

# Annual Report 2016 – 2017

Ministry of Foreign Affairs









## Message from His Excellency Mr. Don Pramudwinai, Minister of Foreign Affairs

The year 2016 was a year of great loss for the nation due to the passing of His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej. On 13 October 2016, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, through the Royal Thai Embassies, Permanent Missions, Consulates-General, and Trade and Economic Office worldwide, organized ceremonies for Thai nationals overseas and foreigners alike to commemorate and express their condolences on the passing of King Bhumibol, whose reign uplifted the lives of Thai people throughout 70 years, as witnessed by the international community.



With deep gratitude to the benevolent leadership and crucial role of King Bhumibol in Thailand's national development, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has promoted His Late Majesty's Sufficiency Economy Philosophy (SEP) to spread sustainable development guidelines and best practices in the international community. This has been particularly the case during Thailand's chairmanship of the Group of 77 during 2016 with 134 member countries, which led to the recognition of the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy as a path to achieve the UN Sustainable Development Goals within 2030.

In addition, Thailand has been entrusted by ASEAN Member States to be ASEAN Coordinator on Sustainable Development Cooperation, coordinating between ASEAN and concerned agencies of the United Nations to push forward regional sustainable development. Thailand has also promoted development cooperation at bilateral, trilateral, and multilateral levels, resulting in the application of Sufficiency Economy Philosophy by many countries to their national development. These activities have not only been carried out in honour of King Bhumibol but also supported Thailand's constructive international roles in the realm of sustainable development. They have also elevated Thailand's status on the international stage and enhanced awareness of all sectors of the country in seriously implementing the late King's Sufficiency Economy Philosophy for the achievement of sustainable development in Thailand.

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The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as a major agency in driving national foreign policies, has implemented activities in several aspects to allow the country's foreign policy to respond to national development guidelines. This has been done in accordance with the 20-Year National Strategy and Urgent Policies of the Government to make Thailand a nation of "stability, prosperity, and sustainability", with emphasis on enhancing relations with neighbouring countries, fostering confidence, promoting people-to-people exchange, and strengthening economic cooperation to achieve common prosperity. Furthermore, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has continuously promoted international understanding, leading to countries with previous limitations in their relations with Thailand due to the country's internal politics expressing interest in upgrading their engagement. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has collaborated with line agencies to solve issues related to international standards including the prevention and suppression of human trafficking, solutions to the illegal, unreported, unregulated (IUU) fishing, and the implementation of regulations in compliance with the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO). The measures taken have led to positive developments, especially the improvement of the human trafficking situation, which resulted in the upgrading of the country's status from Tier 3 to Tier 2 Watch List in the Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Report 2016 and 2017 (before being promoted to Tier 2 in 2018).

At the regional level, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as the ASEAN National Secretariat, has played a leading role, for instance, in promoting progress and collaboration in the ASEAN Community. Thailand has also enhanced concrete cooperation between ASEAN and the European Union. During the ASEAN-EU Ministerial Meeting in October 2016 in Bangkok, ASEAN and the EU expressed readiness to collaborate in all aspects to pave the way for the elevation of relations to strategic partnership in the future. Thailand was entrusted by Asia Cooperation Dialogue (ACD) Member States to host the 2nd ACD Summit in October 2016, with the participation of leaders and high-level representatives from 34 Member States. The Summit was held under the theme "One Asia, Diverse Strengths", during which Thailand was successful in encouraging Member States to bring the strong point in Asia's diversity to create balance with the global economy and to reduce disparities in Asia.

Another important mission of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is the provision of public services and the promotion of people's engagement with foreign affairs. In this regard, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has improved the provision of foreign affairs services to the Thai people, including outreach projects to disseminate knowledge of international cooperation, the preparation before going abroad, and the protection of Thai nationals overseas, especially those in distress or hardship, as well as those who request help or justice from the Royal Thai Embassies and Consulates-General worldwide, functioning as "Damrong Dhamma Centres" or complaints response centres to address the concerns of Thai people. All the above is part of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' tasks in 2016 and 2017 to "connect Thailand and the world" with an aim to propel the work of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as an integral part of Thailand's national development in line with the Government's policy statement as well as to promote the interests of the nation and the people in all dimensions.



