

**58<sup>th</sup> CONFERENCE OF  
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ASIA AND PACIFIC REGIONS**

*Dhaka, Bangladesh  
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**AGENDA ITEM 1: THEME TOPIC**

**MALAYSIA'S INITIATIVES TOWARDS CLOSING THE GAP  
BETWEEN GENDER**

(Presented by Malaysia)

**INFORMATION PAPER**

**SUMMARY**

Gender equality and empowering all women and girls are important as women and girls represent half of the world's population and therefore half of its potential. Over the years, Malaysia has continued to increase the initiatives towards closing the gap between gender as to ensure that gender equality will empower women to achieve social, economic and political development.

## MALAYSIA'S INITIATIVES TOWARDS CLOSING THE GAP BETWEEN GENDER

### 1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Malaysia is populated with over 33.4 million people with males outnumbered females in 2023 with 17.5 million and 15.9 million respectively, this is in accordance with the data on the current population estimates released by the Ministry of Economy Department of Statistics Malaysia in July 2023. As for the world's population, women and girls represent almost half of the world's population and therefore also half of its potential. Thus, it is important to ensure that gender equality is being practiced by every country.

1.2 Over the years, the involvement of Malaysian women in all spheres of life has become more visible. Women-Owned Statistics released by the Department of Statistics Malaysia has clearly shown that gender equality is being practiced in Malaysia. Malaysia has seen ongoing efforts to reduce the gap between gender since 1957. More notably in the 1970s where there was an increased entry of women into higher education institutions in an effort to educate and empower them.

### 2. DISCUSSION

2.1 Recognising the significant role of women, Malaysia is committed to achieving gender equality and promoting the rights of women and girls. The government's continuous efforts and commitments towards achieving gender equality are in line with the Sustainable Development Goals and 12<sup>th</sup> Malaysia Plan (RMK-12). The empowerment of women is outlined as one of the strategies in the 12<sup>th</sup> Malaysia Plan, including to increase economic participation and enhance the role of women in decision-making; review laws to identify gender gaps and address them for better protection of women; introduce a gender mainstreaming framework and gender analysis for a gender perspective in formulating policies; and to enhance legal mechanisms for women's safety and security.

2.2 Data in the table below shows that the Malaysia Gender Gap Index (MGGI) scored 0.714, or 71.4 % in the year 2020, which has increased from previous years. MGGI identifies the gap between women and men across four sub-indices encompassing:

- Economic Participation and Opportunity;
- Educational Attainment;
- Health and Survival; and
- Political Empowerment.

Sub-index	2018	2019	2020
Economic participation and opportunity	0.727	0.717	0.738
Educational attainment	1.054	1.053	1.059
Health and survival	0.958	0.958	0.956
Political empowerment	0.106	0.108	0.100
<b>MGGI score</b>	<b>0.711</b>	<b>0.709</b>	<b>0.714</b>

#### Full and Effective Participation of Women & Equal Opportunities for Leadership

2.3 Malaysia adopts the sustainable development goal of ensuring women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making and eliminates all forms of discrimination against women everywhere to achieve gender equality and women empowerment. The number of women in leadership roles has increased over the years. For example, in the aviation industry, the Civil Aviation Authority of Malaysia (CAAM) and main Aerodrome Operator in Malaysia namely Malaysia Airports Holding Berhad (MAHB) have provided opportunities for women to become leaders in the airport industry.

2.4 The senior management positions nowadays do not remain heavily dominated by men. The government has increased the opportunities given to women in every field possible. Leadership is not based on gender, but rather on experience, enthusiasm and qualifications. Director of CAAM Sarawak, Director of Management Services (CAAM), Director of Finance Management (CAAM), Head of Technical Services (MAHB) are the examples of positions currently held by women. Apart from that, some of the notable achievements by women in Malaysia are as listed below:

**Former Director, Air Traffic Inspectorate, CAAM.  
(Ms. Siew-Huang Tay)**

*First ICAO Auditor from Malaysia. Team Leader, Lead ANS Auditor and Organization Auditor under the Universal Safety Oversight Audit Programme (USOAP) Comprehensive Systems Approach (CSA) for more than 25 ICAO Member States. Also Serving as a Short-term Seconded ICAO Accredited ANS Auditor under ICAO USOAP Continuous Monitoring Approach (CMA), and as an ICAO Combined Action Team (CAT) member-ANS Expert, for ICAO Asia-Pacific Missions.*

