



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 65:
PROMOTION AND PROTECTION OF THE RIGHTS OF CHILDREN
OF THE THIRD COMMITTEE**

**67TH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY
NEW YORK, 18 OCTOBER 2012**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman,

1. Malaysia believes that the promotion and protection of the rights of children must be among the priorities of every country's development agenda, as investing in children is investing in the future human capital of the country.
2. Recognising that investment in education and training is a prerequisite for prosperity of the country and the well being of the people, education and training development have consistently been given the biggest allocation in the national budget since Independence in 1957.
3. For 2013, the Government has allocated roughly USD 12 billion to the Ministry of Education for education and training programs and activities, which constitutes approximately 21 percent of the annual budget.
4. With a view to provide a brighter future for all Malaysian children irrespective of their socioeconomic background, the Government will continue to ensure quality and affordable access to education. Towards achieving this aim and in giving the much-needed leap, Malaysia provides free primary and secondary education for all its nationals.

Mr. Chairman,

5. Malaysia acceded to the Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1995; and we recently acceded to the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict and the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography on 12 April 2012. This accession is a milestone and underscores Malaysia's commitment to the global protection of children.

6. 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, color, 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.

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. The Child Protection Policy focuses 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.

7. We concur with the view articulated in the report A/67/230 that the protection of children from violence contributes to social progress and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. As we move towards realizing 2015 and the global development agenda post 2015, it is critical to address and safeguard children's rights to freedom from violence. Some children are particularly vulnerable and face greater risks to their lives and well being due to social, political and economic factors.

8. The Government of Malaysia 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.

Mr. Chairman,

9. Turning now to the report of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, Malaysia acknowledges the two verdicts passed by the International Criminal Court (ICC) and the Special Court for Sierra Leone earlier this year, which set important international jurisprudence on the war crime of recruiting and using children. These verdicts send a clear signal to commanders that child recruitment is a war crime and perpetrators would be held accountable.

Mr. Chairman,

10. While much progress has been made at the national level, my delegation is of the view that it could also make significant and positive contribution to the promotion and protection of children's rights at the international level.

11. In this connection, I am pleased to inform the Committee that Malaysia is presenting the candidature of Ms. Yasmeen Muhamad Shariff to the Committee on the Rights of the Child, in which elections will be held on 18 December 2012. Ms. Yasmeen's candidacy marks the first time that Malaysia has proposed a candidate to the CRC Committee.

12. Ms. Yasmeen is eminently qualified and is equipped with vast experience and practical knowledge on promoting and protecting the rights of the child as well as on legal issues with regard to family matters. We are confident that if elected, her expertise and experience would greatly contribute to enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of the CRC Committee's work. In this regard, we seek Member States' support to this candidature.

13. In concluding, we hold the future in our hands today. The participation and advancement of the present generation should usher in a future generation that would ensure a country's survival, development and prosperity. Malaysia thus 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 to safeguard 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.

14. Malaysia associates itself with the ASEAN statement under this agenda item.

I thank you Mr. Chairman.