



*Permanent Mission of*  
**Malaysia**  
*to the United Nations*

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STATEMENT BY

THE HONOURABLE DATUK WIRA AHMAD HAMZAH  
MEMBER OF THE MALAYSIAN DELEGATION AND  
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT, MALAYSIA

ON

AGENDA ITEM 56 (a): ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN

AND

AGENDA ITEM 56 (b): IMPLEMENTATION OF THE OUTCOME OF THE FOURTH  
WORLD CONFERENCE ON WOMEN AND OF THE TWENTY-THIRD SPECIAL  
SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
OF THE THIRD COMMITTEE  
OF THE 63RD SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
NEW YORK, 13 OCTOBER 2008

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Mr. Chairman,

Allow me to take this opportunity to thank the Secretary-General for his reports on this Agenda Item on the Advancement of Women, and the appreciation of my delegation for the statement by the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and the Advancement of Women.

2. Malaysia is appreciative of the assistance from the United Nations. Since 2003, our Government has been collaborating with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in implementing gender equality programmes and projects involving: a gender responsive budget; capacity building on gender mainstreaming; and an Action Plan entitled, "Towards Achieving 30% Participation of Women at Decision Making Levels in Malaysia".

3. The Government of Malaysia is cognizant of our obligations as a signatory to the CEDAW and pledge to the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action. Malaysia is committed to realizing women's rights as human rights, and to achieve this goal, changes

in our legal and institutional frameworks have been made to protect, preserve and safeguard the rights and improve the status of women in the country in all areas.

4. We also recognize that non-governmental organisations (NGOs) play an important role in complementing the efforts of the Government for the benefit of women, and funding for NGOs is provided within our budget to implement activities and programmes for the advancement of women.

Mr. Chairman,

5. I wish to express Malaysia's support to the Secretary-General's multi-year campaign to end violence against women which was launched on 25 February early this year. We are pleased to note that the Secretary General is committed to a stronger and more visible role of the United Nations in efforts to eliminate violence against women. As added-value, it is important to ensure that concrete follow-up programmes and actions are undertaken, and we ask that these are consulted with Member States.

6. The issue of violence against women is a priority for the Government of Malaysia, and we take a zero tolerance policy towards it. We undertake a holistic approach to this matter that includes removing impunity and prosecuting those who commit violence, as well as protecting and rehabilitating victims. To address this issue, the Domestic Violence Act (1994) is being reviewed and the Penal Code was amended to provide greater deterrence for sexual related offences. In addition to strengthening existing and introducing new legislation, preventive and rehabilitative programmes implemented are the creation of shelter homes and the campaign entitled, "Women against Violence (WAVE)". Through WAVE, a group of trained community volunteers are created who are able to provide guidance and service to victims of violence. These volunteers are the frontliners in their communities by reporting any occurrence of violence to the appropriate authorities.

7. Currently, more than 100 one-stop crisis centres have been set up throughout Malaysia in public hospitals. These centres allow for the management of the victims of violence and sexual crimes through a cooperative, comprehensive, integrated, as well as through multi-sectoral and inter-agency collaboration. Additionally, an integrated one-stop

call centre has also been established to allow assistance to all types of victims. This one-stop call centre allows the authorities to respond faster and more effectively to assist not only victims of violence, but also to assist in overall social welfare issues.

8. Malaysia is fully supportive of efforts towards creating a gender balance within the United Nations system. As stated in the Secretary-General's report on "Improvement of the status of women in the United Nations system", there remain some systematic impediments within the United Nations system. This needs to be improved. In implementing or adopting new policies to create a gender balance, thorough considerations from all angles are needed to ensure that the inclusion of the gender balance aspect contributes, and does not hinder the purpose of a programme. For example, some capacity-building programmes calling for participants from Member States require candidates from both genders. This in itself is something noble, but we have seen that where some Member States do not have women participants working in that field, or do not have the prerequisite credentials to be a candidate for that programme, the Member State is either unable to participate, or sends an unsuitable candidate. In such cases, policies need to be made less rigid to take into account the circumstances as it exists.

Mr. Chairman,

9. My delegation looks forward to the outcome of ongoing work by the Statistical Commission on the development of indicators to measure the scope, prevalence, and incidence of violence against women.

10. On this point of statistics, data collection within the context of developing policies for advancement of women is an absolute necessity. In Malaysia, we have established the Gender Disaggregated Information System (GDIS) to ensure the systematic collection and compilation of gender-disaggregated data. The GDIS provides data for gender analysis and planning and it is used as a tool to develop gender responsive policies, strategies and programmes. In implementing the GDIS, it is clear that efforts are needed for systematic and standardised data collection in the public and private sectors, and that it is important for such information to be of both a quantitative and qualitative nature.

11. Additionally, another achievement in the area of women's empowerment is the development of Malaysia's Gender Gap Index (MGGI). It is a composite index to measure gender equality in the four dimensions of health, education, economic and empowerment of women for the years 1980, 1990, 2000 and 2004. The time series data showed overall improvements in gender equality in the four areas. The MGGI was recently updated to include data for the year 2006.

Mr. Chairman,

12. In conclusion, the Government of Malaysia will continue to enhance efforts to further improve the status of women to enable them to reach their full potential and contribute towards the social and economic development of the country. Hence, gender mainstreaming will be given emphasis and gender considerations included in the formulation of policies and programmes.

Thank you.