Mr Chairman,

Malaysia wishes to associate itself with the statement made by the distinguished representatives of Fiji, on behalf of G77 and China, and the Philippines, on behalf of ASEAN. We thank the Secretary-General for the report under this agenda item.

2. As highlighted in the Secretary General's report document A/68/311, approximately 868 million people are suffering from chronic undernourishment. While an estimated 26 per cent of the world’s children are stunted and 2 billion people suffer from one or more micronutrient deficiencies. In the 21st century, with all of our technological and agricultural expertise, the figures are certainly mind boggling and paint a gloomy outlook on the current state of food and nutrition insecurity in the world. We therefore, welcome the Zero Hunger Challenge, launched by the UN Secretary-General last year that expresses a vision of a world without hunger and malnutrition in all its forms, especially child stunting, and where agriculture and food systems are sustainable and contribute to eradicating rural poverty through the inclusion of smallholders, rural workers and the landless.

3. Malaysia concurs with the report that there are greater challenges for the global agriculture sector in the coming years. Rising population growth will increase the demand for food while climate change and ecosystem degradation will slow production. Hence, concerted efforts by all is a must to enhance agricultural production.

Mr. Chairman,

4. Paragraph 67 of the Secretary-General's report, states among others, food security and nutrition is a global challenge and a national policy responsibility. It further calls for
Member States to make food security and nutrition a high priority and reflect this in their national programmes and budgets. Against this backdrop, let me share briefly with this august Committee on Malaysia’s national efforts in addressing food security challenges and the eradication of poverty in relation to food security.

5. Recognizing the vital importance of food security and nutrition in meeting the nation’s needs, Malaysia has made it a point to ensure that sustainable agriculture and food security and nutrition are high on its national agenda. In this regard, specific strategies to expand the agriculture sector are adopted under the on-going 10th Malaysia Plan. These are:

- Setting up agriculture consortiums and cooperatives, encourage adoption of accredited practices by farmers, fishermen and agropreneurs, and strengthen marketing through contract farming and strategic alliances;
- Review and streamline current regulation and procedures;
- Promoting innovation-based growth and production processes that utilise modern farm technology and ICT;
- Provide adequate and specific infrastructure, facilities and logistics to support value addition activities based on availability and proximity of resources; and
- Intensify collaborative Research and Development (R&D) with established agriculture research institutes.

6. In 2011, The National Agro-Food Policy (NAP) 2011-2020 was formulated to address the agro-food industry and to ensure sustainable production and consumption of food. It also aims to reform and transform the agro-food industry to become a more modern and dynamic industry with the objective of achieving food security in mind. The policy further aims to generate a competitive and sustainable industry by increasing the income level of socially vulnerable target groups.

7. Under Malaysia’s Economic Transformation Programme, agriculture has been identified as a National Key Result Area. Under this initiative, the agriculture sector is targeted to increase the Gross National Income by USD 9.1 billion (RM28.9 billion) to reach USD 15.4 billion (RM49.1 billion) by 2020, more than double the current size of the sector. The agriculture sector is also targeted to create 109,335 job opportunities by 2020, primarily in the rural areas and increase the income of farmers participating in our initiatives by two to four times.

8. On food security, one of our priorities is to ensure the supply of rice is sufficient for the people. During the 10th Malaysia Plan, Malaysia aims to maintain rice stockpile at 292,000 metric tonnes or sustained consumption for 45 days. We will endeavour to enter long-term contracts to import rice, meeting agreements to export palm oil or oil
and increase the productivity of existing granary and non-granary areas through the upgrade of infrastructures. We expect local production of rice to fulfil a 70% level of self-sufficiency.

Mr. Chairman,

9. At the regional level, Malaysia has been actively involved in regional cooperation in food security namely ASEAN Food Security Information System (AFSIS) to facilitate food security planning and implementation among ASEAN Member States through systematic collection, analysis and dissemination of agriculture information.

10. Malaysia currently supports a regional initiative under the ASEAN-US cooperation towards increasing food security with the establishment of a new project “Maximizing Agricultural Revenues through Knowledge, Enterprise Development and Trade (MARKET)” in order to strengthen the ASEAN institutional platform for improving regional food security.

11. At the international level, Malaysia underscores the importance of freer trade in ensuring food security. We view that food production and trade in agricultural products could be further enhanced through the dismantling of market distorting measures in global agriculture trade. Hence, we called on developed countries to refrain from adopting protectionist and export restrictive measures that can create imbalances in international agriculture production and supply in order to avoid volatility in food prices.

Mr. Chairman,

12. Efforts to increase investment in the agricultural sector cannot be seen as the main responsibility of the government alone. While governments can provide the necessary infrastructure, including a conducive investment environment and attractive incentive packages, private investments is necessary to invigorate the sector.

13. Let me conclude, Mr. Chairman, by emphasizing that agriculture is core to building a sustainable future, especially to ensure food security and nutrition for the ever growing world population. It is therefore imperative that sustainable agriculture and food security and nutrition be part of the new sustainable development agenda beyond 2015. In this regard, international funding for developing countries to develop their agriculture production and to improve their food security and nutrition situation should be significantly increased.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.