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In the midst of international and domestic challenges, such as international geopolitical changes, competition between superpowers in the region, slowdown in both domestic and international economies, as well as non-traditional threats such as climate change and transnational crimes the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has carried out the missions prescribed in the 4-Year Strategic Plan (2015–2018) in response to such conditions by observing the government policy, the National Economic and Social Development Plan, as well as other relevant legislation. It is held that national foreign policy is a key component of the overall policy of state administration to propel the country and the people of Thailand to achieve “stability, prosperity and sustainability” and to ensure Thailand’s constructive roles and contribution to the advancement of the global community.

As the main organization for national foreign policy implementation, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is committed to preserving and promoting national interests in all aspects. This includes promoting relations between Thailand and neighbouring and other countries, building awareness of all sectors of the ASEAN community, promoting Thailand’s constructive and notable roles in the international community, strengthening economic and trade competitiveness, enhancing the image, confidence and positive attitude towards Thailand, protecting Thai nationals abroad, and increasing the efficiency of consular services, enhancing organizational capability, and collaborating with related agencies for a better and more efficient integration.

## Promoting Stability

### 1. Promoting cordial relations between Thailand and neighbouring countries

#### 1.1 Neighbouring countries

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has continued to strengthen close relations and increase cordial cooperation with neighbouring countries in all aspects. This, for instance, includes promoting the exchange of high-level visits, bilateral meetings, diplomatic relations celebrations, cooperation in border areas, and provision of assistance in disaster relief. As a result, this work has brought about excellent relations with neighbouring countries, an atmosphere of camaraderie focusing on progressing together, leaving no one behind, and security in border areas which both Thais and people of the neighbouring countries can commute across conveniently. Particularly, trade and investment has expanded significantly in border areas.

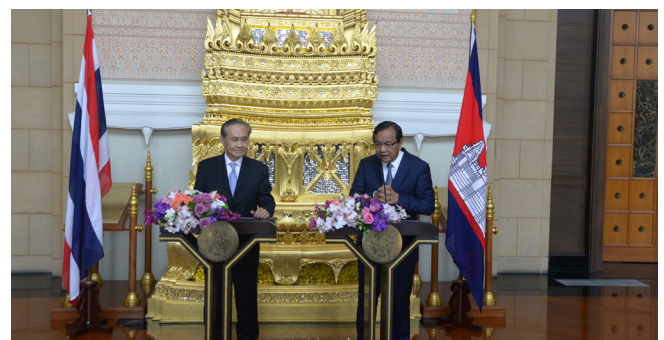
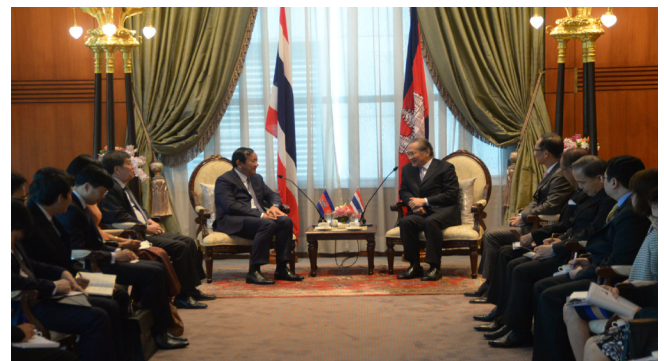
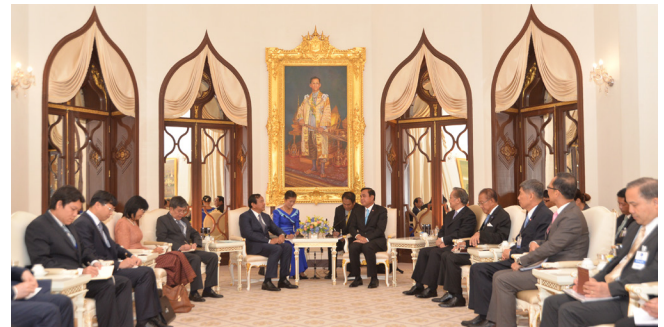


