

At the outset, my delegation joins earlier speakers in congratulating you on your assumption as Chair of the Expert Mechanism & we reaffirm our support & cooperation in facilitating your important work.

2. I take this opportunity to reaffirm the commitment and importance which my government attaches to the promotion & protection of rights of indigenous communities in Malaysia; including through the implementation of various legal, policy & administrative measures all derived from the rights and privileges of indigenous folks as enshrined in the Constitution. Malaysia also reaffirms its commitment and support for the UNDRIP which we have supported both in the HRC & at the General Assembly.

3. As such, my delegation takes strong exception to the statement by the representative of Timor-Leste which alleged that the Malaysian government, in pursuing the national development agenda, had violated the rights of indigenous communities. We regret that the representative of Timor-Leste had resorted to making politically motivated statements of ~~that~~ to the detriment of the work of the Expert Mechanism.

4. Concerning the right to education of indigenous communities; I wish to inform the meeting that since the start of the SR of Education in Malaysia, the government is fully seized of efforts to implement further enhance its provision of facilitating greater access to education for indigenous communities, which was commensurate by the SR of Education being in line with the UNDRIP.

5. Finally under Chair, my delegation fully supports your efforts in ensuring that the debate stays within the context & mandate of the Expert Mechanism.