



Policy Statement of the Council of Ministers

Delivered by General Prayut Chan-o-cha, Prime Minister,
to the National Legislative Assembly

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Friday 12 September B.E. 2557 (2014)

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**Announcement on the
Appointment of the Prime Minister**

Bhumibol Adulyadej, Rex

Phrabat Somdet Phra Paramintharamaha Bhumibol Adulyadej has graciously given a Royal Command for the announcement to be made that:

Following the promulgation of the Constitution of the Kingdom of Thailand (Interim), B.E. 2557 (2014), which stipulates that His Majesty shall graciously appoint a Prime Minister in accordance with the resolution of the National Legislative Assembly. The President of the National Legislative Assembly has humbly informed His Majesty that the Assembly has resolved to appoint General Prayut Chan-o-cha as Prime Minister with unanimous votes on Thursday 21 August B.E. 2557 (2014).

His Majesty is, therefore, of the view that General Prayut Chan-o-cha is one in whom His Majesty may repose his trust to serve as Prime Minister.

On the authority of Section 19 of the Constitution of the Kingdom of Thailand (Interim), B.E. 2557 (2014), His Majesty therefore graciously appoints General Prayut Chan-o-cha as Prime Minister to administer state affairs forthwith.

Announced on 24 August B.E. 2557 (2014), being the 69th Year of the Present Reign.

Countersigned by

Pornpetch Wichitcholchai

President of the National Legislative Assembly

Announcement on the Appointment of Ministers

Bhumibol Adulyadej, Rex

Phrabat Somdet Phra Paramintharamaha Bhumibol Adulyadej has graciously given a Royal Command for the announcement to be made that following the Royal Command dated 24 August B.E. 2557 (2014) appointing General Prayut Chan-o-cha as Prime Minister;

General Prayut Chan-o-cha has now selected those persons deserving to assume positions as Ministers to administer state affairs;

On the authority of Section 19 of the Constitution of the Kingdom of Thailand (Interim), B.E. 2557 (2014), His Majesty therefore graciously appoints the following Ministers:

General Prawit Wongsuwon	Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defence
M.R. Pridiyathorn Devakula	Deputy Prime Minister
Mr. Yongyuth Yuthavong	Deputy Prime Minister
General Tanasak Patimapragorn	Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs
Mr. Wissanu Krea-Ngam	Deputy Prime Minister
M.L. Panadda Diskul	Minister attached to the Prime Minister's Office
Mr. Suwaphan Tanyuwardhana	Minister attached to the Prime Minister's Office
General Udomdej Sitabutr	Deputy Minister of Defence
Mr. Sommai Phasee	Minister of Finance
Mr. Don Pramudwinai	Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs

Mrs. Kobkarn Wattanavrangkul	Minister of Tourism and Sports
Police General Adul Sangsingkeo	Minister of Social Development and Human Security
Mr. Petipong Pungbun Na Ayudhya	Minister of Agriculture and Cooperatives
Air Chief Marshal Prajin Juntong	Minister of Transport
Mr. Arkhom Termpittayapaisith	Deputy Minister of Transport
General Dapong Ratanasuwan	Minister of Natural Resources and Environment
Mr. Pornchai Rujiprapa	Minister of Information and Communication Technology
Mr. Narongchai Akrasanee	Minister of Energy
General Chatchai Sarikulya	Minister of Commerce
Mrs. Apiradi Tantraporn	Deputy Minister of Commerce
General Anupong Paojinda	Minister of Interior
Mr. Sutee Markboon	Deputy Minister of Interior
General Paiboon Koomchaya	Minister of Justice
General Surasak Karnjanarat	Minister of Labour
Mr. Vira Rojpojchanarat	Minister of Culture
Mr. Pichet Durongkaverroj	Minister of Science and Technology
Admiral Narong Pipatanasai	Minister of Education
Mr. Krissanapong Kirtikara	Deputy Minister of Education
Lieutenant General Surachet Chaiwong	Deputy Minister of Education

Mr. Rajata Rajatanavin

Minister of Public Health

Mr. Somsak Chunharas

Deputy Minister of Public Health

Mr. Chakramon Phasukavanich

Minister of Industry

To take effect forthwith.

Announced on 30 August B.E. 2557 (2014), being the 69th Year of the Present Reign.

Countersigned by

General Prayut Chan-o-cha

Prime Minister

**Policy Statement
of the Council of Ministers
Delivered by
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to the National Legislative Assembly
Friday, 12 September B.E. 2557 (2014)**

Honourable President of the National Legislative Assembly,

Pursuant to the Royal Command appointing me as Prime Minister on 24 August 2014 and the Royal Command appointing the Ministers on 30 August 2014, the Council of Ministers is now ready to deliver the Policy Statement prior to taking up the administration of state affairs in accordance with the Constitution of the Kingdom of Thailand (Interim), B.E. 2557 (2014).

First of all, the Government wishes to clarify before the President and all members of this Assembly that, in taking up the administration of state affairs, despite being the statutory use of powers and performance of duties as was the practice of past governments, there are certain conditions and time constraints that distinguish this Government from previous ones. Regarding conditions, this Government will carry on and continue with the work of the National Council for Peace and Order (NCPO) in solving the problems of the country in three phases as stated at the time when the NCPO took control of national administration on 22 May 2014.

The first phase was aimed at stopping divisions; ending the use of force and war weapons to create violence; redressing the impacts of administrative paralysis resulting from the inability of the previous government and parliament to function normally for more than six months; as well as expediting the resolution of urgent problems faced by the people and bringing happiness and peace back to the country as a priority. This was successfully achieved to a certain extent. Only two months thereafter, the second phase began with the promulgation of the interim constitution, establishment of the National Legislative Assembly, submission of the Draft Annual Appropriations Bill for Fiscal Year 2015 to the National Legislative Assembly, and the formation of this Council of Ministers. The NCPO thereafter reduced its role and operations to act in an advisory capacity and work together with the Council of Ministers in considering or resolving problems related to peace and order or national security. Soon to follow will be the establishment of the National Reform Council and the Constitution Drafting Committee to design and lay down a firm political, economic and social foundation for the country before entering the third phase. This will involve the promulgation of a new Constitution and organisation of a general election. The abovementioned conditions constitute an obligation which the Government shall be committed to and continue to expedite.

