Mr. Chairman / Madam Chair,

1. [Malaysia congratulates you as Chair on your election]

2. [My delegation aligns itself with the statements delivered respectively by the distinguished representative of the Republic of Guinea on behalf of G77 and China, and the distinguished representative of [country] on behalf of ASEAN.

Mr. Chairman / Madam Chair,

3. The COVID-19 pandemic has caused great disruption to the world and has impacted not only our public health system, but also the economy and social institutions of our country. Worse still, the economic shock rendered by the pandemic evidently exposed structural weaknesses in the social, public health, and economy of countries.

4. The implementation of measures to contain the outbreak such as movement control or lockdown, disrupted much of our daily lives. This includes the disruption of supply chain, connectivity, social protection as well as a host of
economic activities. At the same time, many more people have had to bear the brunt of losing incomes, some finding themselves spiralling into poverty.

5. To address this, Malaysia has put in place structural economic reforms to help mitigate such impacts. Domestically, we have begun the implementation of economic recovery strategies, including economic stimulus packages valued at approximately USD83 billion, the equivalent of more than 20 percent of the country’s GDP. These economic stimulus packages involved a fiscal injection of USD13 billion, and were announced in stages over a period of 12 months. The strategies outlined in out stimulus packages entails a series of assistance and aid, which addresses the wellbeing of people, particularly for the lower income vulnerable groups, as well as to encourage quality investments to address the needs of businesses, among others. Thus far, more than 20 million people and 2.4 million businesses have benefited directly from the stimulus packages. The 2021 National Budget unveiled in November 2020 further supports our economic recovery efforts through an allocation of approximately USD 80 billion, seeking to save over 2.4 million jobs, while easing cashflow concerns for about 11 million Malaysians from the lower and middle income groups through cash assistance.

Mr. Chairman / Madam Chair,

6. Malaysia strongly believes that access to vaccination is a human right and must be made a global public good that must be respected, protected, and fulfilled. Once a vaccine is developed, it must be promoted through international collaboration rather than nationalistic competition. The issue of equitable
access to COVID-19 vaccine is an important one, which needs to be addressed to end the global COVID-19 threat.

7. Malaysia rolled-out the National COVID-19 Immunisation Programme on 24 of February 2021, which would take place in stages. We believe that when public health services recover, economic recovery would follow suit, following the reopening of borders, further facilitating trade, and investment. Additionally, Malaysia announced earlier this year that it is providing COVID-19 vaccination free of charge, to cover about 80% of its population, regardless of their nationality or immigration status. This is in line with Malaysia’s policy of assuring affordable and equitable access to vaccines for all.

Mr. Chairman / Madam Chair,

8. The pandemic has shown Malaysia the importance of accelerating the shift into a digitalised economy with the wellbeing of its peoples at the heart of its consideration. In recognising this, Malaysia recently launched the MyDIGITAL Economy Blueprint, which complements our upcoming national development plan or the Twelfth Malaysia Plan, as well as the Vision for Shared Prosperity 2030. The initiative seeks to propel a digitally-enabled government, empower businesses to innovate, and help bridge the digital divide to ensure that Malaysians can enjoy improved digital literacy and social wellbeing.

9. Much more needs to be done to soften the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic, as it has not only disrupted efforts to achieve the 2030 Agenda and the
Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), but it has also reversed decades of gains made towards achieving the Goals. As such, Malaysia hopes that the UN and its wider membership would continue to share best practices, knowledge and technical expertise through capacity building, particularly in enhancing member states’ capacity in SDG data collection and analysis as well as addressing SDG data gaps.

10. We also hope that the UN could assist in providing recommendations and plans of action for countries to safely reopen respective borders to promote connectivity, particularly in the region’s areas of tourism and trade, in order to boost countries’ economies.

I thank you Mr. Chairman / Madam Chair.