



Malaysia

Permanent Mission to the United Nations

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STATEMENT BY

THE HONOURABLE SENATOR SHAHRIZAT ANJUMAR

MINISTER OF WOMEN, FAMILY AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT,

MALAYSIA

ON AGENDA ITEM 7: FOLLOW-UP TO THE FOURTH WORLD

CONFERENCE ON WOMEN AND TO THE TWENTY-FIRST SPECIAL

SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, ENTITLED "WOMEN 2000:

GENDER EQUALITY, DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE FOR THE

TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY"

OF THE FIFTY-FIFTH SESSION OF THE COMMISSION ON THE

STATUS OF WOMEN

24 FEBRUARY 2001, UNITED NATIONS, NEW YORK



Chairperson,

1. On behalf of the Government and people of Malaysia, allow me at the outset to extend my sincere congratulations to you on your appointment as the Chair of this session. I would also like to congratulate Ms. Michelle Raeburn on her appointment as the Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director of UN Women. We fully support the establishment of UN Women and are confident that it will strengthen the ability of the United Nations to carry out its mandate in achieving gender equality and the empowerment of women worldwide. We are honoured to be a member of the United Nations Development Programme and to participate in the formulation of UN Women's Strategic Plan.

Chairperson,

2. Malaysia recognises that women's access to and participation in education and training, as well as science and technology, is essential to the development of a country. As indicated by the Secretary-General's report, E/2010/20, education is a key driver of growth and social change, and women's access to scientific and technological knowledge and skills is a rights issue, in as much as education is a basic human right. As an essential part of education, science education contributes to human development by providing tools with which to make sense of the world and empowers individuals to make informed decisions related to critical aspects of their lives.

3. Acknowledging the economic imperative of education, human capital science, technology and innovation, Malaysia under the leadership of the Prime Minister, the Right Honourable Dato Sri Mohd. Najib Tun Abdul Razak, has placed high priority on the importance of these issues in propelling Malaysia towards a developed, high-income nation status. Under the concept of "Malaysia, People First, Better Tomorrow" now, the Government has introduced the Transformation, Prosperity and Economic Transformation Programme, New Economic Model and Tenth Malaysia Plan (2011-2015). Under the latter, the Government of Malaysia is committed to increase the number of women in the workforce. As such, our national target is to increase the female labour force participation rate from 48.9 per cent presently to 55 per cent by 2015.

4. In this regard, I am proud to inform you that the women of Malaysia are not excluded from this important process. My Ministry, the Ministry for Women, Family and Community Development was chosen as one of the lead agencies in the implementation of the National Key Results Areas (NKRA) under the transformation programme to increase the income of poor households. The decision of the government clearly indicates its recognition and confidence in the Ministry to take the lead role for the elimination of the hardcore poverty and economically empower the low-income households. Likewise, the NKRA pertaining to education is spearheaded by the Ministry of Education with the objective to bring a higher level of education and better student performance, including

improvements in students' intellectual, emotional, spiritual and physical aspects.

5. In the area of science, technology and innovation, I am pleased to inform you that although science was once a very much male dominated area, it is now being much taken up by women, and they are showing great enthusiasm and achieving much success. The Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation is now a highly creative Ministry that has undergone a considerable, systematic and fundamental changes in its structure and functions to be the engine which promotes science, technology and innovation to support a transformation of the economy into an innovative, high income economy. I am proud to inform the Commission that the 2 top management positions of the Ministry are now being headed by women and more than 50% of the second tier management are made up of women.

6. Realizing the importance of science, technology and innovation as a key for development, the Ministry has declared the year 2010 as the Year of Innovation and Creativity and 2011-2012 as the Year of Science with the theme, "Go Science, Love Maths". The campaign is to instil the culture of innovation and creativity based on science and technology, eagerness and concentration on excellence to create a "1Malaysia, Innovative Nation". Taking into account, I am pleased to state with that, the Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development will form a strategic and innovative

alliance with the Ministry of Education as well as the Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation to implement programmes that allow women to unleash their potentials, thus empowering women in science, technology and innovation. This is true will allow women to be more resilient in the ever competitive and challenging world.

Chairperson

7. Notwithstanding the great inspirations and the immense effort that has been made in empowering women and girls to participate fully and meaningfully in education, training, science and technology, experience has shown that these have not sufficiently translated into decent employment opportunities for women. Gender stereotyping has been a powerful, albeit insidious, influence on career choices. Therefore, the preconceived ideas, bigotry and over conservative mindsets that "analogue tend to take large whiff of females and to take a risk" should be re-examined and have to change.

8. In Malaysia, effective measures must be put in place to address these unequal and unjustifiable concerns. Embedded in our gender mainstreaming programmes are measures to shape the attitudes of school children, and to do this in institutions of learning is clearly a priority to acculturate gender equality mindsets.

Chairperson,

90. Malaysia recognizes that civil society, including non-governmental organisations (NGOs), play a significant role in complementing the efforts of the Government in the development process, for the benefit of women. As a matter of fact, the NGOs are our strategic partners in implementing programmes at the grassroots level. In this regard, funding for NGOs is provided within their national budget to enable them to implement activities and programs for the advancement of women.

Chairperson,

10. The Government of Malaysia reaffirms its commitment to enhance efforts to further improve the status of women and girls to enable them to reach their full potential to contribute towards the social and economic development of the country.

Thank you.