



# MALAYSIA

PERMANENT MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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**STATEMENT BY**  
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**CHARGE D'AFFAIRES a.i.,**  
**PERMANENT MISSION OF MALAYSIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS**  
**COMMEMORATIVE PLENARY MEETING OF THE**  
**UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY**  
**TO MARK THE INTERNATIONAL DAY**  
**FOR THE ELIMINATION OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION**  
**NEW YORK, 25 MARCH 2019**

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Madame President,

At the outset, please allow me to extend my delegation's utmost gratitude and appreciation to Her Excellency Maria Fernanda Espinosa, the President of the General Assembly, for convening today's event.

2. Malaysia aligns itself with the statement delivered earlier by the Permanent Representative of Tonga on behalf of the Asia-Pacific Group (APG).

Madame President,

3. Today's event is timely as the world witnesses the escalation of undesired tragedies that have claimed hundreds of innocent lives in recent months. Just last week, we were shocked with horrific news about the 50 Muslims who were massacred while they were submitting themselves to God. In October last year, 11 Jews were killed while they were gathering for Shabbat morning services. Much more needs to be done as

innocent victims in many parts of the world have been persecuted by extremists just because they do not belong to the same racial or religious group.

4. Our governments have the responsibility to prevent the recurrence of such tragedies. This must stop! In order to stop it, we must mobilise our collective efforts and implement the provisions of the Durban Declaration and its Programme of Action with full conviction. It is important for us, the international community, to promote tolerance, inclusion, reconciliation, mutual understanding, respect and solidarity, in our common desire to live and act together in peace and harmony.

Madame President,

5. Looking back at the Christchurch tragedy, it is no secret that the attacks were made due to rising nationalist sentiments and extreme supremacist ideologies. To quote Edward Said, a Palestinian scholar, these rising sentiments and extreme ideologies were rooted from a “clash of ignorance”. The lack of knowledge about other racial and religious communities has undeniably contributed to the growing hatred and animosity.

6. Malaysia believes that our differences would be embraced when we learn to accept and appreciate the diversity, distinctiveness, and uniqueness of others. It is, thus, important for us to curb hate speech and curtail the spread of extreme ideologies particularly through social media, as such sentiments could easily influence the general public who may not have the opportunity to learn about other racial, cultural, or religious communities. These sentiments are undoubtedly dangerous as it would make those who are prone to radicalisation become more susceptible to the ideology of extremist groups bent on inciting hatred and provoking violence.

7. Recognizing that lack of understanding may contribute to excessive nationalist sentiments and extreme supremacist ideologies, which may, in turn, lead to greater incidents of violence that we see today, Malaysia calls on all members of the United Nations to seriously promote inter-cultural and interfaith dialogue. Undoubtedly dialogues play a vital role in promoting peace, moderation and religious tolerance.

8. Malaysia firmly believes our success in inculcating the values of moderation, respect and tolerance in our diverse, multi-ethnic, and multi-religious nation contributes to our social harmony. Thus efforts to promote development which is sustainable and inclusive of all communities have been pursued by Malaysia as an integral part of driving the country forward.

Madame President,

9. Let me conclude by assuring all Member States, all stakeholders and all our partners, of Malaysia's full commitment to our common goals of achieving a sustainable and peaceful world. We trust that this annual commemoration of International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination will convey to the world our strong conviction against the extent of destruction that can be brought about by racial discrimination, and on the importance of promoting empathy among people of different cultures, religions and civilizations.

Thank you, Madame President.