At the same time, the Government is conscious of the urgency and severity of the innumerable problems awaiting remedies because of their accumulation over many years when compared to this period in which the situation is not yet normal and compared to the short working timeframe. The international community is also monitoring the change in Thailand with concern. However, the Government will not consider that the abovementioned conditions and time constraints are a weakness or limitation. It is rather a challenge to accelerate thinking and action because in restoring peace and happiness to the people, the earlier, the more serious and the more immediate the action, showing success quickly and sustainably, the quicker the people and country will benefit. The fact that this Government is not formed from political parties means that there is no policy arising from election campaigns or expectation of gaining populist support as a political base. No one needs to worry about the country assuming commitments that will result in fiscal indiscipline or future burdens. Because of a unified policy, there is also no need to worry about ministries not working in an integrated manner or without coordination. Such elements should provide authority and support needed for the Government to perform difficult work smoothly in a short time. As the Head of Government, I will closely supervise the Government's work so that it never becomes a burden to the country.

Section 19 of the current Constitution of the Kingdom of Thailand stipulated for the first time the duties of the government which consist of three functions: to carry out the administration of state affairs, to ensure reforms in all aspects; and to strengthen the unity and harmony of the people. This is akin to a signal of intent that the government should not only maintain the day-to-day situation while simply waiting for the general election, but should conduct other necessary business and eliminate urgent problems in order to effect change as desired by society. The Government has therefore formulated policy in conformity with the abovementioned three duties.

Honourable President,

On the administration of state affairs, which is the main duty of any government, this Government has classified its policy into 11 areas. In formulating its policy, the government has applied the development strategy of "understand, reach out and develop" in line with the initiative of His Majesty the King as a key principle; the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy which emphasises the concept of moderation, rationality and social immunity; the 11th National Economic and Social Development Plan; the policy of the NCPO; and the expressed needs of the people which should be clearer in the period of designing reform for the country. We have taken into account the problems of the country that we are all fully aware of – the conditions and time constraints; the challenges that lie ahead – for the country to recover from a battered economy, mistrust in society which results in political conflict, corruption and

malfesance in the public sector which people are fed up with and apprehensive of, and readiness to enter the ASEAN Economic Community without others seeing us a problem to the Community.

The important point is that the policy in all areas to be declared forthwith is intended to strengthen administrative organisations at all levels from local to national; present a sustainable development strategy covering problems in the short term where action has to be taken immediately, the medium term where action has to be continued or pending law enforcement, and the long term. Although success may not be evident in a short time, this Government deems it necessary to lay a foundation for the next government to consider and take over for continuity. More importantly, we want to make it clear to the people so that they know in advance the direction our country would be heading, what will happen or not happen in the near future in order to be properly prepared. Not knowing in itself is ignorance. We do not even know about things close to us although we are owners of the country, sovereignty, taxes and sometimes property as well. We do not even know which areas are covered under the new city plan; whether our homes will be expropriated; in which category our lands are designated and whether there are limitations on use; where roads are being constructed; why work on public utilities such as electricity and water are not integrated or completed at one time; whether the state will promote or terminate a scheme; and whether Thailand will be an agricultural or industrial society. Having no answers to these problems will cause suffering to the people concerned. The Government requires that the policies and action plans of each government agency provide answers as we shall respectfully inform the Honourable President in the respective areas as follows:

1. Protecting and Upholding the Monarchy

The institution of the Monarchy is an important component of administration under the democratic system in line with traditional rule in Thailand. The Government therefore considers it an extremely important duty to uphold this institution with loyalty and to protect the Crown. We will take legal measures, socio-psychological measures, and information and communication technology measures to deal with people who speak impetuously, rashly or have malicious intent, with the aim of destabilising the core institution of the country, without regard for the conscience and loyalty of many other people. We will also provide correct knowledge and understanding about the Monarchy and Royal Duties for the people. We will support the royally initiated projects, and encourage officials in education and state agencies to learn and understand the work ethics of His Majesty the King, so that they may apply these principles to the performance of their duties and development work, as well as to further expand on the projects and models for which His Majesty the King has laid the foundation, so that they are widely useful and recognised, which would ultimately contribute to creating prosperity for the people.

2. Maintaining National Security and Foreign Affairs

2.1 In the immediate phase, the Government attaches importance to preparations to ensure Thailand's readiness towards the ASEAN Political-Security Community in the following five areas, namely border management, enhancing maritime security, addressing the problem of transnational crime, enhancing trust and confidence with neighbouring countries, and enhancing the potential for joint military operations in ASEAN, emphasising cooperation for preventing and resolving disputes and resolving boundary problems through bilateral and multilateral mechanisms; organising development within the framework of the ASEAN Economic Community, and management of land and maritime border areas; supporting the development of Special Economic Zones (SEZs) along borders by utilising surveillance systems based on modern technology; designating the problems of narcotics, weapons trafficking, human trafficking, piracy, terrorism and transnational crimes as urgent problems that require strict law enforcement to prevent and resolve; and deal with other continuously linked problems in a comprehensive manner, including problems associated with individual status and rights, improving immigration systems, and putting migrant labour in order.

2.2 Expedite a solution to the problem of violence in the Southern Border Provinces by using a strategy of *Understand, Reach Out and Develop*, and apply it with an approach to create amity by peaceful means; promoting dialogue and peace with those whose views differ from the State; creating trust and confidence in the judicial process based on the rule of law and human rights principles without discrimination, in parallel with economic and social development consistent with the needs of the people in socially pluralistic areas; eliminating opportunistic use of violence that further complicates existing problems, whether by local influential persons or state officials; enhancing relations with foreign countries and international organisations that may assist in alleviating such problems.

2.3 Develop and promote the effectiveness of the armed forces and national defence systems so that they are modern, ready to protect and keep national sovereignty and interests safe from every type of threat; promote and develop science and technology in national defence, including research and development and technology transfer that would lead to self-reliance in weapons and equipment production; be able to integrate public and private sector cooperation in the national defence industry; using the capacity of the armed forces during peacetime to support national development, disaster prevention and relief, natural resources protection, and maintaining domestic security, with the aim to mobilise assets at the community, local, regional and international levels, in particular ASEAN and the international community, so that cooperation can be networked.

