



Malaysia

Permanent Mission to the United Nations

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**STATEMENT BY THE HONOURABLE SENATOR NORLIZA ABDUL RAHIM
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT AND REPRESENTATIVE OF MALAYSIA**

**ON AGENDA ITEM 28: ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN
OF THE THIRD COMMITTEE**

**67TH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY
NEW YORK, 15 OCTOBER 2012**

Mr. Chairman,

I am pleased to take the floor on behalf of my delegation under this important agenda item. I wish to firstly associate my delegation with the statement delivered by Algeria and Malaysia on behalf of the G77 and China and ASEAN respectively.

2. I wish to also take this opportunity to express my delegation's appreciation to the Executive Director of UN Women, the Vice-Chair of CEDAW Committee and the Deputy Executive Director (Management) of the UNFPA for introducing the reports of the Secretary-General and the other entities namely the various Special Rapporteurs, the CEDAW Committee as well as UN Women, to the Committee. We are of the view that the reports provide a sound framework for the Committee's further deliberation on the issue of advancement of women.

Mr. Chairman,

3. Malaysia has long acknowledged the key role that women play in driving forward the national social, political and economic development agendas and had as far back as 1989 formulated a National Policy on Women.

4. Upon acceding to CEDAW (Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women) in 1997, the Government implemented a national Plan of Action (PoA) for the Advancement of Women.

5. Both the 1989 policy and 1997 PoA were reviewed in 2009 with the aim of keeping abreast with contemporary challenges and changes that come with the development of the nation. In short, the Government's recognition of the centrality of women is seen through the explicit design and implementation of women or gender specific policies and development plans, including gender responsive initiatives.

6. The Government has also adopted a number of measures to mainstream gender perspectives into the development process, including among others formulating relevant policies, reviewing laws affecting women, improving the capacity of the national machinery for incorporating women's perspectives into the development process, improving access to education, enhancing training and upgrading health care.

Mr. Chairman,

7. Since 2004, the Government of Malaysia through the Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development (MWFCD) has put in place a policy to ensure at least 30 percent participation of women in decision-making positions at all levels in the public sector. In 2008, MWFCD together with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) embarked on a joint effort to enhance implementation of that policy across all sectors of the economy.

8. With the implementation of this policy, Malaysia has seen a significant increase in the number of qualified and capable women appointed to important and influential positions such as Vice-Chancellors of universities, the Governor of the Central Bank and women judges appointed in both the civil and Shari'ah court systems.

9. Under the 5-year 10th Malaysia Plan for the period 2011-2015, the Government has also included as a key component, the further empowerment of women. Under the Plan, the Government will increase efforts to enable women realise their full potential and participate more effectively in the economic and social development of the country.

10. Alongside increasing the number of women in decision-making positions, other key thrusts and elements under the Tenth Malaysia Plan include increasing women's participation in the labour force; improving support for women in challenging circumstances such as widows, single mothers and those with lower incomes; and eliminating all forms of discrimination against women.

11. The national agenda towards further empowering women was given an additional boost by its inclusion in the National Key Results Areas (NKRAs) which was first announced in 2009 under which women's development and social welfare was prioritised. A key strategy for empowering women under the NKRA involves the training and development of entrepreneurial skills of 2,000 women across the nation by 31 December 2010.

12. I am pleased to share with the Committee that by June 2010, the programme had already exceeded its target whereby 2231 women entrepreneurs had graduated from the programme. Currently, the programme is well on track to exceed its objective of graduating 4000 participants by end 2012.

13. Mindful that a significant number of women reside in rural areas, the Government has also introduced income-generating programmes namely agropolitan projects and other commercial agricultural activities for the advancement of rural and indigenous women. These women in remote areas are provided training on agricultural farming and best practices to

enhance their agricultural skills and knowledge. In the long run, crop yields from such small scale plantations would help to positively contribute towards food sustainability and even towards raising family income.

14. With a view to sharing Malaysia's experiences and best practices, especially with other fellow developing countries, the Government of Malaysia continues to fund and support the work of the NAM Institute for the Empowerment of Women (NIEW). Among others, NIEW has designed a structured curriculum to include a comprehensive online readiness assessment, coaching and training of both technical and soft skills.

Mr. Chairman,

15. Turning now to the reports before the Committee under this agenda item, my delegation shares the concerns expressed by the Special Rapporteur on Trafficking in Persons, especially women and girls in the report *A/67/261* which among others focused on the issue of human trafficking in supply chains.

16. Malaysia concurs with the views of the Special Rapporteur that one of the most effective ways to combat trafficking in persons is to adopt a multi-stakeholder approach involving both public and private actors.

17. As a country with open and porous borders, Malaysia is keenly aware of the need to combat this scourge and had in 2007 enacted the Anti-Trafficking in Persons (ATIP) Act which was further strengthened by amendments introduced in 2010. Malaysia also works closely with other destination countries and with countries of origin at the bilateral level.

18. Recognising the need for a comprehensive approach in tackling the issue, Malaysia also subscribes to the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organised Crime (UNTOC) and its Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children.

19. In concluding Mr. Chairman, my delegation wishes to reaffirm the importance it attaches to advancing the status of women both at the national and international levels. As the world moves towards ever closer interconnectedness and as borders continue to melt, society must remain vigilant in ensuring the continued promotion and protection of the rights of vulnerable sections of society which most often include women and girls.

I thank you for your kind attention.