**Head of Licensing, Deputy Director for the Flight Operations Division, CAAM.  
(Captain Emilia Binti Kamarudin)**

*The first woman pilot for fighter jets (Skyhawk, Hawk, Pilatus PC-7, Aermacchi MB339 and Aerotiga MD3). The first woman pilot in Malaysian Armed Forces to become a flight trainer.*

**Head of Unmanned Aircraft System, Assistant Director for the Flight Operations Division, CAAM.  
(Captain Illyaquila Fateen Binti Ismail)**

*The first and youngest Malaysian female pilot to receive airline command. In CAAM, she plays a pioneering role in establishing the Unmanned Aircraft System framework in Malaysia.*

**Instructor, Course Development Unit, Malaysia Aviation Academy (MAVA).  
(Ms. Rizalina Jumary)**

*First Malaysian citizen recognized as International Civil Aviation instructional systems design (ISD) validator.*

**Head of Technical Services (MAHB).  
(Dr Nor Azlina Mohd Isa)**

*Former Head, Facilities Management & Development & Head, Infrastructure Department of AirAsia. Speaker for Women in Airports (MASA 18TH ACI Asia-Pacific Regional Assembly, Kobe Japan).*

2.5 In the year 2022, MAHB has given the opportunity for women to hold the position of Airport Manager for Malacca Airport. It is part of women empowerment by providing women with the necessary skills, resources, and opportunities to succeed. Additionally, in strengthening young women's leadership, the Head of Operations for Langkawi International Airport, Kuantan Airport, Tawau Airport and Limbang Airport and Head of Engineering for Labuan Airport and Sibu Airport are all female. This creative standpoint builds up women involved in aviation, specifically in the airport industry.

**Increase Labor Participation of Women**

2.6 The Malaysian government made continuous efforts to increase labor participation of women. This includes effort to increase the paid maternity leave from 60 days to 98 days as to encourage economic participation and opportunities for women. The amendments to the Employment Act 1955 have included the introduction of paid paternity leave of seven days. This was introduced to allow husbands to take care of their wives and children and manage matters related to birth such as birth registration. The amendments to Malaysia's Employment Act now in force effective 1 January 2023.

2.7 Malaysia has been making strides in reducing the gender gap by proactively implementing various initiatives efforts to empower women at work. The amended Malaysia's Employment Act has introduced for flexible working arrangements which indirectly will attract greater participation of women in the labor market. Majority of the women will opt for jobs that offer more flexibility as women may also experience an interruption in their career due to childcare. This provision allows flexible working arrangements (FWA) to be made with a written application submitted to employers. The employer then has to give a decision including grounds of rejection within a period of 60 days from the date of request.

2.8 To strengthen and maintain women's involvement at work, several initiatives have been taken. This includes campaigns to increase awareness of women's right at work as well as educational program and training for women to address sexual harassment at the workplace. The amended Malaysia's Employment Act has also mandated on the need to display a sexual harassment prevention notice by the employer at all times. In addition, the Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development (KPWKM) has taken the following initiatives:

- Imposing the theme of the World Population Day 2023, "Harnessing Gender Equality: Empowering the Voices of Women and Girls for an Infinite World of Opportunities"
- Organizing Gender Equality Power Forum
- Organizing an anti-sexual harassment advocacy roadshow programme (KPWMKM KASIH Roadshow Programme @ Sexual Harassment Advocacy)

Achieve Gender Equality and Empower All Women and Girls

2.9 The rise of women is not to challenge the world of men, but both women and men shall play their role to complement each other and thus narrowing the gender gap. The United Nations explains that gender equality is not only a fundamental human right, but a necessary foundation for a peaceful, prosperous and sustainable world. It is hoped that with all the initiatives that have been implemented and with future actions, these will ensure that Malaysia will be able to achieve gender equality on par with other countries.

**3. ACTION BY THE CONFERENCE**

3.1 The Conference is invited to note the information contained in this Paper.