Nation Status', where 15 per cent or more of the country's population are aged 60 years and above. As such, the Government realizes that harnessing the pool of resources from older persons is valuable and necessary. The Government of Malaysia thus is very committed towards providing conducive and enabling environment for older persons in the country. In view of this, various benefits are provided for older persons to actively participate in society. In 2011, 135,000 older persons received a total of RM478 million (USD 156 million) of financial assistance. Older persons receive almost free health and medical care at all government hospitals and clinics. Recognizing that access to affordable, reliable, safe and physically accessible transportation is a cornerstone of older persons' participation and independence in society, older persons are also provided with discounts between 25 to 50 per cent for major modes of transportation in the country.

Mr. Chairman,

10. As of December 2011, registration of persons with disabilities (PWDs) in Malaysia stands at 344,508 people. The government firmly believes that persons with disabilities are entitled to the same rights as all other citizens in the country and equal opportunities to partake in the country's development. 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 is an act to provide, among others, for the registration, protection, rehabilitation, development and well being of PWDs.

11. The Tenth Malaysia Plan 2011-2015 focuses on to better integrate persons with disabilities into society. Greater efforts are made to provide easy physical access to transportation and buildings for a more disabled-friendly environment. Existing community-based rehabilitation centers are being upgraded to one-stop service centers which will provide more comprehensive services such as registration of persons with disabilities, disability screening and detection, referral services, vocational trainings, job placements and dissemination of information on disabilities. The Plan is to enable them to be independent, productive and valued contributors. In line with this, Malaysia welcomes the convening of a High-Level Meeting on Disability and Development in 2013, to take concerted action towards a disability inclusive development agenda towards 2015 and beyond.

Mr. Chairman,

12. A progressive society is one that ensures the rights of its citizens are upheld and respected. It is a society where diversity is respected and encouraged, and where people of different backgrounds, ethnicities, and religious beliefs work together to ensure that as the nation advances, no one is left behind. Youth, older persons, persons with disabilities and the family unit are all vital components of society, and therefore embracing their needs and balancing those needs against an evolving social environment is critical towards achieving a truly progressive and inclusive society. 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.