



MALAYSIA

PERMANENT MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS



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

(Please check against delivery)

**STATEMENT BY
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TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

**ON AGENDA ITEM 26: SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
OF THE THIRD COMMITTEE**

NEW YORK, 7 OCTOBER 2014

Madam Chair,

Allow me at the outset to extend my congratulations to you on your election as the Chair of the Third Committee for the 69th Session of the United Nations General Assembly. Our congratulations also go to all members of the Bureau. My delegation is convinced that under your able stewardship, the Committee will complete its work successfully.

Madam Chair,

2. My delegation wishes to associate itself with the statement delivered by the distinguished representative of Plurinational State of Bolivia on behalf of the Group of 77 and China and the statement made by my own country, Malaysia on behalf of the ASEAN member countries on the agenda item under consideration.

3. Great strides, without a doubt, have been made since the World Summit for Social Development in Copenhagen and the twenty-fourth Special Session of the General Assembly in Geneva to address challenges of social development. That said, the encouraging progress of social development hinges on other external factors. These external factors include the impact of global financial and economic crisis.

4. Realizing the challenges before us, the theme of “promoting empowerment of people in achieving poverty eradication, social integration and full employment and decent work for all” chosen for this year’s Commission for Social Development discussion is both apt and timely. To this end, my delegation concurs with the recommendation put forth by the Secretary General in his report to the Assembly. We recognize that additional resources have been invested towards creating an inclusive, equitable and sustained economic growth. But, let us be cognizant that now is the right time for Governments to introduce policies to empower individuals.

5. We believe empowered individuals could play the catalyst role for a sustainable solution to existing and emerging social development challenges.

Madam Chair,

6. This year marks an important milestone as we celebrate the twentieth anniversary of the International Year of the Family. And as we celebrate this milestone, my delegation is pleased to take stock of our achievement thus far, as we empower families in its pathway to sustainable development.

7. At the national level, as the overarching legal framework, the National Population and Family Development Act aims to develop caring, resilient and progressive Malaysian families. Through this act, a National Family Policy was developed, subsequently adopted and implemented in 2011. The family policy provides a framework for the implementation of programmes and initiatives to better meet the changing needs of Malaysian families. Chief among those include:

- 7.1 Parenting@Work, a programme designed to help parents balanced their career and family life; and
- 7.2 SMARTSTART Premarital Programme, an initiative to assist newlyweds deal with the trials and tribulations of a married life.

Madam Chair,

8. The youth agenda in Malaysia is quickly becoming a key national agenda, as the Government recognizes the participation of the youth as one of the critical driver for the nation's growth. The National Youth Development Policy has been developed beyond youth empowerment, human resource development and youth enterprise development agenda. The policy now encompasses several new areas including youth leadership and youth volunteering. The Government will continue to apply the principles of engagement, participation and empowerment in all youth socio-economy development programmes to tap the potential of 12.5 million of youths in Malaysia.

9. On youth leadership, the Prime Minister of Malaysia had announced the Government's initiative to provide a platform for Malaysian youth to engage in the policy making process involving the youth agenda. The Malaysian Youth Parliament's inaugural sitting is expected to be convened in early 2015. The campaigning for election is currently underway. In empowering the youth, the Parliament will have a two pronged approach. The approach will see participants taking part in a debate on issues concerning the youth and allowing them to hone their leadership skills in an enabling setting.

10. Youth volunteerism is also gaining credible and encouraging traction in Malaysia. The 1 Malaysia For Youth (IM4U) programme supports five different social causes and has seen the participation of more than 2.5 million Malaysian youths in volunteering activities. These volunteering activities had Malaysian youths adventure to the most

remote places in Sarawak, East Malaysia in “preserve the reserve forest activity” to gracing radio stations in the more upscale Kuala Lumpur in “music and volunteerism outreach programme”. Occassionally, IM4U programmes spread beyond the borders of Malaysia. Most recently, more than 70 Malaysian youths tended to the elders of New York at Lincoln Square Neighbourhood Centre.

Madam Chair,

11. My delegation welcomes the Secretary General’s report on the “Follow-up to the Second World Assembly on Ageing”. We welcome the report’s analysis on two issues singled out as critical to the well-being and human rights of older persons. Malaysia believes the issues, addressing age-based discrimination; and abuse and violence against older women are two issues that require immediate remedy.

12. By the year 2030, Malaysia is expected to attain the “Ageing Nation Status” where 15 percent of the population constitute persons older than 60 years old. In recognition of the necessity and importance to foster a society for all ages, the Government had formulated, approved and implemented the 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 outlined in the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing (MIPAA).

Madam Chair,

13. Malaysia has and will always adhere to the principles of non-discrimination, equal opportunity and full participation with regard to policy and programmes for Persons with Disabilities (PWDs). We believe PWDs are entitled to the same rights as all other citizens in the country and equal opportunities to partake in the country’s development. It is for this reason, the PWDs Policy and National Plan of Action was drafted based on the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD).

14. The PWDs policy and plan of action provided the basis for development programmes intended for PWDs under the Tenth Malaysia Plan. The Government had introduced inclusive and comprehensive development as the core agenda of the said Plan. Several initiatives have been implemented where emphasis were given to provide an enabling environment at work, employment support services as well as platform for self-employment of PWDs. The Government had also established Community Based Rehabilitation (CBR) centres as a strategy within the community for the rehabilitation, equalisation of opportunities and social re-integration of all marginalized groups, including PWDs into mainstream society. As of July 2014, the Government has established 508 CBR centres throughout the country benefitting more than 490,000 registered PWDs.

Madam Chair,

15. The nation can only develop its real potential through inclusive societal development programmes. And societal development can only prosper through a progressive society that respect the diverse background of peoples of different creed, ethnicities and religious beliefs. To this end, the Government of Malaysia is committed towards the well-being of its population, irrespective of its differences and vulnerabilities. Malaysia will continue to work towards creating a consensus and policy prescriptions to move forward on these issues.

Thank you.