



Malaysia

Permanent Mission to the United Nations

MALAYSIA

COUNTRY STATEMENT

**THE THIRD SESSION OF THE
OPEN-ENDED WORKING GROUP ON AGEING**

Presented by

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Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development**

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Mr Chairman,

On behalf of the Malaysian delegation, allow me at the outset to extend my sincere congratulations to you on your appointment as the Chair for the Third Session of the Open-Ended Working Group on Ageing. We are confident that under your able leadership and guidance, the deliberations of the Working Group will be both substantive and fruitful.

I would like to commend the Division for Social Policy and Development (DSPD), United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) for its role in propelling the international community to support initiatives that aim to address the increasing challenges of ageing population, a subject which is critically important and close to all our hearts.

Ageing population is a universal phenomenon experienced by nearly all countries in the world at different rates. Malaysia, for example, with a total population of 28.6 million in 2011, has experienced a steady rise in its older persons (those aged 60 years and above) from 6.3% in 2000 to 7.7% (or 2.2 million) in 2011. By 2020, it is estimated that the number of older persons in Malaysia will be 5.5 million and by 2030, the older persons will constitute 15% of the total population.

In order to address the increasing challenges and needs of senior citizens, the government has reviewed the National Policy and Plan of Action for Older Persons which were formulated in 1995 and 1998 respectively. Subsequently, in responding to the trends of ageing population, a new Policy for Older Persons and its Plan of Action was approved by the government in January 2011.

The review was seen as necessary, in particular to address the needs of older persons effectively and efficiently and to ensure an enabling and supportive environment for the well-being of older persons as well as to promote healthy, active and productive ageing. The Policy outlines six strategies to empower the individual, family and the community towards improving the well-being of older Malaysians, namely promotion and advocacy; life-long learning; safety and security; governance and shared responsibility; inter-generational solidarity; and research and development.

Mr Chairman,

With regard to the existing international framework on the human rights of older persons and identification of existing gaps at the international level, Malaysia would like to suggest that the statistical capacity of countries as well as data collection of older

persons is given due prominence. In addition, the data needs to be disaggregated by sex as part of global strategic planning efforts.

Malaysia would also suggest that a repository on ageing population is established to enable the sharing of data, information as well as best practices among the relevant stakeholders. Many technology innovations and systems are readily available to make this suggestion possible. Additionally, online storage costs have dropped significantly, making repositories more affordable these days.

Human beings are living longer today, and with increasing age, we are also more likely to live with chronic illness and disability. Some research carried out indicates that approximately 80% of people age 65 and older have at least one chronic illness, such as heart disease, diabetes, or arthritis, and that the number of older persons with multiple chronic illnesses is substantial. To address these issues in the future, research should focus on older persons with multiple chronic illnesses rather than just one illness, as this scenario best represents the typical older patient.

In addition, as the way forward, it has become increasingly apparent that solutions to the healthcare challenges of older persons require a collaborative teamwork approach that is inter-disciplinary.

Finally Malaysia wishes to reiterate its commitment to address the increasing challenges of ageing population and will give its full support in all deliberations of the Third Session of the Open-Ended Working Group on Ageing.

Thank you.