2.4 Promotion of good relations with foreign countries based on the principle that foreign policy is a vital component of overall policy in national administration, whether in the area of politics, economics, or society, by employing integrated diplomatic mechanisms, directly or indirectly, for the maximum benefit of the Thai people such as the protection of Thai nationals and interests abroad; exchanges in education, culture, trade, human resources development, and broadening perspectives to be more universalistic.

3. Reducing Social Inequality and Creating Opportunities to Access Public Services

Social inequality is another reason behind the conflict and hardships of the people. The following policies shall therefore be carried out:

3.1 At the urgent stage, will expedite creating opportunities, vocations, and a secure source of income for those in the labour market, including women, those who lack opportunities, and legal foreign labourers; raise labour standards by providing the entire labour force with opportunities to access standardised learning and skill development at every level; link data and operations between the state agencies and the private sector so that they meet the needs of local communities and of the country; and promote greater legalisation for illegal labourers.

3.2 Prevent and resolve the problems of human trafficking, illegal immigration, abuse of foreign workers, tourism that emphasises sexual services and children, and the problem of beggars, by reforming necessary laws and regulations, and enhancing rigorous inspection processes.

3.3 In the subsequent stage, establish and develop the social protection system, savings system, and community welfare system so that they are more effective and sustainable; including overseeing the creation of a fair lending system and welfare for the indigent based on individual conditions; developing potential, protecting and safeguarding rights, arranging welfare to assist and develop quality of life for those lacking opportunity, the disabled, the elderly, women and children.

3.4 Make preparations to be ready to become an elderly society, in order to promote quality of life with appropriate occupations or activities, espousing creativity and not creating a burden for society in the future by creating a system of home-care, rest homes and hospitals that result from cooperation between the State, the private sector, communities and families; and developing a financial system to take care of the elderly.

3.5 Make preparations to be ready for a diverse society as Thailand enters the ASEAN Community, by creating resilience and readiness for the Thai labour force and by cooperating in the development of a social security system for ASEAN workers.

3.6 Putting society in order, establishing standards in morals and ethics and good governance for government officials and the general public, by using the 12 fundamental values according to the previously announced policy of the NCPO.

3.7 Resolving the problems of unavailability of arable land for farmers and encroachment of conserved forests by disseminating tenure rights for local residents who have not encroached, and introducing measures to prevent the transference of tenure rights into the hands of non-farmers; using satellite technology for exploration and modern cartographic methods; resolving problems of overlapping land claims and unclear forest boundaries which have caused disputes between the public and government officials.

4. Education, Learning, and Fostering Religions, Arts and Culture

The Government will apply education, religion, arts and culture, pride in history and in being Thai to create a robust society, with quality and morality, by undertaking the following:

4.1 Arrange for reform in education and learning by attaching importance to both education within the system and alternative education, to improve the qualifications of Thai people to be able to learn, develop themselves to their full potential, make a living with a way of life that seeks knowledge and appropriate skills, and being persons of virtue; promoting the quality of learning by focusing on learning to enhance an honest livelihood in the local communities; reducing inequality and developing a workforce that is needed by and appropriate for local communities, in such fields as agriculture, industry, and the services sector.

4.2 At the urgent stage, adjust the allocation of the budget for education to be consistent with the needs of those who wish to learn and the characteristics of the locations of educational institutions; improve and integrate the educational loans system to be more effective in order to provide more opportunities for the poor or those lacking opportunity; organise supporting systems so that the young and the general public have more choices in educational services, whether intra- or extra-scholastic, with education vouchers to be considered as one approach.

4.3 Let organisations in civil society, the private sector, local administrations, and the general public have the opportunity to participate in organising quality and accessible education, and cooperate in reforming education and learning, devolving education management authority to educational institutions, local education authorities, and local administration based on potential and readiness, by having educational institutions become juristic persons for more independent and flexible management.

4.4 Develop people of all ages by promoting life-long learning to increase knowledge and new skills that can be used for a number of vocations in consideration of future employment trends; adjust learning processes and curriculum to be more connected to social geography by integrating knowledge and morals to accommodate the development of learners, in knowledge, skills, desire to learn, problem-solving, listening to the opinion of others, having good morals, ethics, and good citizenship by emphasising cooperation between those concerned, whether inside or outside the schools.

4.5 Promote vocational training and community colleges to create a skilled labour force, especially in localities in need of skilled labour, and develop quality standards of education linked to occupational standards.

4.6 Develop the teacher development system for better quality and teaching spirit; emphasise teachers with qualifications to teach the subjects they are responsible for; introduce information technology and appropriate equipment in learning and teaching as tools for teachers or for self-education, such as long-distance learning and e-learning, including adjusting the performance evaluation system to significantly reflect the effectiveness of learning and teaching, and developing the quality of learners.

4.7 Nurture and patronise Buddhism and other religions; support religious organisations to have an important role in instilling morals and ethics, including improving the quality of life, building peace and harmony in Thai society in a sustainable way, and participating in developing society according to readiness.

4.8 Conserve, revitalise, and disseminate cultural heritage, Thai language and local languages, local wisdom and the diversity of Thai arts and culture for learning and enhancing pride in Thai history and in being Thai, so as to help foster good relations at the public, national, regional, and international levels, along with adding economic value for the country.

4.9 Support the learning of foreign languages, the cultures of neighbouring countries and international culture, creating international works of arts and culture to prepare for entry into the socio-cultural pillar of the ASEAN Community and as part of the international community.

4.10 Instil positive values and conscientiousness; promote the production of quality media to create a public space for youth and the general public to have the opportunity to express themselves creatively.

5. Improving the Quality of Public Health Services and Public Health

The Government aims to build, develop, and ensure the improvement of quality, accessibility, efficiency, and effectiveness of the healthcare system for all Thais, as follows:

5.1 Further develop the health insurance system to ensure that all citizens receive access to quality, convenient, timely, and equitable healthcare; and integrate information under different health insurance systems and agencies to ensure consistency and effective management.

