

Statement by the Delegation of Thailand
Ambassador Krerkpan Roekchamnong
Chargé d’Affaires a.i. and Deputy Permanent Representative of Thailand,
During the General Debate under Agenda Item 2
at the 31st Session of the Human Rights Council
on 10 March 2016 at Room XX, the Palais des Nations in Geneva

Mr. Vice President,

At the outset, I wish to thank the High Commissioner for his comprehensive report.

The concern of the High Commissioner on the global migration crisis reflects the concern of the international community and of Thailand as well. In the Asia-Pacific region, the problem of irregular migration at sea is currently being addressed together with the human trafficking issue through various regional frameworks.

On our progress in implementing the roadmap towards sustainable democracy, there continues to be constant benchmarks. The new draft constitution is currently being disseminated nationwide to seek comments from the public, with sections related to human rights and the role of human rights institutions. The final draft is expected to be completed by April 2016 before being forwarded to the Election Commission, who will be in charge with holding a national referendum. If the Constitution is adopted, general elections are then expected to take place by mid-2017.

Thailand highly values freedom of expression as a basic foundation of a democratic society. However, a balance between freedom of speech and security must be kept to uphold public order and prevent social divisiveness, as the country continues to move forward to achieve a more sustainable democracy.

We are also working on a Draft Act as a stand-alone law which will cover prevention, protection and suppression of the acts of torture, as well as enforced disappearance in a comprehensive manner.

With regard to some views delivered in this Council on the situation of human rights defenders and lawyers, we would like to reiterate that they are protected under Thai law. We are aware of our duty to ensure that they can carry out their work in a safe and enabling environment.

Thank you, Mr. Vice-President.