### 1.1.1 The Kingdom of Cambodia

On 22-24 February 2016, H.R.H. Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn paid an official visit to the Kingdom of Cambodia at the invitation of the Cambodian Government on the occasion of the 65<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the establishment of Thailand-Cambodia diplomatic relations. On 23 February 2016, H.R.H. Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn presided over the gala dinner at the Grand Ballroom, Hotel Sofitel Phnom Penh, attending the Royal Celebration Concert which was organized by the Royal Thai Embassy in Phnom Penh together with the Ministry of Culture, the Thailand–Cambodia Friendship Association and Princess Galyani Vadhana Institute of Music.

On 19–20 June 2016, H.E. Mr. Prak Sokhonn, Senior Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of the Kingdom of Cambodia, officially visited Thailand as guest of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. On 20 June 2016, H.E. Mr. Prak Sokhonn and delegates paid a courtesy call on the Prime Minister. Both sides were pleased with the cordial and constructive relations and reaffirmed their commitment to promote development and connectivity in the border areas, trade and investment, tourism, special economic zones, energy, labor, the opening of border crossings as permanent border checkpoints, and people-to-people links between the two countries. In addition, H.E. Mr. Prak Sokhonn had bilateral meetings with the Minister of Foreign Affairs on various issues, such as accelerating the opening of a new border crossing at Ban Nong Ian–Stung Bot, promoting trade and investment, encouraging cooperation in education, labor, culture, tourism, and agriculture, addressing the problem of illegal logging and human trafficking, community development, public health, special economic zones, and increasing connectivity by land, water and air transportation, as well as regional and global cooperation.

On 25–26 August 2016, the Senior Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of the Kingdom of Cambodia visited Thailand to attend the 10<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Joint Commission for Bilateral Cooperation (JC) between Thailand and Cambodia and co-chair the meeting with the Minister of Foreign Affairs, in Bangkok, to further discuss cooperation issues stemming from the 9<sup>th</sup> JC Meeting in the Kingdom



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of Cambodia and the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thailand–Cambodia Joint Cabinet Retreat in 2015. Both parties discussed key matters of cooperation, including the acceleration of the opening and upgrading of border crossings as permanent border checkpoints, cooperation in addressing the problem of illegal logging in the Thai-Cambodian border areas, labour cooperation through the distribution of passports to Cambodian workers in Thailand who have already passed the nationality verification process, the aim to increase bilateral trade to 15 billion US dollars by 2020 as set forth in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thailand–Cambodia Joint Cabinet Retreat, cooperation in the development of public health, education, and natural disaster prevention, and the development of Cambodia's potential in science, technology and innovation. On the same occasion, the Ministers of Foreign Affairs signed the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on the establishment of the Transit and Reception Center for Victims of Trafficking and other Vulnerable Groups in Poipet, Banteay Meanchey Province, Cambodia between the Government of the Kingdom of Thailand and the Government of the Kingdom of Cambodia.

