

Statement by Malaysia
On Agenda Item 5: Review of Development Pertaining to the
Promotion and Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental
Freedoms of Indigenous People

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Madam President,

1. Thank you for giving me the floor. On behalf of the Malaysian delegation, I would like to congratulate you on your election to the Chair and wish you every success in steering this important Working Group.

2. The Malaysian Government is always aware of the responsibility in meeting the rights and needs of Malaysians including the indigenous population. The omnibus trust in the promotion and protection of rights, including the rights to development in Malaysia's multi-ethnic, multi-cultural and multi-religious society is enshrined in the Malaysian Constitution. The protection of the fundamental rights of Malaysians is always in line with the country's socio-economic development and in meeting the concerns of all Malaysians. The government has drawn up various socio-economic development plans, in consultation with the public by conducting hearings/dialogues with the population at various levels to obtain views and feedbacks. This is in line with the principles of a democratically elected government through elections, which has been held regularly since the country's independence. Criticisms made by representatives of some NGOs that Malaysians are not given the opportunity to participate in nation building process, is certainly not true.

3. One NGO Representative had referred to the ongoing developments in Sarawak, one of the 13 states in Malaysia, in a statement delivered during this session, and made remarks concerning the implementation of the Bakun Hydro Electric Project. The remarks made were incorrect and indeed misleading. I would like to take this opportunity to emphasise that the Malaysian government has taken into various factors and elements before finally deciding to implement the Bakun Hydroelectric Project, that include among others:-

- a. The energy sector plays a significant role in the development and growth of the Malaysian economy, and development programmes are designed and implemented to meet its current and future needs, including greater access to affordable energy in the rural areas, for the well being of its citizens. The continuous development of the energy sector is of priority to the Malaysian government in order to ensure adequate, secure and cost-effective supply.
- b. The Bakun project in Sarawak, is deemed as the most realistic option by the Malaysian government to address the future energy needs of Malaysia and in ensuring that the 30% margin of energy reserve be maintained.

- c. The Bakun project was also opted for, as hydroelectricity generation is an environment friendly energy option. Its realization, among others would pre-empt the use of an estimated 5.5 million tons of coal annually as an energy source.
- d. The Malaysian government has always pursued policies to increase the income of the people and to improve their quality of life by providing basic amenities and services. In line with this and in line with the government's long practice of social responsibility, all people affected by necessary development projects in Malaysia are fairly compensated and resettled. In the case of the people affected by the Bakun project, they were compensated and resettle at Kampung Asap. They are provided with housing and infrastructure facilities, including schools and roads, for their well being.

4. Having said that, I would like to draw the attention of all present, to the Malaysian Government's Third Outline Perspective Plan (OPP3) for 2001-2010 and the National Vision Policy, as well as the implementation of the Eighth Malaysia Plan for the 2001-2005 period. These plans set to provide development objectives of the nation and policies that will be followed in this decade to take Malaysia further towards a developed nation status as envisaged in our Vision 2020. I should like to point out that in formulating the OPP3, the government established the Second National Economic Action Council (MAPEN II) which comprised of 154 members representing various sections of the Malaysian society. The OPP3 and the National Vision Policy including the Eighth Malaysia Plan will help to strengthen the country's competitiveness and resilience, as well as build an equitable society to ensure stability and unity. The key thrusts of the National Vision Policy, among others are: -

- building a resilient nation by fostering unity, inculcating the spirit of patriotism, nurturing political maturity, cultivating a more tolerant and caring society with positive values, raising the quality of life, as well as increasing economic resilience;
- promoting an equitable society by eradicating poverty and reducing imbalances among and within ethnic groups as well as region;
- sustaining economic growth by identifying and strengthening the sources of growth, the financial and corporate institutions as well as macroeconomic management;
- enhancing competitiveness to meet the challenges of globalisation and liberalisation;
- developing a knowledge-based economy as a strategic move to raise the value added of all economic sectors and optimising the brain power of the nation;
- strengthening human resource development to produce a competent, productive and knowledgeable workforce; and
- a pursuing environmentally sustainable development to ensure long-term growth.

5. As for the Eighth Malaysian Plan, which is being implemented, the government, among others had set the following objectives:

- accelerating further structural transformation in manufacturing, services and agriculture sectors, increasing competitiveness and positioning industry for globalisation
- developing a knowledge-driven economy
- strengthening domestic capability particularly through the development of SMEs and Malaysian MNCS.
- expanding the, supply of skilled and knowledge manpower, improving quality of education and training, optimising utilisation of local labour and strengthening labour market information system.
- addressing environmental and resource management issues in an integrated and holistic manner through prudent and cost-effective approach: including through community participation.

6. In conclusion, my delegation would like to take this opportunity to emphasise that the policies, to be implemented by the government over the next 10 years and beyond, have only one main objective, that is to ensure continued economic growth and prosperity of the country for the benefit and well being of all the population in Malaysia regardless of their ethnic grouping or races. And the beneficiaries, Madam Chairperson, include the indigenous population of Malaysia.

Thank you.

**Permanent Mission of Malaysia to the United Nations
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