



# MALAYSIA

PERMANENT MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS



CANDIDATE  
to the  
UNITED NATIONS  
SECURITY COUNCIL  
for the term 2015-2016

*(For immediate press release)*

**STATEMENT BY  
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PERMANENT MISSION OF MALAYSIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS  
ON AGENDA ITEM 23: ERADICATION OF POVERTY AND OTHER  
DEVELOPMENT ISSUES,  
23(A): IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SECOND UNITED NATIONS DECADE FOR  
ERADICATION OF POVERTY (2008-2017) AND  
23(B): WOMEN IN DEVELOPMENT  
AT THE SECOND COMMITTEE OF THE 68TH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS  
GENERAL ASSEMBLY,  
NEW YORK, 17 OCTOBER 2013**

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Mr. Chairman,

Malaysia wishes to associate itself with the statement made by the distinguished representative of Fiji on behalf of G77 and China, and the distinguished representative of Singapore, on behalf of ASEAN. We also would like to thank the Secretary-General for his report on this agenda item.

2. We welcome the Secretary-General's report as contained in document A/68/183, that states the proportion of people living in extreme poverty on less than USD 1.25 a day have reached new lows in all six developing regions in the past five years, despite the economic recession and volatility of prices for fuel and food. Despite the positive development, much work remains as the report also highlighted that progress has been uneven, and there were 1.2 billion people still living on less than USD 1.25 a day in 2010, most of them in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia. In this regard, we support the recommendations to address the remaining challenges to poverty eradication as contained in paragraphs 77 (a) to (g) of the Secretary-General's report which placed the eradication of extreme poverty in the heart of the post-2015 development agenda.

Mr. Chairman,

3. The recommendations in the Secretary-General's report among others highlighted the need for Member States to have policy priorities in eradicating poverty. In this regard, allow me to now share Malaysia's national experience in the eradication

of poverty and addressing socio-economic inequality which the Secretary-General has highlighted in the report.

4. Malaysia is one of the region's most dynamic economies, having achieved sustained economic growth, substantial poverty reduction, and progress in human development over the last few decades. We have achieved seven out of the eight MDGs at an aggregate level, and are confident of meeting the target of the MDGs on poverty eradication by 2015. The country's overall poverty rate dropped to 1.7% in 2012, compared to 3.8% in 2009, with fall in incidences of poverty happening in both urban and rural areas. Malaysians also enjoyed an annual increase of 7.2% to their average household income over the 2009-2012 period.

5. This positive trend can be attributed to the successful implementation of various poverty eradication programmes at the national level. These include the establishments of health clinics (Klinik 1 Malaysia), affordable housing (PR1MA), welfare programmes providing assistance for low-income senior citizens, children and disabled people (KAR1SMA), as well as a government backed trust fund for low-income households (AS1M) benefiting around 100,000 households. Underpinning these programmes is the concept of 1Malaysia, which stresses the importance of national unity and ethnic tolerance. This year, the government has allocated substantial budget to ease the burden of the poor by providing training for Malaysian students from the minority group to equip them with skills in line with market demands, as well as providing educational grants and financial assistance to build mobile clinics and repair houses for the poor and needy. In addition to these programmes the Government of Malaysia has also launched the Government Transformation Programme (GTP) and the New Economic Model (NEM) in 2010. The GTP is expected to contribute in making the country a developed and high-income nation by 2020. Meanwhile, the NEM aims to shift affirmative action from being ethnically-based to being need-based hence becoming more competitive, market and investor friendly.

Mr. Chairman,

6. We wish to highlight three particular programmes that have been successful in reducing poverty in Malaysia.

**First**, is the development of the eKasih system, a centralized Malaysian National Poverty Data Bank, which stores information related to poverty. It can be accessed by all government agencies and other related parties for planning, coordination and monitoring of poverty eradication programmes in Malaysia. It is an innovation which assesses the effectiveness of poverty eradication programs, which are crucial for their strengthening and development. While Malaysia is proud that this innovation was awarded the first prize in the United Nations Public Service Awards last year, we are not resting on our laurels. This year, the government has set up the eKasih mobile team to reach out to deserving applicants who are not on the registry and to set up focus groups to help filter the applications, ensuring that all deserving citizens obtain the assistance that they

need.