### 1.1.2 The Lao People's Democratic Republic (Lao PDR)

On 5–6 July 2016, H.E. Mr. Thongloun Sisulith, Prime Minister of Lao PDR, paid an official visit to Thailand as guest of the Government. During the bilateral meeting, both sides reiterated their intention to strengthen the continuous proactive relations at all levels on the basis of mutual respect and mutual benefit. In addition, both parties were pleased with the results of the Thai-Lao joint survey and installation of land and river boundary posts and reaffirmed that boundary issues would not hinder cooperation. At the same time, Thailand also requested that Lao PDR take action on local issues, such as river sand mining problems, to prevent local problems from becoming international ones. In addition, Thailand supported infrastructural connectivity, including the construction of bridges, roads and railways. Both sides would commence the feasibility study for the sixth Thailand-Lao Friendship Bridge (Ubon Ratchathani–Salavan) construction project to connect the lower Northeast of Thailand to the South of Lao PDR and onwards to the Socialist Republic of Vietnam. On the same occasion, Thailand urged Lao PDR to put emphasis on improving and enforcing related guidelines, regulations and laws (soft connectivity) and Thailand showed readiness to discuss the expansion of electricity supply purchase from Lao PDR pursuant to the Memorandum of Understanding on Thai-Lao Cooperation for the Development of Electricity. For tourism, both sides expressed their commitment to increase the volume of two-way tourist flow and to promote cross-border ecological



H.E. Mr. Thongloun Sisulith,  
Prime Minister of Lao PDR, paid an official visit to  
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and historical tourism between Thailand and Lao PDR alongside other ASEAN member countries. Furthermore, Thailand pledged to continue to provide scholarships to Lao students in order to support human resource development. At the end of the meeting, both parties signed the Memorandum of Understanding on Labor Cooperation, which will enhance employment, labor protection, and technical cooperation, particularly skills development for Lao workers.

On 9–10 August 2016, H.E. Mr. Saleumxay Kommasith, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Lao PDR, officially visited Thailand as guest of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The discussion agenda covered mutually beneficial topics, such as border issues, energy cooperation, Thailand-Lao PDR connectivity and regional connectivity, labor cooperation, support for science and technology cooperation, and sustainable development. Furthermore, both sides agreed to sign the renewed Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) to increase the maximum committed energy capacity trading between the two countries.



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### 1.1.3 Malaysia

On 9–10 September 2016, Dato' Sri Mohd Najib bin Tun Haji Abdul Razak, Prime Minister of Malaysia, paid an official visit to Thailand as guest of the Government to attend the 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Consultation (AC) between the Prime Ministers of Thailand and Malaysia. During the meeting, both parties expressed their satisfaction with the cordial and close friendship between the two neighbouring countries and the increase in the exchange of high-level visits between the two nations. Both sides also attached importance to strengthening the ASEAN community by promoting and revitalizing ASEAN centrality and unity. The two parties agreed to heighten cooperation in border management, transnational crimes and human trafficking suppression, cyber security, maritime security, as well as the prevention of international terrorism and extremism through such measures as exchange of information and intelligence, support for moderation, and exchange of experiences and best practices in terrorist rehabilitation. In addition, both sides discussed the situation in the Southern Border Provinces (SBP) of Thailand and mutually agreed that the peace dialogue and negotiation process have been merely in the early stages of trust and confidence building among relevant parties. Furthermore, both sides reaffirmed their intention to promote economic prosperity, physical connectivity, and people-to-people relations, including tourism in the border areas between Thailand and Malaysia. Regarding this matter, relevant agencies were encouraged to expedite the integration of special



economic zone between Thailand and Malaysia at Sadao District, Songkhla Province, Narathiwat Province and Chuping Valley, Perlis State. Finally, the private sector of Thailand and Malaysia would be supported to play a role in advancing economic cooperation between the two countries.



Dato' Sri Mohd Najib bin Tun Haji Abdul Razak, Prime Minister of Malaysia, paid an official visit to Thailand as guest of the Government on 9–10 September 2016.

