



MALAYSIA

Permanent Mission to the United Nations, New York

**STATEMENT BY
MR. HAIRIL FADZLY MD AKIR
DEPUTY DIRECTOR GENERAL
NATIONAL POPULATION AND FAMILY DEVELOPMENT BOARD MALAYSIA
MINISTRY OF WOMEN, FAMILY AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

**AT THE GENERAL DEBATE OF THE
57TH SESSION OF THE COMMISSION ON POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT**

WEDNESDAY, 1 MAY 2024, CONFERENCE ROOM 4, UNHQ, NEW YORK

Madam Chair,

At the outset, I congratulate you on your appointment as Chair of this session of the Commission. Malaysia aligns itself with the statement delivered by Belarus on behalf of the Group of Friends of the Family.

Madam Chair,

2. In 1994, Malaysia, together with 178 other countries adopted the Programme of Action (POA) of the ICPD to spur necessary measures in addressing critical issues and challenges on population and development. Today, we meet to share our experiences, constraints and success stories so that together we can accelerate our actions more effectively and efficiently in order to meet the various goals that have yet to be achieved.

3. Despite facing numerous challenges in our endeavour, Malaysia is pleased to report that significant progress has been made over the past 30 years since the implementation of the Programme of Action. This includes improvements such as increased life expectancies as well as better access to services and education on sexual and reproductive health.

4. For decades, Malaysia has excelled in providing high-quality, accessible, and affordable healthcare, aligning with the principle of universal health coverage. This has led to increased life expectancy, with the average life expectancy at birth in 2023 recorded at 72.5 years for males and 77.4 for females compared to 61.6 years for males and 65.6 for females in 1970. These achievements follow the declining death rates over the past decades whereby the number of deaths among infants under 1-year-old and children under 5 years old in 2022 were 6.1 and 7.4 per 1,000 live births, respectively, compared to 39.4 and 55.9 in 1970. In other words, Malaysia has reduced child mortality rates in the last five decades by more than 80 percent.

5. Despite these achievements, Malaysia like many other countries is becoming an aging nation due to declining fertility and increasing life expectancy. As 10.7 per cent of its population aged above 60 in 2020, Malaysia is expected to reach aged nation status by 2030. In this regard, Malaysia has revised its National Policy for Older Persons to enhance the integration of the elderly into society and introduced measures to boost the number of geriatricians and aged care health professionals under the National Health Policy for Older Persons.

Madam Chair,

6. Malaysia's commitment to adolescent healthcare is evident in the National Adolescent Health Plan of Action (2015-2020) and the revised National Policy and Plan of Action on Social and Reproductive Health Education (2022-2025). These initiatives emphasize sexual and reproductive health education rooted in religious and moral principles across different settings and age groups.

7. The Government also provides comprehensive health care services which includes contraceptive and sexual and reproductive health services that are integrated into primary health-care facilities nationwide. Family planning services are also provided by the National Population and Family Development Board of the Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development, NGOs such as the Family Planning Associations as well as private practitioners.

8. Acknowledging the importance of advancing gender equality in all aspects of life, Malaysia remains committed to dismantling barriers and creating an inclusive environment where women and girls can thrive, achieve their aspirations, and actively participate in decision-making processes that affect their lives. As a result, Malaysia has made notable progress on gender equality and women's economic empowerment. This is exemplified by the consistent enrolment rate of female students pursuing first degrees in public universities, which has remained above 62 percent from 2009 to 2022.

9. The government's extensive efforts to elevate the representation of women in key decision-making roles of 30 percent have yielded significant results in recent years, coinciding with the entrance of highly educated women into the workforce. The proactive implementation of this policy has resulted in a notable increase in the proportion of women occupying decision-making positions within the public sector, rising from 18.8 percent in 2004 to 38.8 percent in 2023, while strides are being made towards achieving similar progress in the private sector.

Madam Chair,

10. In conclusion, Malaysia reaffirms its commitment to the ICPD-POA and will continue to work towards creating policy prescriptions to ensure that the country remains peaceful and prosperous with fair, equitable as well as inclusive economic distribution.

Thank you.