5.2 Improve public health services with an emphasis on disease prevention and proactive health services; set up health management mechanisms at the district level rather than have them centralised; decentralise public health resources and personnel as appropriate for each locality; allow private sector involvement in the hiring of medical personnel to provide health services under state supervision; and promote collaboration between the public and private sectors in the advancement of public health services by sharing medical resources and personnel based on an agreement that is sound and beneficial to all parties.

5.3 Strengthen the monitoring system for epidemic diseases, especially newly emerging and reoccurring diseases, by systematically establishing units for disease surveillance, diagnostics, and decision making to promptly stop the outbreak of disease.

5.4 Prevent and solve the problem of traffic accidents that cause injuries and loss of life by coordinating with all relevant agencies to strengthen the enforcement of traffic regulations, as well as treatment services for the injured.

5.5 Encourage the public to exercise and play sports for good health, good sportsmanship, discipline, adherence to the rules of the game, and unity; and produce athletes capable of achievements at national and international competitions.

5.6 Integrate the work plans of all relevant sectors to reduce and prevent teen pregnancy and to probe the ethics of doctors regarding surrogacy, organ transplantation, and the use of stem cells by providing for robust laws and measures suitable for such new social issues.

5.7 Develop scientific research competencies on medical sciences and public health; equip public health personnel with up-to-date medical equipment; foster cooperation in prevention and treatment between national and international agencies, especially for priority diseases.

6. Enhancing the Country's Economic Potential

The political unrest, which persisted for over 6 months until the middle of this year, resulted in a significant economic slowdown. Although the NCPO carried out economic stimulus measures so that the economy began to recover, economic expansion fell short of its potential. Moreover, the Thai economic system has several weak spots that need to be corrected in order to create an economic foundation that can expand in a sustained and stable manner. This ranges from tax collection – which is inadequate to fulfil the potential of the country's administration and development – public debt, and wasteful energy use, to problems of water use in the agricultural and industrial sectors, which face chronic shortages during the dry season, while experiencing frequent flooding in the rainy season, posing an obstacle to economic growth. The government will carry out its economic policy in 3 phases: in the immediate term where prompt action is required, the intermediate term in which outstanding fundamental problems are addressed, and the long term where a foundation needs to be put in place for sustained growth, as follows:

6.1 In the immediate term, the government shall speed up the disbursement of the outstanding capital budget for fiscal year B.E. 2557 (2014) before its expiry within the end of this year, continue the economic stimulus budget policy prepared by the NCPO, while following up to ensure that disbursements can be made smoothly from the ministry level down to the local level, and monitor against fruitless spending, in order to create jobs and stimulate consumption.

6.2 The government shall continue the economic stimulus budget policy prepared by the NCPO, by taking into consideration key principles in preparing the annual appropriations for fiscal year B.E. 2558 (2015), which gives importance to the integration of the budget and preparedness for action, as well as other sources of funding, to propel policy towards concrete results in an economical, non-duplicative, and efficient manner; review tasks that are unsustainable or impose an excessive public debt burden, and disclose capital spending items at the provincial level to show transparency, fairness, and non-discrimination, while enhancing the efficiency of budget disbursements from the ministry level down to the local level, to create jobs and stimulate consumption, and seeing to a monitoring system and mechanisms to guard against wasteful spending.

6.3 The government shall stimulate investment by expediting the vetting for efficiency of investment projects submitted by investors for approval of investment privileges, and undertake infrastructure investment projects with good returns, such as Bangkok mass transit projects, as joint investment projects with the private sector, which would help create a good investment climate in the construction sector, real estate sector and financial markets.

6.4 Look after farmers so that they earn appropriate incomes, through such means as reducing the cost of production, comprehensive assistance on production factors, assistance for smallholders, and employing market mechanisms to raise the prices of unusually low-priced agricultural products as appropriate.

6.5 Reduce barriers to exports for greater ease and speed, such as by improving the method for inspection and certification of product standards and farm-level production standards; reducing the steps in clerical procedures and documentation processes to help speed up the transport system for goods; and seek out markets with potential in order to expand the export base, including border trade, which is increasingly important.

6.6 The government shall encourage foreign tourists to visit Thailand, by considering measures to reduce the impact of the invocation of martial law in certain areas on tourism at the earliest possible opportunity, and create incentives and amenities conducive to enhancing the tourism climate, promote tourism that encompasses distinctive theme-based clusters of tourist attractions, such as nature, history, arts and culture, local wisdom and health, such as natural hot springs, and link them with products developed from local communities' way of life, develop domestic tourist attractions, whether traditional or new, by emphasising knowledge sharing and upgrading standards for safety of life and property, regulating goods and services to ensure quality at fair prices, and facilitating various aspects for tourists.

6.7 In the next phase, the government shall coordinate monetary and fiscal policies in order to support economic recovery while maintaining price stability in an appropriate manner.

6.8 The government shall address the problem of flooding during the rainy season, whether affecting a wide area or confined to specific areas, and the problem of drought in certain areas and certain seasons, which bring devastation and hardship to farmers, by brainstorming ways to prevent severe floods such as those of 2011, and find ways to address area-specific flooding so that the floodwaters drop quickly and do not affect crops. As for drought conditions that cause shortages of water for agriculture, the government will expedite the creation of small bodies of water that are dispersed as much as possible across planting areas, which can be achieved in about 1 year.

6.9 The government shall reform the price structures of various types of fuel so that they are consistent with costs, and ensure an appropriate tax burden for different kinds of oil and different types of users, in order to improve efficiency in the country's energy use and deter consumers from wasteful use, see to a new round of exploration and production of natural gas and crude oil

both at sea and on land, and see to the construction of more power plants by state and private sector agencies, including the use of fossil fuels and alternative energy, in a manner that is open, transparent, fair, and environmentally friendly, while cooperating with neighbouring countries on energy development.

6.10 Improve tax collection so that it is more thorough, by improving the tax structure by maintaining current income tax rate levels, both for individuals and juristic persons, while improving the structure of commercial tax rates and expanding the tax base through new types of taxes to be assessed from inheritance, land, and building structures, but to have minimal impact on those with low incomes, improve income tax deductions in order to benefit those with low incomes, and abolish tax exemptions that favour the financially well off, in order to bring about greater fairness.

