

**EIGHTH ASIA-PACIFIC FORUM ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (APFSD-8)  
THE UNITED NATIONS ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMISSION FOR ASIA AND  
THE PACIFIC (UNESCAP), 23 - 26 MARCH 2021**

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**COUNTRY STATEMENT**

**Agenda Item 2: Regional perspectives on accelerating progress on the 2030  
Agenda for Sustainable Development**

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Mr. Chairman,

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

1. On behalf of the Government of Malaysia, I would like to congratulate the UN ESCAP for organising this forum, in time for Malaysia to review our achievements of the Sustainable Development Goals, and for the upcoming Second National Voluntary Review 2021.
2. Malaysia welcomes the findings by UN ESCAP on the progress, gaps, challenges and recommendations in building back the resilience of the economy, wellbeing of the people, and addressing the urgent need for environmental and climate action, due to the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and series of lockdowns that took place.
3. In this regard, Malaysia takes note on the challenges faced in implementing the Sustainable Development Goals due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which also has impacted the progress made for the SDGs. In particular, the Goals concerning poverty, hunger, health, environmental degradation and climate change, which are Goals 1,2, 3, 8, 10, 12, 13, 16, and 17.
4. Since the onslaught of the COVID-19 pandemic early last year, the Government has implemented **several economic stimulus packages worth RM340 billion**, equivalent to more than 20 percent of GDP. These economic stimulus packages also involved a fiscal injection of RM55 billion by the Government. These stimulus packages were announced in stages from March 2020 up until March 2021. The strategies outlines in the packages entailed a series of

assistance and aid in addressing people's wellbeing particularly for the B40 and the vulnerable groups to lessen the effect of COVID-19 as well as to encourage quality investments and cater business needs among others. More than 20 million people and 2.4 million businesses have benefited directly from the stimulus packages. The National Budget 2021 announcement on 6 November 2020, further supports our economic recovery efforts through an allocation of RM322.5 billion.

5. The strategies outlined in the economic stimulus packages seek to address the possibility of Malaysia experiencing a K-shaped economy recovery as outlined in the first paper. The initiatives helped save over 2.4 million jobs, while easing income concerns for about 11 million Malaysians from the B40 and M40 income groups through cash assistance, propelling business, and also supporting the tourism industry through tax exemptions.
6. In recognising the importance of digitalisation of the economy and other sectors in building back Malaysia's resilience, the Government recently launched the MyDIGITAL Economy Blueprint, which complements the upcoming Twelfth Malaysia Plan and the Vision for Shared Prosperity 2030. This initiative will propel a digitally-enabled government, empower businesses to innovate, and help bridge the digital divide to ensure Malaysians can enjoy improved digital literacy and social wellbeing.
7. Malaysia hopes the UN and member states will continue to **share their best practices, knowledge and technical expertise through capacity building** to enhance member states' ability in data collection and analysis as well as addressing the data gaps.
8. We also hope that the UN could provide **recommendations and plan of action** for countries to safely open up their borders to promote travel and trade in this region to boost up countries' economies as outlined in the papers.

Thank you.