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**NATIONAL STATEMENT BY DATO' SRI DR. NOORUL AINUR MOHD NUR,
SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE MINISTRY OF WOMEN, FAMILY AND
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT OF MALAYSIA AT THE 47TH SESSION OF THE
COMMISSION ON POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT, 8 APRIL 2014**

AGENDA ITEM 4:

**GENERAL DEBATE ON NATIONAL EXPERIENCE IN POPULATION MATTERS:
ASSESSMENT OF THE STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAMME OF
ACTION OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON POPULATION AND
DEVELOPMENT**

Mr. Chairman,

Allow me to join other delegates in congratulating you on your election as the Chair of the Forty-Seventh Session of the Commission. My delegates and I are confident that under your able leadership and guidance, the deliberations of this session will be both substantive and fruitful.

2. On behalf of the Malaysian delegation, I would like to express our appreciation to the Secretary General for the comprehensive report on the Assessment of the Status of Implementation of the Programme of Action (POA) of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD).

3. Malaysia shares the view that the current state of the world's population is one of unprecedented diversity and change, reflected in new patterns of fertility, mortality, migration, urbanisation and ageing. The continuation and consequences of these population trends will present both opportunities and challenges for the formulation and implementation of the post-2015 development agenda and for the achievement of all internationally agreed development goals.

Mr. Chairman,

4. Malaysia has undertaken periodic reviews to assess the achievements of the ICPD goals and objectives. At the national level, four assessments have been conducted while at the international level, Malaysia participated in the Global Survey Beyond 2014 conducted by the UNFPA in 2012.

5. I am pleased to report that Malaysia has achieved most of the objectives and goals of the ICPD-PoA. New policies and programmes are being implemented to respond to the changing socio-economic conditions and emerging challenges for Malaysia to become a high income, developed nation by 2020. Key enabling factors such as our political stability, an efficient civil service, a harmonious social environment, unity and strength in diversity, an educated and trained workforce, abundant natural resources, and effective partnerships with stakeholders and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) have contributed to our success in achieving the ICPD-PoA and other development goals.

6. Poverty eradication programmes have been highly effective in reducing the incidence of poverty from 8.7 percent in 1995 to 1.7 percent in 2012. During the same period, the incidence of hardcore poverty decreased from 2.0 percent to 0.2 percent. The reduction in the rate was due to inclusive poverty eradication initiatives which aimed to improve immediate welfare as well as provide income-earning opportunities to ensure sustainability.

7. With regard to education, the enrolment rate at primary education increased from 95.05 percent in 2001 to 96.59 percent in 2013, while the enrolment rate at secondary education increased from 85.85 percent in 2001 to 91.12 percent in 2013. The Government of Malaysia has given special attention to education for women. This is evident in the enrolment of women doing first degrees in public universities which has been consistently above 62 percent for the period 2009-2012. I am also pleased to inform you that 28,280 or 68.02 percent of 41,573 new student intake for first degrees for the 2013/2014 academic year in public universities are female students.

8. The Government of Malaysia has set forth a plan to increase women's participation rate in the workforce to 55 percent by the year 2015. Due to our efforts, the participation rate of women in the work force increased from 46.8 percent in 2010 to 49.5 percent in 2012 and rose to 52.4 in 2013.

9. With better educated women entering the workforce, Malaysia has achieved the Policy of At Least 30 Percent Women in Decision Making Positions in the Public Sector. Proactive implementation of this policy has seen the percentage of women holding decision-making positions in the public sector increase from 18.8 percent in 2004 to 33.7 percent in 2013.

10. The same target was set for women at decision making levels in the corporate sector. Following the implementation of this policy, women representation in the Boards of Directors of Government Investment Companies (GIC) has increased from 14 percent in 2012 to 15.34 percent in January 2014.

Mr. Chairman,

11. Owing to its excellent health system, Malaysia has one of the lowest mortality rates among developing countries, which is 4.6 deaths per thousand population in 2012 compared to 4.7 deaths per thousand population in 2011.

12. The average life expectancy at birth in 2013 was 72.6 years for males and 77.2 for females compared to 70 years for males and 74.7 for females in 2000.

13. In Malaysia, the number of reported HIV cases has declined steadily. However, while the epidemic was initially dominated by transmission through drugs users, there has been a rise in HIV cases attributed to heterosexual intercourse and this phenomenon is prevalent among the younger cohort (aged between 15 to 24) years old). To address new challenges, Malaysia formulated the National Strategic Plan on HIV and AIDS 2011-2015.

14. The National Strategic Plan incorporates a multi-sectoral strategy that takes into account young people's vulnerability and provides the delivery of free first line treatment for all patients at government hospitals and clinics, provision of sexual reproductive health education and services as well as encouraging HIV testing through voluntary testing and counselling.

15. With regard to reproductive cancers, Malaysia has introduced a national *human papilloma virus* (HPV) vaccination programme in 2010. Free HPV immunisation is given to 13 year old Malaysian girls who are in schools to protect them from cervical cancer. An average of 250,000 girls benefit from the programme every year which costs the government USD12.2 million per year.

16. The Government of Malaysia has adopted various approaches to address issues related to the reproductive health of adolescents. The introduction of the National Policy on Reproductive Health and social Education and its Action Plan in November 2009 has paved the way for increased access to reproductive health education, information and services for adolescents and youth. A major milestone under this policy is the integration of Reproductive Health and Social Education into the National Service Training curriculum in 2011 which benefits around 100,000 school leavers each year.

17. In addition, the National Adolescent Health Policy (2001) and the National Adolescent Health Plan of Action (2006-2020) were formulated to empower adolescents (aged 10–19 years) with the appropriate knowledge and assertive skills to enable them to practise healthy behaviour and lifestyles.

Mr. Chairman,

18. Migration has an impact on the economy, education, health, security, community and family. Due to its economic prosperity and rapid economic growth over the decades, Malaysia has become one of the major destinations for citizens of other

countries. Until January 2014, there are 2.09 million foreign workers employed in Malaysia.

19. As such, policies and legislation have been put in place to address issues pertaining to international migrants. Measures taken include:

- migration policies that use health as a primary criterion for permitting migrant entry and stay for employment; and
- the enforcement of the Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act and Anti-Smuggling of Migrants Act 2007.

Mr. Chairman,

20. Despite the achievement of almost all ICPD objectives, we are constantly assessing the changing socio-economic conditions, such as the decline in fertility and population ageing.

21. Malaysia's total fertility rate declined from 2.9 in 2000 to 2.2 in 2006 and to 2.1 in 2012. The decline in fertility level will have profound effects on the nation's population size and composition. This will result in significant age structural shift and population ageing that will determine the future labour supply.

22. Apart from that, Malaysia's total population of older persons in the year 2013 was 8.6 percent from the total population of the country (2.57 million out of 29.95 million). By 2030, Malaysia will be in the category of ageing nations with older persons constituting more than 15 percent of the population.

23. Malaysia is of the view that fertility decline and ageing population are issues that could pose challenges in achieving the MDGs. Ageing can be considered from both the health and socio-economic perspective. Hence, comprehensive policies, programmes and services to ensure the well being of older persons should be initiated and implemented.

24. Finally, Mr. Chair, I wish to reiterate that Malaysia will give her full support to all deliberations of this Forty-Seventh Session of the United Nations Commission on Population and Development.

Thank you.