6.11 Manage the public debt incurred during the previous government – which amounts to over 700,000 million baht and will be a fiscal burden for the next 5 years, leading to a lower national capital budget – by comprehensively accounting for these debts, finding a long-term financing source to pay off all debts, and extending the payment period as long as possible to reduce the future fiscal burden.

6.12 In the long term, improve the transportation infrastructure. On land transportation, start with expansion of the light rail mass transit system in Bangkok Metropolis and that linking Bangkok and its environs in order to reduce travel time and improve quality of life, to form a basis for the next government to pick up immediately. On air transportation, upgrade the airports, including Phase II of Suvarnabhumi Airport, Don Mueang Airport, and an international airport in the region. The use of a regional airport shall be promoted in order to accommodate the volume of air traffic efficiently. Support development of an industrial park for the aviation industry, aircraft maintenance and develop the capacity of air freight services to international standards. Regional airports, such as U-Tapao, shall be utilised to support Suvarnabhumi and Don Mueang Airports. On water transport, cargo services by river and coastal shipping should be enhanced in order to reduce the country's logistics cost, beginning with expediting the development of piers at Laem Chabang deep seaport, and seaports along the Gulf of Thailand and the Andaman, as well as pushing for piers along the Chao Phraya and Pa Sak rivers to be used for cargo services and linked with Laem Chabang seaport, as well as deep water dredging.

6.13 Improve the management structure in transport sectors where there is a clear division of roles and missions among policy agencies, regulating bodies and implementing agencies. Set up an agency to oversee the railway system, to set service and safety standards, a fair fare structure, investment, maintenance and management that would develop the railway system into the

country's main transportation network. Consider modernising laws and regulations regarding transport and logistics so that they are up to date and can be clearly implemented. Promote private sector participation in the transport sector.

6.14 Develop and improve the system for management of state enterprises towards efficiency, transparency and accountability by formulating a clear strategy for the development of state enterprises, as well as setting goals and tangible measures to resolve the problems and revitalise enterprises that face financial and operational problems. Consider the necessity of maintaining the role of each state enterprise in the present situation so that it is an effective instrument of the state in national development. Strengthen monitoring mechanisms for state enterprises to ensure free and fair competition, taking into account the overall benefit to the country, effective consumer protection, and to provide the public with standardised services. In order to reduce financial burden, public and state enterprise debt should be effectively managed in a transparent manner.

6.15 On agriculture, two major issues shall be pursued. The first is demand-driven structural adjustment of agricultural production, including the establishment of agricultural zones for each product. The second issue is to promote agricultural cooperatives to enhance farmers' capacity to be suppliers, manufacturers and exporters so that cooperatives become one of the major suppliers to counterweigh the power of private merchants for greater balance.

6.16 On manufacturing, promote industries that are the country's core competencies, for example, promotion and development of agro-industrial processing from upstream to downstream, by ensuring that raw materials and the production process are of good quality, standardised and environmentally-friendly. Promote innovation to add value to Thai food products, based on knowledge, creativity and traditional wisdom; promote research and development of processed agricultural products to add value and resolve an important national issue. Promote hi-tech, design and creative, and hi-tech mechanical industries to move towards automated and semi-automated production systems.

6.17 Strengthen capacity and competitiveness of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) by increasing knowledge of efficiency enhancement for the production process, product development, organisational management and operations. Systematise and unify the structure of supporting and driving mechanisms for SMEs for access to financial resources, financial services and investment, product development and services, marketing and investment opportunities.

6.18 Promote the digital economy and lay a foundation so that the digital economy can seriously move forward. This would make all economic sectors more advanced and competitive in the modern world, including the direct production and trade of digital products, such as hardware, software, digital communication and telecommunication products; and the use of digital technology as a basis for financial services and other service sectors, particularly communications and entertainment; and digital technology for manufacturing and creative economy. Improve the roles and missions of the authorities directly responsible to supervise and push this important matter forward; and establish a national committee to seriously steer the issue.

7. Promoting Thailand's Role and Exploring Opportunities in the ASEAN Community

The establishment of the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) which will take full effect at the end of 2015 will generate much benefit for Thailand if Thailand can undertake sufficient preparations in various areas. Accelerating our efforts to enhance our readiness, whether in the areas of transport and logistics connectivity, trade facilitation, development of border areas or human resources development (HRD), will help promote Thailand's role and ability to make best use of opportunities in the ASEAN Community. This will enable Thailand to raise living standards of the Thai people together with those of the peoples of ASEAN.

7.1 Speed up efforts to enhance connectivity in the areas of the economy, trade and investment within the ASEAN region and expand economic cooperation with neighbouring countries. This will be achieved by making use of the transportation and telecommunications infrastructure network connecting the Member States of ASEAN, an electronic based system of certification, and electronic based transactions within ASEAN. Such means also include making use of trade and investment agreements under the bilateral and multilateral frameworks that are already in effect, speed up finalisation of mutual recognition agreements regarding standards and conformance of goods, especially goods in which Thailand has high potential in production such as consumer products. adjustments of trade regulations and customs procedures to better facilitate trade, streamlining or elimination of procedures, and a harmonised system related to customs tariffs and other trade facilitation measures, in order to attract the setting up of regional headquarters in Bangkok, so that Bangkok could be developed further as a regional centre for business, trade and investment.

7.2 Enhance the competitiveness of Thai manufacturers at all levels so that they are consistent with agreements regarding free movement of goods, services, investment, skilled labour and freer movements of other factors of production. Special attention will be given to SMEs so that they can be

competitive, pursue business activities together with counterparts in ASEAN Member States and link up with the global supply chain. Production bases of many products and businesses in Thailand have already seen investments in additional production facilities in other ASEAN Member States for quite some time, with additional investments of Thai business groups who plan to expand investments within ASEAN to enhance their production capacities expected to follow. These will help Thailand expand its production base of high quality and diversified products to serve both the ASEAN market and the global market as well as help neighbouring countries in their industrial development.

7.3 Develop the skills of the labour force in the industrial sector in order to prepare for Thailand being part of the ASEAN Community. These include professional labour, skilled labour and unskilled labour. Professional skills should be developed so that they can be effectively used in practice, taking into account the harmonised standards of both skilled labour and professional labour in the eight sectors for which there is agreement within ASEAN for free movement of skilled labour. In addition, there should be planning to ensure sufficient production, raising the skill levels of labour in industries of high potential and labour-intensive industries, and development of systems to test labour skill levels as a means to assess wages.

