

Statement by Malaysia

Agenda Item 9: Racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related forms of intolerance: follow-up to and implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action - General Debate 10th Regular Session of the Human Rights Council, 2 – 27 March 2009

Mr. President,

My delegation aligns itself with the statements by the delegation of Pakistan and Cuba, delivered on behalf of the OIC and NAM, respectively. We are fully appreciative that the important issue of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance which affects all countries in the world is an important feature of the Council's work.

2. My delegation takes this opportunity to express its hope for a mutually agreeable and consensus outcome to the upcoming Durban Review Conference. We reaffirm our commitment to work constructively with all delegations with a view to ensuring such an outcome. In our view, a consensus outcome document which not only reaffirms the important principles enshrined in the DDPA of 2001 but also contains action oriented language, will serve as an indispensable guide to the international community's efforts in combating the insidious menace of racism.

3. Malaysia has been unfortunate enough to experience the ugly and deadly side of racism which culminated in the race riots of 1969, resulting in massive loss of lives and destruction of property. In the aftermath of the riots, the government in 1972 instituted legal and administrative provisions aimed at addressing underdevelopment, poverty and the association of race with vocation, which in our experience constituted the root causes for racism and racial discrimination. Even so, given the complex multicultural and multireligious composition of Malaysia society, the project of nation-building aimed at eradicating distinctions on the basis of race, gender, religious and other grounds remains a constant preoccupation of the government.

Mr. President,

4. My delegation takes this opportunity to thank the High Commissioner for Human Rights for her report A/HRC/10/45 concerning the composition of staff in the OHCHR. In this regard, my delegation welcomes the commitment expressed by Madam Pillay to take appropriate steps towards ensuring that the composition of staff in her office conforms to the relevant principles, including equitable geographical representation. We reiterate the view that such efforts would go a long way towards enhancing the reputation of the OHCHR as a respected, impartial, non-discriminatory and non-selective international institution.

5. My delegation also takes this opportunity to reiterate its full support for the work of the Ad-Hoc Committee on the elaboration of complementary standards, established by HRC resolution 6/21. We are encouraged to note that the AHC has agreed on a roadmap for its future work. In this context, we reaffirm our readiness to work constructively with all delegations with a view to achieving positive gains in the fight against racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, including its contemporary manifestations.

I thank you, Mr. President.

24 MARCH 2009