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Statement

by

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Before the Third Committee

at the 78th Session of the United Nations General Assembly

Agenda item 71: Promotion and Protection of Human Rights

UNHQ, 17 October 2023

Chair,

1. Thailand associates itself with the statement delivered by Malaysia on behalf of ASEAN.

2. This year marks the 75th Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the 30th Anniversary of the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action. Yet, the world we see today is still far from realizing the aspirations our leaders committed to.

3. As the new Thai Prime Minister underscored at the General Debate of the UNGA last month, Thailand reaffirms its sincere commitment to the advancement of human rights, at home and abroad. The Thai constitution clearly stipulates that the Government has the duty to promote and protect human rights.

4. We concur with what the High Commissioner for Human Rights mentioned earlier, and that is human rights and sustainable development must go hand in hand, in order to create a society that is inclusive, equal and just, and to truly leave no one behind.

5. In this regard, Thailand would like to share the following three points.

6. First, Thailand is constantly reviewing and improving our laws and policies to be in line with international human rights obligations and commitments as well as to be responsive to the changing circumstances on the ground.

7. A milestone development is the enactment of the Act on Prevention and Suppression of Torture and Enforced Disappearance of 2022, which supports better alignment with the Convention against Torture. The Government has been working

to build the capacity and understanding of law enforcement and relevant agencies to ensure effective application of the Act.

8. This has also led to the withdrawal of Thailand's interpretative declaration on three articles of the Convention in September this year.

9. Another positive development this year is the announcement of the 2nd National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights for 2023 – 2027, which reinforces our commitment to align with the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights and to implement recommendations from the Universal Periodic Review.

10. This is a good example of our constructive collaboration with the UN human rights system, which is a continuation from the visit of the UN Working Group on Business and Human Rights to Thailand in 2018.

11. Second, we must respect and protect the human rights of those left furthest behind and foster their human security to enable a level playing field for all in the society.

12. Thailand believes that social protection is an effective tool in this regard. A clear example is our “Education for All” and universal health coverage policies.

13. We therefore welcome the adoption of the Political Declaration on Universal Health Coverage earlier this month, which reaffirms the right to the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health and put in place actionable commitments to accelerate progress towards the achievement of UHC by 2030.

14. Third, international cooperation is essential to assist States in building the capacity needed to effectively implement their human rights obligations on the ground, recognizing the varying challenges facing each country. The UN must be the platform for such constructive engagement and must not politicize the human rights agenda.

15. This is the reason why Thailand initiated the Human Rights Council resolution on “Enhancing Technical Cooperation and Capacity Building in the Field of Human Rights” and has been tabling this resolution since 2012.

Chair,

16. Before I conclude, I would like to use this opportunity to congratulate the newly elected members of the Human Rights Council.

17. As the candidate of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) for the Human Rights Council for 2025 – 2027, Thailand stands ready to contribute to the Council’s work and be part of the global endeavour to address human rights challenges of our time and to take on human rights issues for future generations.

17. I thank you.