7.4 Accelerate development of transport and logistics connectivity in the sub-region and within ASEAN by implementation of plans to promote economic cooperation within the framework of the Greater Mekong Subregion (GMS), the Indonesia-Malaysia-Thailand Growth Triangle (IMT-GT), the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multisectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) and the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity (MPAC) which will help ensure that the development of transport and logistics connectivity within ASEAN will produce concrete results.

7.5 Link up transportation routes and logistics networks from production centres in local communities to processing centres, so as to increase value added within the country and ensure connectivity with ASEAN markets. This is to raise the capacities of small manufacturers and to promote access to larger domestic and foreign markets. At the same time, this will open doors of opportunities for various regions within the country.

7.6 Develop the Special Economic Zones (SEZs), beginning with border checkpoints with cross-border trade, and transportation networks in the vicinity of main trading gateways to accommodate the link between cross-border production and investment processes. To this end, road networks, the National Single Window (NSW) and cross border trade and transport facilitation will be developed. In the initial phase, priority will be given to 6 key border checkpoints, namely, Padang Besar, Sadao, Aranyaprathet, Mae Sot, Ban Khlong Luek and Ban Khlong Yai. This will enable the transportation and

logistics network to be linked with those of neighbouring countries more efficiently and be better able to support the volume of travel and transportation that are expected to rise following the realisation of the ASEAN Economic Community.

8. Developing and Promoting the Application of Science, Technology, Research and Development, and Innovation

The Government attaches importance to research, development extension, and innovation to meet the needs of the manufacturing and services sectors, as follows:

8.1 Support increased funding of national research and development to at least 1 percent of GDP. The ratio of public to private research and development investment should be 30:70 in accordance with the National Economic and Social Development Plan, in order to increase competitive capacity commensurate with the development progress of other developing countries, also to improve the organisation of scientific, technological, research, and innovative work in order to ensure unity and efficiency, as well as support linkages with the private sector.

8.2 Expedite the creation of an innovative society by supporting integrated science, technology, engineering and math education, developing personnel to meet the need of sectors with skill shortages, linking the learning process and employment, allowing public sector research personnel to work with the private sector, and encouraging SMEs to acquire new technologies through cooperation between public sector agencies and academic institutions.

8.3 Reform incentive schemes, regulations, and laws that hinder the use of research and development extensions for the benefit of the people, including the formulation of regional and provincial research and development plans to respond to unique needs of local communities, seek research and development outcome for commercial applications by supporting cooperation between universities, public research institutes, and the private sector.

8.4 Support the use of Thai research and development, and innovation in national investment projects, including projects in clean energy, rail systems, automotive vehicles, electricity, water and waste management, as well as promote the use of domestic tools, materials and other products to supplement the use of foreign technologies. Review public sector procurement policies to create opportunities for domestic technology development, and in necessary circumstances requiring the need to acquire foreign tools, materials, and technologies, to specify technology transfer provisions for future technological self-reliance.

8.5 Improve and organise infrastructure for science, technology and innovation that are fully ready, relevant, and evenly distributed to all regions to ensure effective commercial applications and extensions for the industrial sector, including the development of information technology systems, analysis, operational and research centres.

9. Maintaining the Security of the Resource Base and Creating Balance between Conservation and Sustainable Use

At present, there is increasing encroachment of public land and deforestation. Once abundant, natural resources and biodiversity, such as forests, wildlife, plant species and minerals, have been destroyed and illegally used commercially. Problems of pollution, particularly various types of waste, are more severe. The Government, therefore, has a policy to maintain the security of the natural resources base by creating balance between conservation and sustainable use, as follows:

9.1 The immediate phase will be to expedite the protection and restoration conservation areas, forestry resources and wildlife by giving importance to solving public land encroachment; delineating clear boundaries for public land; expediting the process of verifying tenure rights over public land by utilising information technology in its management; revising outdated laws and creating norms for efficient and fair law enforcement, particularly in watershed and conservation areas of ecological significance; designating strategic buffer zones and foothills for afforestation in order to prevent disasters and forest encroachment; expanding community forests and encouraging the planting of economically viable trees on private land so as to decrease logging of natural forests; pushing for ways to assess the economic value of ecosystems and income creation from conservation, such as reforestation projects to restore ecosystems, and forests conservation projects that involve the participation of all sectors.

9.2 Promote conservation and sustainable use of bioresources and biodiversity, bearing in mind the constraints and potential for recovery; creating opportunities to access and share benefits arising from the use of genetic resources in a fair and equal manner; in order to create good livelihood for the people, food security, sanitation, support for the community's way of life and development of economic value, and provide protection for biosafety.

9.3 The subsequent phase will be to develop the land management system and resolve public land encroachment by adhering to His Majesty the King's guidance that people can live in harmony with the forest, such as by clearly demarcating community forest areas; strictly apply the law in areas reserved or set aside as prime forest land; providing lenient treatment as

necessary regarding land that people should be able to use, by using management and socio-psychological measures as well as afforestation; and link this to the promotion of occupations and other income which is the continuous wellspring of the local economy, so that people can rely on themselves according to the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy while the land remains state owned; compile a database for management purposes; develop a registry of people holding tenure rights over public land; improve and make coherent the management mechanisms for public and private land so that land policy can be set in a holistic manner; improve tax mechanisms for the purpose of distributing land possession; expedite land distribution to the poor without giving land entitlement but guaranteeing shared rights to manage community land; designating an appropriate form for a land bank to serve as a mechanism to ensure optimal use of land resources.

9.4 Manage the country's water resources in a unified manner in all dimensions, quantitatively and qualitatively; and provide a water management plan for the country and a process which integrates the work plans and budgets of all concerned agencies so that project work plans avoid redundancy, are systematically linked and conform with water resource management policy and direction, by establishing or designating water management mechanisms as well as using high-efficiency technology in the water management and danger warning systems.

