



# MALAYSIA

PERMANENT MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS



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**STATEMENT BY  
H.E. AMBASSADOR HUSSEIN HANIFF  
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF MALAYSIA**

**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  
THAILAND AND  
THE SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF VIET NAM**

**ON**

**AGENDA ITEM 26(A): IMPLEMENTATION OF THE OUTCOME OF THE WORLD  
SUMMIT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND OF THE TWENTY-FOURTH SPECIAL  
SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

**AGENDA ITEM 26(B): SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT, INCLUDING QUESTIONS  
RELATING TO THE WORLD SOCIAL SITUATION AND TO YOUTH, AGEING,  
DISABLED PERSONS AND THE FAMILY**

**AGENDA ITEM 26(C): FOLLOW-UP TO THE INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF OLDER  
PERSONS: SECOND WORLD ASSEMBLY ON AGEING**

**OF THE THIRD COMMITTEE**

**69<sup>TH</sup> SESSION OF THE  
UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

**NEW YORK, 7 OCTOBER 2014**

Madam Chair,

1. At the outset, allow me to congratulate you on your election as Chair of the Third Committee for the 69<sup>th</sup> Session of the United Nations General Assembly. My congratulations also go to the other members of the Bureau. I wish you all success in steering the current session.

2. It gives me great pleasure to speak on behalf of the ten Member States of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations or ASEAN, namely Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Viet Nam. Our joint statement today will look at ASEAN's standing with regard to the social development pillar while illustrating some of the efforts and progress made towards fulfilling the region's social development agenda.

Madam Chair,

3. ASEAN is now gearing up closer to achieve its target of establishing a peaceful, prosperous and progressive ASEAN Community in 2015; a Community which is politically cohesive, economically integrated, culturally harmonious and socially responsible; a Community which puts its people at the center and where their well-being, livelihood and welfare are improved. In the spirit of cooperation and collective responsibility, the region's efforts to realize an ASEAN Community are furthered, among others, through the advancement of social welfare and protection, social justice and rights, as well as human development.

4. The establishment of the Community will light the path for us to create a people oriented / people-centred ASEAN, in line with the overarching objective of the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Blueprint. A people oriented / people-centred ASEAN approach will be a strong catalyst for the realization of our peoples dreams; a more effective and responsive form of governance, better standard of living, strengthened environment protection, further empowerment of women and greater opportunity for all. A people-centred ASEAN will also see the more direct involvement of all sectors of society in ASEAN's activities.

Madam Chair,

5. ASEAN welcomes the continuation of focus of the 52<sup>nd</sup> Session of the Commission for Social Development on promoting the empowerment of people in achieving poverty eradication, social integration and full employment and decent work for all as put forth in the Secretary-General's Report pursuant to the World Summit for Social Development and the 24<sup>th</sup> Special Session of the General Assembly. Looking forward, we welcome the priority theme of the 53<sup>rd</sup> Session of the CSocD on "Rethinking and strengthening social development in the contemporary world". Regionally, ASEAN is advocating community empowerment for a sustainable livelihood in pursuit of a balance growth and inclusive development, and is doubling our efforts to further enhance social development as we move towards an ASEAN Community.

6. As mentioned in the Secretary-General's report, the formulation and implementation of policies and strategies for people's empowerment must be based on careful social analysis and assessment of the factors that reinforce their disempowerment and exclusion. ASEAN subscribes to the notion that improved efforts should be made to address the root causes of poverty, inequality and social exclusion, and also that this will be crucial to a successful post-2015 development agenda.

Madam Chair,

7. In addition to the social welfare and protection component, ASEAN is also committed to promoting social justice and mainstreaming people's rights into its policies and all spheres of life. Protection of the rights of disadvantaged and vulnerable groups, namely women, children, the elderly and persons with disabilities are central to the ASEAN Socio Cultural Community blueprint and will remain the prime motivator to the work of ASEAN member states in moving forward.

8. ASEAN has adopted the Strategic Framework on Social Welfare and Development (2011-2015) aimed at safeguarding the welfare and rights of older people, persons with disabilities, children and families; the finalization of the Mobilization Framework which sets fifteen priority areas aimed at promoting disability-inclusive development in ASEAN; the proclamation of the ASEAN Decade of Persons with Disabilities for the period of 2011-2020; and the adoption of the Bali Declaration on the Enhancement of the Role and Participation of Persons with Disabilities in the ASEAN Community.

