NATIONAL STATEMENT

BY

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PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF BRUNEI DARUSSALAM
TO THE UNITED NATIONS

AGENDA ITEM: 11

"SPORT FOR DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE"

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Mr. President,

1. Brunei Darussalam fully supports this agenda item on Sport for Development and Peace. We also recognise the significant role and positive impact of sport in contributing towards development and peace.

2. We have in place a National Sports Policy since 1989 which identifies sport as one of the crucial elements and most effective means to enhance the quality of life. We believe that sport can be an effective tool in bringing everyone together, across nations and boundaries, communicating, understanding one another; and forming friendships which in the long run can bring about peace and harmony. We are also convinced that this development will ensue not just at national level but also the world at large.

3. In Brunei Darussalam, we encourage everyone’s participation in sport activities including the young and elderly. Our target includes having in place at least one sports facility within two kilometres of each populated area. We now have in place 673 sporting facilities with 140 soccer fields; 200 outdoor and 260 indoor sports facilities; 60 jogging tracks; and 13 public swimming pools.

4. Physical education has always been a part of our national education curriculum. Our school children and youth are not only highly active in sport competitions across the country but have also participated in both regional and international tournaments including the Southeast Asian Games, ASEAN School Games and Islamic Solidarity Games.

5. We are also proud that we now have good representation of female athletes, instructors, coaches and sports administrators. At present, females in Brunei Darussalam account for almost 60% of our national athletes and they
represent the country at numerous sub-regional, regional and international sporting events including the 2012 London Olympics.

6. Our efforts towards inclusiveness came in the form of a national Plan of Action on Persons with Special Needs to promote and protect their rights and enhance their full participation in society. To ensure this and that our people are able to reach their full potential, the Plan of Action is carried out with close collaboration with both private sectors and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs). Our national sport events have also included the rights of all people to participate and our first athlete took part at the 2012 Paralympics London summer games.

Mr President,

7. In commemorating the International Day of Sport for Development and Peace, Brunei Darussalam, on 6 April this year, for the first time organised a nation-wide sporting event with the collaboration and participation of our national sport associations and bodies. (National Olympic Council, Brunei Cycling Federation, Canoe Association and Paralympics Association) Our objective was to inculcate the spirit and value of sports for all, equality and non-discrimination, fairness, integrity, tolerance, respect and mutual understanding.

8. Additionally, we have two on-going programmes in relation to Sport for Development and Peace which particularly focus on our youth who made up more than 50% of our population. The first is the Hassanal Bolkiah Trophy (HBT) ASEAN Soccer Under-21 Tournament. The protagonist for this tournament is His Majesty the Sultan of Brunei Darussalam who encourages young athletes and sports enthusiasts from the ASEAN countries to come together to uphold the spirit of sportsmanship and form bonds of friendship. This tournament is also to promote greater
understanding and contribute to the maintenance of a harmonious ASEAN Community in the Southeast Asian region.

9. The other programme we have is an annual 5-day National Youth Challenge aimed at cultivating the values and spirits of sport amongst the young people from an early age. This programme brings together youth from various backgrounds. Part of the activities is team building exercises through community service such as helping the poor, the elderly and people with special needs.

Mr President,

10. Brunei Darussalam welcomes the Commonwealth Youth Sport for Development and Peace Working Group, which emphasises youth development. In this regard, we established two communication platforms called “For-the-Youth, By-the-Youth” and “National Youth Dialogue” whereby the Government takes into account the views of young people on the promotion of healthy lifestyles, sports volunteerism and sports industry.

11. The importance of sport for development in social harmony and economic progress is also upheld. Towards this end, our Ministries of Culture, Youth and Sports, Education, Health and Development; as well as the private sectors have been working hand in hand in organising sporting events nationally and regionally to promote healthy lifestyles.

12. In conclusion, Mr President, Brunei Darussalam welcomes the sharing of best practices in sport for development and peace programmes with other Member States. We believe this will develop, enhance and strengthen our relations with other Member States and unite the world community in terms of social life, youth development, peace and foster sustainable development.