

**COUNTRY STATEMENT FOR THE
10th GLOBAL FORUM ON MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT (GFMD)
BERLIN, 28 – 30 JUNE 2017**

Ladies & Gentlemen,

Though Malaysia is currently a “destination country” for migrants, yet migration has become and continues to be one of the more serious security challenges faced by Malaysia, either in the form of irregular or illegal migration flows, as well as mixed migration flows.

- 2. Currently, Malaysia is home to an estimated 4 million illegal migrants as well as around 2.5 million legal migrants. Malaysia is also hosting approximately 150,000 Persons of Concern (POC) comprising of asylum seekers and refugees from 54 countries, and their resettlement to third countries is taking too long, in some cases, many years.**

- 3. The number of these migrants and refugees add up to about 20 percent of Malaysia’s population. The huge number of migrants and refugees in Malaysia presents a complex set of challenges in economic, social, political, and security areas for the government, enforcement agencies, and policy makers.**

Ladies & Gentlemen,

- 4. Illegal entry enables those with contagious diseases to filter through and spread it to the population at large. Not only illegal migrants can pass through the various illegal entries, but subversive elements as well.**
- 5. Apart from coming in through illegal entry, Malaysian authorities are also aware that many economic migrants have also found their way into Malaysia by abusing the process provided by United Nations High Commission on Refugees (UNHCR).**
- 6. There is also the high cost for Malaysia to house and care for these migrants and refugees in the country.**
- 7. Therefore, we can already see some nationalistic pressure building up, opposing the flow of large numbers of illegal migrants into Malaysia.**

Ladies & Gentlemen,

- 8. These developments necessitated a harder stance to be taken by Malaysia to ensure that its sovereignty, integrity, and security is not compromised. Malaysian authorities have a duty to serve the people and we strive to hold the basic rights of our own citizens.**

- 9. In this direction, Malaysia is currently working closely with the UNHCR to ensure that refugees in Malaysia are properly registered and accounted for.**
- 10. Malaysia's firm actions in restricting the flow of migrants and repatriating those who come illegally is the best action that it can take in the face of the current challenges.**

Ladies & Gentlemen,

- 11. Even though the term "refugee" is not currently defined under Malaysia's domestic legislation and that Malaysia is not yet a member of the 1951 Refugee Convention and 1967 Protocol, Malaysia has always rendered its assistance to refugees on humanitarian basis since the early 1970s, beyond our international obligations.**
- 12. Since then, Malaysia has played a constructive role in assisting vulnerable groups such as the Rohingya and the Syrian refugees, and Malaysia have always done so out of a strong moral and conscientious obligation to help people in need.**
- 13. Finally, Malaysia has also maintained a humanitarian approach to refugees, and doing its best within its legal and financial limits despite the apparent constraints and stress put on Malaysia's social systems.**

Thank you.