

**INTERVENTION NOTES TO THE REPORT OF THE SPECIAL
RAPPORTEUR ON THE RIGHT TO EDUCATION OF PERSONS WITH
DISABILITIES.**

Thank you Mr. President.

1. The Malaysian delegation wishes to convey our appreciation to the Special Rapporteur on the right to education, Mr. Vernor Munoz, for the presentation of his report. We also thank him for having undertaken a country visit to Malaysia recently during which we had good and constructive dialogues concerning Malaysia's education policy. In this context, we look forward to receiving his report on that visit which will certainly be of great interest to us.

Mr. President,

2. On the Report that has just been presented, The right to education of persons with disabilities, we would like to give our support to the case for inclusive education. In Malaysia, educational provisions for children with learning disabilities are widely available in the form of integrated programmes.
3. As it exists now in Malaysia, special needs children receive inclusive education and we have not built special schools since 1988. We had built those schools before because of the need to address the problems of large class sizes in our mainstream schools and the absence of teacher assistants. In these and very few cases, mechanisms are in place to ensure they abide by the mainstream curriculum. There is no alternative curriculum because we believe in providing equal opportunity for these children.
4. The government also provides residential facilities for these students especially if they have logistics problems. Our Education Act of 1996 specifies that these students are given an allowance of 2 years to be in the mainstream of education.
5. What I would like to share next is our 5-year plan for special education in Malaysia.
6. In our recent Malaysia Educational Development Plan or the blueprint for 2006-2010, we recognize that there are several types of educational gap. These include the gap between higher income families and lower income, the digital gap, the achievement gap, the rural-urban gap and the gap between special needs children and normal children. The Blueprint has outlined several strategies to address these educational gaps which are cross-cutting issues.
7. One such strategy put forth is to strengthen special education by increasing the participation rate and reducing the risk of dropping out. Accordingly, the plan of action includes increasing the number of primary and secondary Integrated Special Education Programmes in mainstream schools. We are also amending our

Regulations of Special Education of 1957 to ensure students with disabilities receive the proper attention especially with respect to multiple disabilities.

8. Other strategies that have been implemented and some are in the pipeline include providing a yearly grant and monthly allowance or pocket money for children with special needs and providing transport for them.
9. We are continuously studying ways to improve on the appropriate assessment methods for these children. These children are also given the rights to access to education and even encouraged to pursue their education at technical or vocational secondary schools.
10. Malaysia views the provision of inclusive education for special needs children as vital and towards this end, our policy has always been to give emphasis on adequate teacher training and to develop specialists in these less-explored areas. Thus in the next five years, we are sending more teachers to be trained in many areas of special needs such as speech pathology, clinical psychology, vocational training and differentiated instruction. Aside from this, teachers also attend numerous in-service courses specifically designed to enable them to respond to diversity in the classroom and to cater to the individual needs of the child.
10. Once again, Malaysia wishes to support the aims and aspirations of the Report by Special Rapporteur, Mr. Munoz. We fully understand the concerns addressed in the paper. These include : i) The need to carefully monitor the special needs children especially in terms of exclusion from education ii) the provision for statistical and data collection and analysis, iii) the respect for choice of parents, iv) the need to establish standards of education that are on equal basis with others.

Mr. President,

11. Like Costa Rica and New Zealand, we ask if the Special Rapporteur could highlight some of the best practices in inclusive education that the team have come across in their visits or in the analysis of the data on inclusive education.
12. Finally, we appreciate that you have outlined the challenges facing inclusive education and that it becomes an important agenda for all of us to address them for the achievement of the right to education of persons with disabilities. The conclusions and recommendations put forth in the paper deserve careful study by all governments.

Thank you, Mr. President.