#### 1.1.4 The Republic of the Union of Myanmar

On 8–9 May 2016, the Foreign Minister paid an official visit to the Republic of the Union of Myanmar as distinguished representative of the Prime Minister and paid a courtesy call on the President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar. The meeting encompassed the development of bilateral and trilateral cooperation, education and public health collaboration, Rakhine State development, care provision for Myanmar nationals in Thailand, and trade and investment promotion between the two countries. On this occasion, the Foreign Minister also paid a courtesy call on H.E. Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, State Counsellor, Union Minister for Foreign Affairs, and Union Minister of the President's Office of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar. The discussion focused on sufficiency economic development and youth development, and the Foreign Minister proposed that Myanmar organize a meeting of Thailand–Myanmar Joint Cabinet Retreat (JCR) as a mechanism to strengthen close cooperation in a similar manner to Thailand's mechanisms with other neighbouring countries. Mrs. Suu Kyi agreed to take up the matter for further discussion. In addition, the Foreign Minister reiterated his wish for the Thai private sector in Myanmar to be cared for and facilitated, restating that Thailand had encouraged Thai entrepreneurs to conduct business in accordance with ethical principles in order to justly benefit the society and communities.

On 23–25 June 2016, H.E. Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, State Counsellor of Myanmar, carried out an official visit to Thailand as guest of the Government. During her courtesy call on the Prime Minister, a constructive and fruitful discussion on foreign affairs took place. Key tangible results consisted of the protection of Myanmar workers in Thailand and development cooperation - including (1) the 3-year development support for 2016 – 2018 and (2) development assistance along border areas, such as cooperation in the prevention and suppression of drugs and transnational problems, public health cooperation, and cooperation in the development of labor skills, as well as the projects under the ASEAN Forest Project and Sister Village Projects along the border areas. In addition, the Prime Minister and the State Counsellor witnessed the signing of 3 documents, namely (1) the Agreement between the Government

of the Kingdom of Thailand and the Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar on Border Crossing (2) the Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of the Kingdom of Thailand and the Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar on Labour Cooperation and (3) the Agreement on the Employment of Workers between the Government of the Kingdom of Thailand and the Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar. These would act as a significant basis for further promoting connectivity and labor cooperation between the two countries.



H.E. Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, State Counsellor of Myanmar, carried out an official visit to Thailand as guest of the Government on 23–25 June 2016.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has provided financial assistance of 200,000 US dollars to support the Government of Myanmar's humanitarian operations in Rakhine State. Such assistance resulted from the Foreign Minister's statement on Thailand's intention to provide humanitarian assistance to Rakhine State during the briefing on the Rakhine State situation made by H.E. Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, State Counsellor of Myanmar, on 19 December 2016 in Yangon.

### 1.1.5 The Socialist Republic of Vietnam

On 28 January 2016, Mr. Panyarak Poolthup, Deputy Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs presided over a press conference on activities to celebrate the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Thailand-Vietnam relations. The theme of event was “Embarking on the 5<sup>th</sup> Decade of Relations: Towards a Strengthened Strategic Partnership”. The focus was on encouraging all sectors including the public, private, academic, media and peoples of both countries to participate in the commemoration and to have greater interaction. Thailand has organized several activities to celebrate this relationship, namely (1) a logo design contest, (2) an issuance of a commemorative postage stamp by Thailand Post Co., Ltd. together with Vietnam Post, (3) research support to study “Thailand's roles in Vietnam's national restoration”, (4) seminars to promote Thai-Vietnamese relations co-organized by an academic network, (5) the promotion of activities to be co-arranged by provinces of Thailand and Vietnam with sister-city relations, (6) cultural exchange activities co-hosted by the Ministry of Culture of Vietnam, (7) people-to-people exchanges activities, and (8) activities to promote cooperation among their private sectors.

On 7 – 9 July 2016, the Minister of Foreign Affairs paid a visit to the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, upon the invitation from the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Socialist Republic