9.5 Expedite the control of pollution – air, refuse and wastewater – arising from production and consumption to create a good quality environment for the people by giving first priority to solid waste management; encouraging mechanisms for sorting of refuse for recycling as much as possible; expediting the disposal of accumulated refuse in waste disposal sites located in critical areas, which are mainly state owned land; supporting the transformation of waste into energy wherever possible; setting up special regulations and measures to manage industrial waste, by designating standard-built industrial waste pits separate from community waste disposal sites; developing a monitoring and inspection system to prevent illegal disposal of hazardous, electronic and infectious waste; managing chemicals to lessen the risk and danger of leakage and accidents; attaching importance to comprehensive waste management; and using legal measures and strict enforcement of the law.

At the local level, accelerate the solving of problems at Map Ta Phut, the main base for the country's industries, in a continuous and comprehensive manner, including the reduction and disposal of waste; the rehabilitation of natural resource and environment; looking after the quality of life of the people affected by industry, as well as improving infrastructure capability and developing towards an eco-industrial city.

10. Promoting Administration of State Affairs that Upholds Good Governance and Prevents and Suppresses Corruption and Malfeasance in the Public Sector

The civil service is an enormous system comprising personnel, budget and statutory powers, with broad discretionary powers by government officials that can benefit or penalise, facilitate or hinder people's livelihood. It is unfortunate that in the past, certain parts of the civil service and some officials have been a cause of conflict in society, from the local to national levels, obstructing national development with various outdated regulations that have not been revised in line with changing global trends and cannot be used to enhance national competitiveness. High costs, lengthy procedures, overlapping permit requirements and unnecessary checks have become a burden to the public. Sometimes, neglect alternates with strict regulation, fleeting attempts to impose order, and corruption, creating injustice and social inequality. This does not motivate investors to do business in Thailand, as seen in survey results or annual reports of some foreign agencies on rankings regarding credibility and ease of doing business in Thailand. The Government therefore has the following policy:

10.1 Organisationally improve the civil service system or public agencies at the national, provincial or local levels; review the structure of government agencies with duplicate or overlapping responsibilities or lengthy work process; modernise government practices through use of technology, and revise regulations to be transparent and clear, in order to provide services to the public efficiently; revise personnel structures and improve remuneration for civil servants to be more appropriate and equitable, upholding the principles of good governance, using new approaches in public administration, meeting the needs of the public, and facilitating users of government services in order to build confidence and trust in the civil service; lower the costs of the business sector to increase international competitiveness and retain capable officials in the civil service system. Action will be taken from the immediate phase onward in accordance with priority and as permitted under the law.

10.2 In the first phase, decentralisation will be pursued to enable the people to access public services quickly, economically and conveniently. Legal measures will be put in place designating clearly the responsible persons, correct procedures, fast execution times, and a transparent and fair appeals system to prevent officials from shirking or delay, or misusing their authority and cause corruption, opportunity loss or damage to the public, particularly investors. In the immediate phase, special emphasis will be placed on improving government agencies that provide business- and investment-related services and everyday public services.

10.3 Raise the capacity of government agencies to become efficient, so that they can proactively provide services, such as increasing the number of centres receiving complaints from people in provincial areas so that they would not need to travel to the capital, setting up fully-integrated public service centres with a comprehensive range of services in various communities for convenient public access, offering “One Stop Service” centres and comprehensive e-Government services; develop government agencies into learning organisations, producing work innovations economically, efficiently and with an integrated system.

10.4 Strengthen the merit system in the appointment and transfer of government officials. Lay out measures to safeguard against political interference and support the adoption of a merit protection system in personnel management.

10.5 Use legal measures, the inculcation of values, morals, ethics and conscientiousness in preserving the dignity of being a civil servant, and honesty, coupled with efficient public sector management, to strictly safeguard against and combat corruption and malfeasance by government officials at all levels; repeal or amend laws, regulations and requirements that are unnecessary, impose an undue burden on the public or open up opportunities for corruption, such as procurement policy, approval and authorisation to obtain public services that are lengthy in procedure, time-consuming, redundant and costly for both the government and the public.

10.6 Revise and arrange for legislation that comprehensively prevents and suppresses corruption, malfeasance and conflicts of interest in the government sector at all levels, regarding this matter as an urgent national agenda to be included in all aspects of reform. Expedite disciplinary actions and legal measures against those involved in corruption and malfeasance. Provide users of public services with the opportunity to evaluate the credibility of government agencies and disclose the results to the public. Use case studies of past problems, including procurement, joint ventures, government spending, negligent or wrongful conduct, use of discretionary powers by government officials, conflicts of interest or overlapping interests that have already been ruled upon by various agencies, as lessons to edify government officials and codify them into regulations or a practical handbook.

10.7 Promote and support parties to private organisations and networks established to keep under surveillance and monitor government officials or to combat corruption and malfeasance. Put in place measures to protect witnesses and those involved so that legal cases involving corruption and malfeasance proceed efficiently without interference or hindrance.

11. Improving Laws and the Judicial Process

In a civilised society, adherence to the rule of law means that the law is supreme, not individuals or arbitrary decisions by government officials. For the rule of law to be respected depends not simply on whether laws exist, but the requirement that such laws are consistent with reality and the needs of the people, just, and protective of human rights. Moreover, there must be a judicial process that is easily accessible, up to international standards as well as modern and just. Otherwise, it might become a cause of endless conflict and rancor. The Government therefore has set policy on this matter as follows:

11.1 In the immediate phase, expedite the revision of Thailand's main legal codes and other laws that are obsolete, unjust, inconsistent with international agreements, and impediments on the administration of state affairs, business operations or potential international competitiveness. The Government will utilise existing mechanisms of current agencies and mobilise experts to take part in ad hoc committees to expedite the process.

11.2 Increase the capacity of agencies responsible for giving legal opinions and drafting laws so that they are able to work quickly, provide assistance to the private sector and the people in accordance with criteria that will be more open; and have the personnel of law-related agencies contribute to educating and building the capacity of government officials in various agencies in the areas of public law, administrative law proceedings, law drafting and interpretation of laws, in order to increase efficiency and support their work on behalf of the people.

11.3 The subsequent phase will be to establish a judicial reform entity that is independent from state interference.

11.4 Apply modern technology and knowledge of forensic science to all steps of legal proceedings for greater speed and fairness; and to have linked databases that can be used to follow up on findings, and to improve efficiency of the agencies and personnel in the judicial process.

