

**SPEECH TEXT BY PRIME MINISTER: HIGH LEVEL WELCOME
SESSION OF THE 77TH WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY (WHA)**

By : DATO' SERI ANWAR IBRAHIM

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**SPEECH
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PRIME MINISTER OF MALAYSIA**

**HIGH LEVEL WELCOME SESSION OF
THE 77TH WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY (WHA)**

**27 MAY 2024
PALAIS DES NATIONS, GENEVA, SWITZERLAND**

(VIDEO RECORDING)

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen.

1. Thank you, Dr Ghebreyesus, Director General of the WHO, for inviting me to address the 77th World Health Assembly in Geneva.

2. I commend the inclusive theme for the Assembly – “**All for Health, Health for All**”, which is aligned with Malaysia’s national philosophy and values of civilisational development, centring on the core principles of sustainability, care and compassion, respect, innovation, prosperity, and trust.

3. Underpinning this philosophy is the principle of social justice and equity, which includes the universal right to health. I am pleased to share that my government is fully committed to ensuring that every individual, regardless of their background or socio-economic standing, has access to essential and quality healthcare services throughout their lifetime.

4. Nonetheless, as we deliberate on the universal right to health, it would be remiss if I did not take the opportunity to remind the audience of the dire humanitarian catastrophe faced by the Palestinians in Gaza. Not only are they facing famine, malnutrition, and diseases, but their hospitals have been bombed by the Israelis; with medical workers and humanitarian volunteers being killed indiscriminately. On this note, once again, I implore the international community to do more to stop the atrocities and ensure accountability moving forward.

Excellencies,

Ladies and gentlemen,

5. Prioritising the right to health requires collective efforts to address inequalities and enhanced preparedness for future emergencies. I am aware that a consensus for the Pandemic Agreement and the amendments to the International Health Regulations is neither straightforward nor easy to achieve.

6. Malaysia stands for the principles of equity and solidarity to be operationalised in the revision of the International Health Regulations and the Pandemic Agreement. I wish to stress that equity must underpin any agreement to meaningfully improve our collective pandemic prevention, preparedness and response.

7. Collaboration will be key moving forward; and balancing resources with the objective of global public health is, therefore, essential. Only then can we truly address the gaps and inequities in preventing and responding to pandemics and other health emergencies while safeguarding the sovereign rights of our nation.

8. Together, I am confident that we can make transformative changes with lasting outcomes.

Thank you.

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