Mr. Chairperson,

Further to the Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Safety held in Vienna merely three months ago, we are gathered here in New York to continue drawing lessons from the Fukushima nuclear accident, to strengthen nuclear safety throughout the world, and to generate moral and political support from the IAEA Member States to the work of the organisation, particularly in the context of nuclear safety. We are here to match and supersede that, and assure our publics, and each other, that nuclear power is and can remain a viable and safe source of energy, and that we will assist each other to ensure its development, research, production and use for peaceful purposes.

2. I also take this opportunity to once again express the deepest sympathy and heartfelt condolences from the people and Government of Malaysia to the people and Government of Japan.

Mr. Chairperson,

3. In our discussions, we need to be mindful on the distinction between nuclear safety and security and also the many areas in which these intertwine and are linked. On one hand, the protection of people, the environment and installations against radiation risks under normal circumstances and risks as a consequence of incidents is paramount. On the other, there is a need to prevent, detect and response to malicious acts involving nuclear material, other radioactive substances or their associated facilities.
4. It is at the intersection of nuclear safety and security where we must ensure the right of countries to the development, research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes without discrimination.

5. At the same time, Malaysia is of the view that all States must adhere to the fundamental principles related to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. In order to ensure that these principles are not abused, States must exercise full transparency in their nuclear programmes, subject those programmes to the full scope of the IAEA safeguards, adhere to the provisions of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, and gain the confidence and trust of the international community over the peaceful nature of their nuclear programmes. We encourage all States to subscribe to these principles which are the necessary foundation for the development and peaceful uses of nuclear energy. This would ensure a safe and secure environment for all.

6. All States must continue their cooperation with the IAEA by undertaking transparent and voluntary confidence building measures with a view to enable the Agency to conclusively determine the peaceful purposes of their nuclear programme. Moreover, the IAEA should be allowed to conduct its verification activities without undue interference from other parties.

Mr. Chairperson,

7. Nuclear safety is an increasingly important issue for Malaysia, not only in view of the Fukushima nuclear accident, but also in the context of global nuclear energy development. For Malaysia, nuclear energy development is one of the primary projects embarked by the Government under its Economic Transformation Programme. The first nuclear power plant is envisioned to be commissioned in the year 2021, followed by the second in 2022. The objective is to ensure adequate electricity supply for Malaysia beyond the year 2020.
8. The Malaysian Government is currently conducting a detailed study on the nuclear power project before taking a final decision on the matter. Our focus is on the development of a comprehensive nuclear programme, including its legal and regulatory frameworks as well as an assessment of public opinion. The studies will be conducted by independent consultants and in consultation with the IAEA, taking into consideration the lessons learned from the Fukushima Daiichi incident and the results of "stress tests" on nuclear power plants by Member States. The paramount objective is to ensure that the highest standards of nuclear safety are observed at all times.

9. In preparing for a nuclear power programme, Malaysia is fully cognisant of a need to sign and ratify, or accede to, the relevant multilateral instruments to ensure peaceful, safe and secure use of nuclear energy, and efforts towards this are and would be undertaken. Malaysia will also remain transparent in the development of a nuclear power programme, both international and nationally. This is attested by the consultation with civil society on the nuclear energy option, Malaysia’s cooperation and coordination with the relevant international bodies, and the use of foreign consultants to undertake relevant aspects of its nuclear power programme planning and implementation activities.

Chairperson,

10. While the issues of nuclear safety and security are technical in nature, and should be addressed within the framework of the IAEA, we are confident that the convening of this High-Level Meeting by the Secretary-General will contribute and reinvigorate global political commitment on the matter.

I thank you.