



Malaysia

Permanent Mission to the United Nations

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**Statement by H.E. Ambassador Hussein Haniff,
Permanent Representative of Malaysia to the United Nations,
on Agenda Item 24:
Eradication of Poverty and Other Development Issues,
at the Second Committee of
the Sixty-Seventh Session of the United Nations General Assembly,
New York, 05 November 2012**

Mr. Chairman,

Malaysia wishes to associate itself with the statement made by Algeria, on behalf of G77 and China, and Indonesia, on behalf of ASEAN. We also thank the Secretary-General for the reports presented under this agenda item.

2. According to the Secretary-General's report E/2012/63, the ongoing financial and economic crisis has worsened the global job crisis, with worldwide unemployment estimated to have increased from 170 million in 2007 to an unprecedented high of 197 million unemployed in 2011. Hence, cohesive action is urgently needed to boost productive capacities, investments and to create more jobs, to sustain the incomes of working families, the poor and the vulnerable.

3. Against this backdrop, the Secretary-General's report A/67/180, which provides several useful recommendations for eradicating poverty, with particular emphasis in employment and decent work, is very timely. In this regard, allow me to share Malaysia's national experience in the eradication of poverty and addressing socio-economic inequality which the Secretary-General has highlighted in the report.

Mr. Chairman,

4. Since 1970s, Malaysia has successfully reduced poverty that besieged nearly half of the population in 1970, through the implementation of various poverty eradication programmes. Notably, Malaysia has achieved the target set in MDG1 by reducing poverty to about 2.8 per cent of the population today. Moving forward, Malaysia is

looking into the daily needs of the bottom 40 percent of Malaysians which consist of 2.3 million of the population, by improving the quality of their livelihood. In doing so, by 2015, poverty rate will be further reduced from 2.8 percent in 2010 to an all time low of 2.0 percent by 2015.

5. To ensure the effectiveness of the poverty eradication programme, the Malaysian Government has established the **eKasih** system, a centralised Malaysian National Poverty Data Bank, which stores information related to poverty. It can be accessed and used by all government agencies and other related parties for purpose of planning, coordination and monitoring of poverty eradication programmes in Malaysia. Notably, this **eKasih** innovation was awarded the first prize in the United Nations Public Service Awards for 2012, in recognition of its significant contribution in poverty eradication in Malaysia.

6. The successful implementation of poverty eradication programmes in Malaysia is attributed to the successful power sharing and political stability which Malaysia has enjoyed in the past 55 years. It is also attributed to Malaysia's strategic planning and effective implementation of economic programmes, coupled with continuous investments in physical infrastructure, education and primary healthcare services. Among the prominent poverty eradication initiatives is the rural development scheme implemented by the Federal Land Development Authority of Malaysia (FELDA). This land reform programme has successfully brought out of poverty citizens involved in the land distribution scheme through planned and coordinated land development and socio-economic activities. This scheme has been proven to be successful in elevating the quality of life and bringing social and economic benefits to 177,000 rural families in Malaysia to date. These families now enjoy household incomes that have substantially exceeded the poverty line income established by the Malaysian government. In addition, the listing of FELDA Global Ventures Holdings Berhad in the Kuala Lumpur Stock Exchange in June this year, the world's second biggest initial public offering (IPO) after Facebook, has elevated the status of these households as shareholders of the world's largest plantation group.

7. Despite these successes, Malaysia is very much aware that there are still vulnerable groups among the Malaysian population. Therefore, an inclusive development approach that broadens the ability of Malaysians to participate in and benefit from the nation's economic development is not an option, but a necessity. The Government is committed to continue policies that would, in the middle term, totally eradicate poverty among Malaysians, and we hope to achieve this zero-poverty among the population by 2020.

Mr. Chairman,

8. Measures to overcome socio-economic inequalities need to be implemented in the context of an expanding economy. The Government of Malaysia has embarked on structural economic and political reforms through the *One Malaysia* agenda, the *Government Transformation Programme*, the *Economic Transformation Programme*, *Rural Transformation Programme*, the *New Economic Model* and *Political Transformation Programme*, aimed at delivering high economic growth in a sustained, inclusive and equitable fashion, that would eventually enable Malaysia to become a developed nation by 2020.

9. To ensure social justice, where every Malaysian is able to participate in the nation's development and to realize their full potential, we have adopted a pragmatic approach in pursuing inclusive development that is anchored on two objectives:

- i) Enabling equitable opportunities for all Malaysians to participate in the economy according to their requirements and needs; and
- ii) Providing a social safety net for disadvantaged groups through equitable access to health, education and basic infrastructure.

10. In addition, the 10th Malaysia Plan, tagged along with the 1Malaysia movement, had inspired the creation of a fair and socially just society with national unity as its ultimate objective. The Malaysian Government through the many 1Malaysia initiatives, among others, has launched the establishment of grocery stores, food outlets, mobile clinics, and provided affordable homes as well as various forms of cash assistance for the low and middle income earners, to enable them to enjoy the wealth of the nation.

11. To advance the inclusive growth agenda, the Plans ultimate aim is to totally eradicate poverty, with the focus on the 2.4 million vulnerable households categorised as the bottom 40 per cent, in particular among the women, youth and indigenous communities.

Mr. Chairman,

12. Unlike the ambit of the 1Malaysia movement, the government has introduced the 1Azam Programme. This programme is targeted to increase the incomes of rural households, with focus on upgrading their skills, linking them to employers in nearby job clusters and cities as well as providing support for self employment, micro-businesses and small scale industries. Efforts are also underway to increase the productivity and

sustainability in rural agro-based activities through the adoption of efficient agricultural technology and expansion of contract farming.

13. In line with attempts towards poverty eradication, the Government has established employment hubs to provide career counselling and job placement programmes in areas where employment opportunities are scarce. These hubs will study and identify the categories of workforce requirements through consultation with key employers in nearby clusters and cities, and match the requirements with suitable candidates in adjacent rural areas. Pre-employment training would be conducted, based on the need to help the candidates meet the participating employers' requirements.

14. Malaysia firmly believes that youth participation is a critical driver of the nation's growth. The Plan aims to better prepare them to undertake their roles in contributing towards Malaysia's development. A Cabinet Committee on Youth Development, chaired by the Deputy Prime Minister of Malaysia, has been established in this respect.

Mr. Chairman,

15. At the regional and global level, Malaysia will continue to share its development experience in the field of poverty eradication with fellow developing countries, with a view of accelerating the achievement of MDGs by 2015. This had been implemented since 1980, mainly through the Malaysian Technical Cooperation Programme (MTCP) that forms part of the commitment of the Malaysian Government towards the promotion of Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries (TCDC), under the South-South cooperation framework. Currently, more than 25,000 participants, mainly from the LDCs, have benefited from Malaysia's sharing of experience and expertise.

Mr. Chairman,

16. Let me conclude by emphasising that poverty eradication is multi-faceted and involves a whole range of stakeholders – the government, intergovernmental organisations, private sector and civil society, both at the national and international levels. Combining resources and harnessing on the experience and expertise of all stake holders are the best way forward towards eliminating of poverty worldwide.

Thank you.