**Second**, is the rural development programme which remains as one of Malaysia's biggest success stories. The rural development scheme implemented by the Federal Land Development Authority of Malaysia (FELDA), has successfully elevated the quality of life and brought social and economic benefits to hundreds of thousands of rural families and increased their household income over the years. This year, FELDA will implement and complete 20,000 units of new generation housing projects for a period of five years on 5,000 acres of land in FELDA areas at a cost of approximately USD 469 million (RM1.5 billion). FELDA will also spend approximately USD 31 million (RM100 million) a year for education and skills training programmes, as well as providing scholarships for 5,000 new generation children from which 30% or 2,000 people are children outside the FELDA scheme.

**Third**, is the 1AZAM programme implemented by the government in 2010, which provides assistance in four essential areas; job placements, creating small business enterprises, creating small service providers and creating opportunities in agriculture. The emphasis of the programme is productive welfare; striking a balance between providing direct aid and economic opportunities to its participants to ensure that these individuals become financially self-sustaining. From January to December last year, 11,694 people had pulled themselves out of the poverty line. Moving forward, the programme will be more granular and state specific to target under-served districts and to place greater emphasis on the urban poor. Further, recognizing the important role women play in the Malaysia's socio-economic development, women are encouraged to participate in these income-generating programmes. As of 31 December 2012, out of 106,947 who enrolled in the 1Azam project, 70,224 participants are women.

Mr. Chairman,

7. The empowerment of women is a key agenda of the 10<sup>th</sup> Malaysia Plan, with the government taking efforts to allow women to realize their full potential and participate more effectively in the economic and social development of the country. Amongst the measures taken to encourage increased labor participation for women include increasing the number of community based nurseries and day care centers, flexible working hours, training and re-skilling opportunities under the Human Resources Development Fund, and gender sensitization programs in public sector recruitment. The government has also increased leadership and capability development under the *Nur Bestari* programme, and expanded skills development programmes for single mothers through the Intensive Skill Training for Single Mothers (I-KIT) entrepreneurship and skills programme. Malaysia has solidified its commitment to the role of women in development by successfully hosting the Women Deliver 2013 Conference and the 2013 Global Summit of Women in May and June 2013 respectively.

8. Notwithstanding the progress that Malaysia has made in poverty reduction and increasing the quality of life of its citizens, there are still pockets of hardcore rural poverty remaining and appropriate measures have been taken to address them.

9. In line with the principle of social justice which is at the core of the 10th Malaysia Plan, one of the key goals of the Plan is elevating the livelihoods of the bottom 40% of households, by raising their income generation potential, boosting education and skills attainment of children, strengthening the social safety net to reduce vulnerability of disadvantaged groups, and assessing the needs of special target groups with integrated programmes. At the same time, the focus of the strategies is anchored on enabling equitable opportunities for all Malaysians, which includes equitable access to health, education and basic infrastructure. The government prioritizes the interests of each and every community, ensuring no group is left behind or marginalized in the course of the nation's development.

Mr. Chairman,

10. Malaysia strongly believes that the successful implementation of poverty eradication and development programmes is underpinned by political stability, inclusiveness and strong political will. Malaysia has taken concrete measures to leverage on Malaysia's unique diversity as a source of strength in reducing poverty and strengthening the economy to achieve a sustained, inclusive and equitable economic growth. However, regional and international stability is also crucial in supporting national growth.

11. Malaysia will continue to share its development experience in the field of poverty eradication with fellow developing countries both at the regional and global levels, with a view of accelerating the achievement of off-track MDGs by 2015.

12. Let me conclude by emphasizing that poverty is a multi-dimensional phenomena that extends beyond income poverty and poverty eradication should remain at the centre of a transformative development agenda beyond 2015.

I thank you Mr. Chairman.