9. ASEAN reiterates its commitment to continue strengthening social protection and mainstreaming of perspectives and concerns in its work to promote the rights of the vulnerable groups.

10. On persons with disabilities, ASEAN welcomes the UN Secretary General's acknowledgement in his report of Singapore's promulgated new policies to improve accessibility to public service and to provide tax subsidies for caregivers of persons with disabilities. We also welcome the UN Secretary General's acknowledgement of the Philippines intensified efforts to implement the Incheon Strategy in its national programmes and policies.

11. As part of activities carried out under the ambit of the Strategic Framework on Social Welfare and Development (2011-2015), the ASEAN Programme Evaluation and Planning Conference for Persons with Disabilities was held from 2 to 4 April 2014 in Manila, Philippines. The programme discussed relevant mechanism to develop the capacity of governments to implement sufficient and quality auxiliary social services for persons with disabilities through technical cooperation among ASEAN member states. This is in line with the recommendations set out in the Secretary-General's Report to further improve coordination among existing international processes and mechanisms on disability in order to advance a disability-inclusive global agenda.

Madam Chair,

12. ASEAN's commitment to improving social protection for its elderly is supported at the regional level by means of networking and exchanging information. Such mechanisms were demonstrated by the 11<sup>th</sup> ASEAN and Japan High Level Officials Meeting on Caring Societies held from 3 to 5 December 2013 in Tokyo. The meeting had proposed several pertinent recommendations, including on the need to consider reorienting and building systems to support the elderly according to the current conditions in the community, recognizing that urbanization is rapidly progressing in the ASEAN countries.

13. ASEAN also welcomes the proposal for the convening of the 12<sup>th</sup> Meeting with the theme "Resilient Communities with Active Ageing" scheduled to be held from 21 to 23 October 2014 in Tokyo.

14. ASEAN's efforts in addressing the issue concerning older persons are in keeping with the spirit of the Secretary-General's Report on the "Follow-up to the International Year of Older Persons: Second World Assembly on Ageing". One of the highlights of the report, among others, discussed palliative care as fundamental to improving the quality of life, well-being, comfort and human dignity of patients, especially the ageing population.

Madam Chair,

15. We recognize that social protection is a cross cutting issue that requires inclusive, holistic, and adaptive approaches in strong collaboration of the Governments with private sectors, development partners, civil society, service providers, and other relevant stakeholders. The 12<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community Council met on 30 September 2014 in Bagan, Myanmar and agreed in principle on the Framing of the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community Post 2015 Vision. Recognizing the importance of continuity of development programmes, the Council had endorsed five ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community central elements for submission to the ASEAN Coordinating Council with a view to be incorporated into ASEAN Post-2015 Vision.

Madam Chair,

16. Aside from tending to vulnerable groups, ASEAN also highly values its youth as critical agents of progress in the region. The ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Youth, held once every two years, continues to be the platform for ASEAN to discuss the role that ASEAN younger generations can play to boost ASEAN solidarity. We are also encouraged by the active participation of ASEAN youth in ASEAN related meetings. Participants of ASEAN Youth Forum were involved in a dialogue with ASEAN leaders during the 2014 ASEAN Summit on 11 May 2014 in Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar.

17. Several initiatives were also endorsed by ASEAN to instill a sense of community including the establishment of an ASEAN Youth Volunteer Program and other youth

professional volunteer initiatives. The ten-month long inaugural programme, which had begun in November 2013, saw 97 volunteers recruited through a competitive process from the ten member states of ASEAN. Jointly implemented by Ministry of Youth and Sports Malaysia and the ASEAN Secretariat, the Programme was aimed at supporting the development of youth with mental resilience, kindness and solidarity so that they can contribute to the betterment of communities across the region.

Madam Chair,

18. The successful realization of an ASEAN Community by 2015 hinges on the inclusive and full participation of its people. As we prepare to complete our dream of a peaceful, prosperous and progressive ASEAN Community, we will continue to work with each other as well as encourage and foster a more direct involvement of the peoples of ASEAN for an advanced regional integration. To conclude, allow me to say this; we, the member states of ASEAN have built an impressive house in our quest for a single community, and we shall redouble our efforts to ensure the house is turned to a home where a truly progressive Community has a platform to prosper.

Thank you, Madam Chair.