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Office of the Resident Coordinator Of The United Nations
System's Operational Activities For Development in Malaysia

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**SPEECH
CELEBRATION OF THE
INTERNATIONAL DAY OF LIVING TOGETHER IN PEACE**

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FOR MALAYSIA, SINGAPORE & BRUNEI

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KUALA LUMPUR, MALAYSIA**

Thank you and a very good morning:

His Excellency Nasreddine Rimouche, Amabssador of Algeria,

Yang Berbahagia Dato' Dr. Nasharudin Mat Isa, Chairman and CEO of the Global Movement of Moderates Foundation,

Yang Berbahagia Tan Sri Rastam Mohamad Isa,

Yang Berbahagia Tan Sri Dato' Dr. Michael Yeoh,

Prof. Dr. Abdelaziz Berghout, Deputy Rector, International Islamic University.

Excellencies,

Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

The first half of the 20th century was defined by cataclysmic wars and the UN was founded to steer humanity in a direction of peace and prosperity. And while through our collective efforts, world wars have been successfully avoided, and human development has reached unprecedented heights in terms of income, education levels and longevity, the 21st century is still marred by different types of non-state, inter-state and intra-state wars and conflicts – that have caused untold suffering to millions.

It is therefore, very significant that we now have a new day to celebrate the importance of “living together in peace”. And I congratulate the Government of the People’s Democratic Republic of Algeria for having their resolution passed by consensus in the UN General Assembly last year.

I also take this opportunity to congratulate Malaysia on its recent elections, especially the peaceful transition of power and for being a model to the world in this regard. The people's trust and commitment to democracy this past week, has been nothing short of impressive.

Peace as an outcome of good governance, inclusive growth and sustainable development

Ladies and gentlemen,

Talking about the highest public good of "Peace" we have to acknowledge that Peace is an outcome of a number of key elements that must be in place.

SDGs

Peace and development are intrinsically linked as underscored by the Resolution. And the Sustainable Development Goals (or SDGs) provide countries with a detailed implementation framework to achieve prosperous and peaceful societies. The SDG principle of leaving no one behind – is crucial to sustaining peace, more so now than ever before. Because we live in a world of new challenges that include - unprecedented human mobility, protracted conflict, climate change and rising inequalities.

Inclusive development

First, the building of peaceful societies, is deeply rooted in inclusive growth, where everyone enjoys an equitable share of the fruits of development; where grievances are systematically addressed and reduced.

Governance

Second, peace is directly linked to governance – the rule of law, transparent and accountable institutions, access to justice and importantly the realization of human rights. This is so compellingly articulated in Goal 16 of the SDGs that lays out the governance benchmarks for peaceful societies.

Sustainability

Third, peace is also linked to environmentally sustainable development – by ensuring that economic growth is taking into account of environmental impacts and the inherent limitation of natural resources on our planet. Otherwise conflicts triggered by the competition for natural resources and degradation of land and seas are bound to increase in the future. Hence peaceful coexistence on our small vulnerable planet depends on the prudent management of natural resources and on joint action to stem climate change and other environmental degradation.

PH Manifesto

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The United Nations is encouraged by the commitments made by the newly elected government in its manifesto that has many of these important elements embedded. Indeed, the expressed commitments place great emphasis on good governance and institutional reform, reducing the burden of people, sustainable and equitable economic growth, and the creation of a Malaysia that is inclusive and moderate.

It also has a strong emphasis on vulnerable groups, in line with the principle of the SDGs to reach those furthest behind first, which is critical to building inclusive and peaceful societies.

Dignity and Equal Rights

Finally, we are happy to see that “rights” are prominent throughout the manifesto, which is in line with Malaysia’s commitments to international standards and conventions, particularly the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights – because the realization of human rights is fundamental to our ability to live in peace with one another.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Inter-ethnic and inter-religious harmony are particularly relevant in our globalised world and in multi-cultural countries like Malaysia. Equal rights and non-discrimination therefore, needs to be legally safeguarded and mainstreamed into policies, programmes and legal instruments. This will ensure a level playing field and equal opportunities for all persons.

Ladies and gentlemen,

We all have a choice in the way we interact with one another. And every day, each and every one of us can choose to stand up against prejudice and intolerant attitudes.

Let this “International Day for Living Together for Peace” serve both as a reminder and an opportunity for us to work towards reconciliation, peace and sustainable development.

And may I end by saying that the globally adopted Agenda 2030 and SDGs can only be achieved where there is “tolerance, inclusion, unity and respect for diversity”, and when all people everywhere, enjoy equal rights. These are the cornerstones of peace and sustainable development.

Thank you.