11.5 Improve the legal and financial aid systems for those deprived of justice by enabling them to have easy and expeditious access to justice; promote the Justice Fund to protect the poor and the underprivileged; protect those whose rights and freedoms are violated; and provide remedies to innocent persons or those affected by injustice, by emphasising the integrity and efficiency of the public sector, justice for those affected, and no opportunistic fraudulent claims in the aid system.

11.6 Use financial and tax measures as well as preventive measures against money laundering to prevent and suppress influential people and government officials who are corrupt and commit wrongdoing, or commit offences related to human trafficking, forced labour, international terrorism, drugs and transnational crimes.

Honourable President, Honourable Members,

Regarding the undertaking of reform in various areas, which is another duty of the Council of Ministers, the Government is of the view that the Interim Constitution of the Kingdom of Thailand B.E. 2557 (2014) has delegated the task to formulate recommendations in this regard to the National Reform Council (NRC). The Constitution also stipulates the reform framework for bringing about changes in at least 11 areas, *i.e.* politics, public administration, the law and justice system, local administration, education, the economy, energy, public health and the environment, mass media, social, and others, which include arts and culture, sports, social values, ways of life, and adaptation to changes in the world. The NCPO has taken action on some of these matters by organising brainstorming sessions with various sectors. Moreover, a number of recommendations from various groups of people and organisations have been received. Currently, the nomination process for members of the NRC is ongoing, with more than 7,000 interested applicants from all parts of the country. The NCPO will then select not more than 250 persons out of those applicants to work on designing and proposing reforms, as though they are architects of the country. It is expected that the nomination and selection of the NRC members will be completed and they can begin their work by the beginning of this October.

The Government therefore has a policy to render support and facilitation to the NRC in order for them to undertake their work in good order, promptly, independently, and to attain concrete direction and tangible achievements. Coordination mechanisms will be set up so that government officials as well as other agencies can provide information on what has been done and cooperate with the NRC. The Government is also ready to consider their reform proposals and implement them under the policy scope of the government's administration of state affairs. Political reform is considered to be the most urgent task and must be done in parallel with tackling corruption. For the reforms to arise from wide-ranging and diverse proposals as befits the making of history for our country, the Government will consider setting up or support the setting up of reform groups on some issue areas in parallel. For nominees who reach the final stage before the selection of NRC members as well as the thousands remaining, the Government will reciprocate their good intentions by supporting them to have opportunities to jointly propose reform recommendations in the form of a body and other appropriate processes. This is to bring about a new atmosphere of change for the country that is as close to the needs of the people as possible. Regarding the drafting of a new constitution, the Government is ready to render facilitation and cooperation requested by the Constitution Drafting Committee, without any interference.

Having said that, even if the NRC may be likened to the architect of the country, it is an urgent matter to get to work on or deal with certain problems without delay. The Government therefore has a policy to undertake reforms on those matters in the meantime, such as education, raising quality of life, reduction of social disparities, solving problems of the people that affect their livelihood and jobs, prices of agricultural crops, prevention and suppression of corruption, as well as integrated and efficient budgeting, so as to avoid lost opportunities for the country or causing damage to the people, as announced in the 11 areas of administration of state affairs and in line with our strategy to “act early, seriously and immediately” in accordance with the priorities to achieve sustainable success.

Honourable President,

Regarding the promotion of unity and reconciliation of the people in the country, which is another duty since the NCPO took charge of national administration, there has been action on several issues, with the Army, the Office of the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Defence, the Internal Security Operations Command, the Damrongtham Centre of the Ministry of Interior, the provinces, religious organisations, mass media, and the private sector as major driving forces. The Government believes that the applied methods of open dialogue and discussion forums, giving justice and reducing social disparities should be the right approach, which taken together is the strategy of “understand, reach out, and develop”. The Government will therefore continue to utilise these agencies and methods and will expand the network, of both the public and private sectors, so that there can be broader participation. The Government will eliminate the conditions that are obstacles to creating unity and reconciliation and providing justice at all levels, such as economic disparities, abuse of power, unjust practices in the appointment and transfer of state officials, corruption, and discrimination.

Honourable President, Honourable Members of the National Legislative Assembly,

The policy I have just declared is the framework or approach for the work of the Government, with the goal of creating a society where there is reform, justice, and no corruption.

After delivering this Policy Statement, the Government will consult with state officials who will implement the policy. As the Government is well aware that this policy will show results only when concrete action plans are drawn up designating the implementing agencies, timeframes, measures, and budgets that

are clear and can be used in the follow-up and scrutiny of work. The Government will entrust all government agencies to prepare their action plans in conformity with the one-year timeframe of the fiscal year and duration of the Government. The Government will assign central agencies, such as the Office of the National Economic and Social Development Board, the Office of the Permanent Secretary of the Prime Minister's Office, and the Secretariat of the Cabinet to follow up on the action plans and report to the Council of Ministers and this Assembly at the next opportunity. It would be most appreciated if the National Legislative Assembly could monitor the administration of state affairs in accordance with the Constitution of the Kingdom of Thailand as another way of following up on this policy.

Speaking of achievements, I have reiterated many times the principle of "act early, seriously and immediately" and the division of work into immediate, medium-term, and long-term phases. I believe that Mr. President and all members of this Assembly share the same understanding with the Government that the administration of state affairs, which is present work, needs to be done in parallel with the reform process in various areas, which is future work. At the same time, it is not easy to create an atmosphere and environment suitable for the unity and reconciliation that was absent in the past. Many problems and obstacles still lie ahead. The matter is all the more serious as it involves change from what we are accustomed to and melding and bringing closer together the viewpoints of people who held such acutely different opinions that it led to fighting. But this is what is called reform. The Government promises to use perseverance, tolerance, knowledge and ability, honesty, and integrity to overcome all problems and obstacles to the best of our ability as befits the trust and time that the Government has received from you. The only thing more that we would ask from members of the National Legislative Assembly and all Thai citizens is to come together in cooperation, spirit, thought and action, so that our country can quickly return to an environment of peace and happiness and move forward firmly towards the reforms that we all shall hereafter help design.

Thank you.

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