



MALAYSIA

PERMANENT MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS



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**STATEMENT BY
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CHARGE D'AFFAIRES
PERMANENT MISSION OF MALAYSIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

**ON BEHALF OF
THE ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN NATIONS (ASEAN)**

**COMPRISING BRUNEI DARUSSALAM, THE KINGDOM OF CAMBODIA,
THE REPUBLIC OF INDONESIA, LAO PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC,
MALAYSIA, THE REPUBLIC OF THE UNION OF MYANMAR, THE REPUBLIC OF
THE PHILIPPINES, THE REPUBLIC OF SINGAPORE, THE KINGDOM OF
THAILAND AND THE SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF VIET NAM**

ON

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

OF THE THIRD COMMITTEE

68TH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY

NEW YORK, 16 OCTOBER 2013

Mr. Chairman,

It gives me great pleasure to address this pertinent issue on behalf of the Member States of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), namely Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Viet Nam.

Mr. Chairman,

2. ASEAN notes with appreciation the reports related to this agenda item among others, the Report of the Secretary-General on the status of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Report of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict which highlighted issues of common concerns. ASEAN believes that these reports provide a useful basis for the Committee to objectively reflect on and assess efforts aimed at further promoting and protecting the rights of children.

Mr. Chairman,

3. ASEAN underscores the importance of advancement of vulnerable groups, such as children, as a crucial determinant of an inclusive, robust and sustainable ASEAN Community. ASEAN's commitment to this agenda is reflected in the strategies and targets set out in the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community Blueprint that serve to address the rights of vulnerable groups, including children. Our collective efforts to this cause are constantly renewed through various policy documents such as the ASEAN Human Rights Declaration; Joint Declaration and ASEAN Roadmap on the Attainment of the Millennium Development Goals in ASEAN; Ha Noi Declaration on the Enhancement of Welfare and Development of ASEAN Women and Children; Declaration on the Commitments for Children in ASEAN; and the Resolution on the ASEAN Plan of Action for Children. Most recently at the 23rd ASEAN Summit in Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei Darussalam on 9 October 2013, ASEAN adopted the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women and Elimination of Violence Against Children in ASEAN. This Declaration, among others, addresses the concern of violence against women and children as obstacles to achieving equality, peace and development. This Declaration also reflects ASEAN's collective efforts to strengthen legal and policy frameworks and institutional capacity to combat violence against women and children, and assist victims through protection, services, rehabilitation, recovery and reintegration of victims.

Mr. Chairman,

4. ASEAN believes that in order to ensure further progress for the betterment of children, a systematic, comprehensive and multifaceted approach, together with cooperation and collaboration by the regional and international stakeholders are required. In this regard, ASEAN wishes to reiterate its readiness to continue to engage and cooperate closely with all interested partners and stakeholders as this approach had resulted mutual benefits.

5. ASEAN will continue to engage constructively with the UN system on issues concerning the children rights, in order to serve the best interest of our children, which are first and foremost the ASEAN Member States' priority. ASEAN commends various UN efforts through the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Children and Armed Conflict and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). We would also like to see more cooperation between ASEAN and the UN at both the national and regional

levels to support the collective efforts in attaining the child-related MDGs, as we approach 2015.

6. ASEAN would also like to stress the importance of adherence to their respective mandate by each UN child protection mechanism, as well as respect for bilateral frameworks between each member state and the UN Country Team. These mandates and bilateral frameworks are drafted and produced for a reason, based on the principles of complementarity, partnership and effectiveness.

7. Another fruitful outcome of regional and international cooperation worth mentioning was the visit of the ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children (ACWC) to the European Union (EU) headquarters in Brussels in February 2013. The visit was one of the activities convened by the Regional EU-ASEAN Dialogue Instrument (READI), and had provided a useful platform to exchange views, challenges and experience in promoting and protecting women's and children's rights in Europe and Southeast Asia, as well as to explore cooperation in areas of mutual interest. The visit also presented the opportunity for the ACWC Representatives to better understand EU institutions, mechanisms, instruments and policy priorities on a broad spectrum of issues relating to women's and children's rights.

8. On the same note, ASEAN also appreciates the contributions by our external partners in the implementation of activities outlined in the ACWC Work Plan 2012-2016. It comprises, among others the various initiatives to promote rights of women and children; justice for women and children victims; strengthening economic rights of women; impact of climate change to women and children; standards on service delivery for children with disabilities; review mechanism in managing and treatment of trafficked women and children; and promotion of best practices in eliminating violence against women and children.

Mr. Chairman,

9. To conclude, I wish to emphasize that ASEAN is fully aware that there remain many challenges in ensuring the promotion and protection of the rights of children in the region. We desire for our children to be given the best opportunity to fulfil their fullest potential. It is our governments' responsibility to promote and protect the rights of our children to allow them to reach their dreams. ASEAN shall continue working towards an ASEAN Community that supports safe and healthy childhoods; a Community that offers abundant opportunities for learning and social growth towards nurturing competent citizens who would contribute to the region's continued peace, stability and prosperity.

I thank you Mr. Chairman.