COUNTRY STATEMENT

BY

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Madam/Mr. Chair,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates.

The Malaysian Government has been providing continuous support for older persons to remain strong and resilient in adapting to the new norm in the endemic phase. Data from the Population and Housing Census Malaysia 2020 shows that people aged 60 and above constitute 10.4% of the total population in Malaysia as compared to only 8% in 2010. The Household Income and Basic Amenities Survey 2019 reveal that over one-third of Malaysian households have at least one co-residing older person. Following a decline in fertility, the country is ageing from the bottom. Realising that, Malaysia has put in various structures and support in place to prepare for the aging society.

2. On the international front, the **Kuala Lumpur Declaration on Active Ageing: Empowering Older Persons in ASEAN** was adopted in 2015 to promote healthy, active and productive ageing. Malaysia has played an active role in the development and implementation of this **Regional Plan of Action**. The National Population and Family Development Board, an agency under my ministry has also recently
concluded the **Establishment of an ASEAN-Wide Research Networking on Ageing Project** for a standardised research protocol as a means to promote country comparisons and data harmonization to improve policy responses to ageing in the region.

3. At the domestic level, the **National Policy and Plan of Action for Older Persons**, a guiding policy on the provision of social welfare services for older persons has been drafted based on three priority areas outlined in MIPAA and Agenda 2030. Over the years, Malaysia has moved beyond a welfare-oriented approach and this is reflected in the appointment of 7 sub-committees covering different portfolios under the **National Advisory and Consultative Council for Older Persons**. Members of this Council consist of representatives from various ministries and agencies, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), private sectors, communities as well as individuals who have interests in ageing.

Madam/Mr. Chair,

4. Inclusivity of older persons in national development is a key recurring theme in development plans. Malaysia recognises the crucial role played by NGOs as well in enhancing the needs and wellbeing of older persons. Allow me to briefly reflect on Malaysia’s achievement in these areas:

   (i) Malaysia has completed a study in drafting a Bill specifically for older persons in October 2021 that sets out the rights to equality and non-discrimination. The rights of older persons will be further recognised once a new law on older persons is tabled in the first quarter of 2023.
(ii) The Government has reviewed the national monthly Poverty Line Income (PLI) from approximately USD220 to USD500 per household to reflect the consumption patterns, needs, as well as demographics of Malaysian households. With this new PLI, starting January 2021, the monthly cash transfer for older persons has been increased by 43 per cent. As of May 2022, a total of 139,000 eligible older persons have benefited from this assistance amounting to USD82 million.

(iii) Activity Centres for Older Persons have been implemented with strategic cooperation between government agencies and NGOs. Adopted based on the community concept, the centre provides older persons with the opportunity to socialize with peers and implement activities including recreation, health screenings and capacity building. These efforts aim to overcome the empty nest syndrome; promote productive and inclusive aging; lifelong learning; and volunteering among older persons. As of June 2022, there are a total of 50,929 older persons participating actively at 153 centres nationwide.

5. Malaysia shall continue to effectively implement national policies and plan of actions for older persons to promote and protect their rights and dignity. Malaysia would like to acknowledge the work that is done at regional level, especially the efforts of UN ESCAP. I hope that this Meeting will provide us with valuable opportunities to share good practices and prepare us to respond adequately to the challenges faced in an ageing society.

Thank you.