of Vietnam. On 8 July 2016, the Foreign Minister attended the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thailand–Vietnam Foreign Ministers’ Retreat at the State Guest House in Hanoi. The two countries gladly marked the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the diplomatic relations between Thailand and Vietnam in 2016. Both countries agreed to strengthen bilateral relations as strategic partners by using existing bilateral frameworks, namely joint cabinet retreats and ministers’ retreats. The emphasis was on promoting trade and investment cooperation to achieve the goal of increasing bilateral trade to 20 billion US dollars by 2020. In addition, both parties agreed to promote cooperation to increase trade and investment and enhance competitiveness in the private sector. They also discussed enhancing the connectivity between the two countries, strengthening people-to-people relations, and exchanged views on multilateral cooperation and international political affairs of mutual interest, such as the situation in the South China Sea. Moreover, the Foreign Minister paid a courtesy call on H.E. Mr. Nguyen Xuan Phuc, Prime Minister of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, emphasizing Thailand’s readiness to strengthen bilateral relations with the Socialist Republic of Vietnam in every dimension and mechanism, through public-private and youth cooperation between the two countries. Besides this, the Foreign Minister accepted the invitation of Thailand-Vietnam Business Council to meet with representatives of Thai businesses in Vietnam and to learn about Thai-Vietnamese trade and investment from the perspective of the private sector. He also delivered a speech at the press conference with Vietnamese media and later attended a meeting with the Team Thailand in Vietnam at the Royal Thai Embassy in Hanoi.

On 5 August 2016, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs hosted a commemorative reception to celebrate the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Thailand–Vietnam diplomatic relations at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, co-presided over by H.E. Mr. Vitavas Srivihok, Deputy Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and H.E. Mr. Nguyen Tat Thanh, Ambassador of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam to Thailand. The reception featured Thai and Vietnamese cuisine and cultural performances, and a raffle to win the grand prize of a round-trip flight between Thailand and Vietnam. In addition to the participation of over 300 representatives of government agencies and private sectors, the Bangkok Administration Metropolitan invited a group of high-ranking executives from Hanoi, Ho Chi Minh City and Thua Thien-Hue Province to attend, while the Consul-General in Ho Chi Minh City also invited a group of Vietnamese youth from the 8<sup>th</sup> Thai–Vietnamese Youth Exchange Programme to the reception as well.



Activities to celebrate the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Thailand-Vietnam relations  
at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on 5 August 2016.

On 16 August 2016, the Department of East Asian Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, together with the Institute of Asian Studies and the Faculty of Arts, Chulalongkorn University, organized an academic seminar to promote Thai-Vietnamese relations under the theme “The 5<sup>th</sup> Decade of Thailand–Vietnam Diplomatic Relations: Towards a Strengthened Strategic Partnership”. The main objective was to promote and spread knowledge and understanding concerning the development of Thailand–Vietnam relations in various dimensions to commemorate the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Thailand–Vietnam diplomatic relations. At this event, H.E. Mr. Asda Jayanama, former Ambassador to Vietnam in Hanoi, delivered a keynote speech on “Thailand–Vietnam Diplomatic Relations: From the Past to the Future”. The speakers in the panel discussion on political, security and socio-cultural relations included Assistant Professor Dr. Thira Nutpiam, an academic expert on the politics of Vietnam, Colonel Apisak Sombatcharoennon, Deputy Director of Strategic Studies Center, National Defence Studies Institute and a professional expert on the security of Vietnam, Associate Professor Dr. Montira Rato, an academic expert on Vietnamese language and culture, and Dr. Thanyathip Sripana, an academic expert on the history of Vietnam. This academic seminar was had high attendance with over 80 participants, including representatives from government and private sectors, academics, professors, students, as well as the general public and the media. Once again on 31 August 2016, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Institute of Asian Studies of Chulalongkorn University held this seminar in Ubon Ratchathani Province. This time, the keynote speech on “The 5<sup>th</sup> Decade of Thailand–Vietnam Diplomatic Relations” was delivered by H.E. Mr. Singtong Lapisatepun, Director-General of the Department of East Asian Affairs, while the panelists in the panel discussion comprised Assistant Professor Dr. Thira Nutpiam, Associate Professor Dr. Montira Rato, Dr. Thanyathip Sripana, and Dr. Rujiwan Laophairoj, Chair of the Bachelor of Arts Program in Vietnamese Language and Communication, Faculty of Liberal Arts, Ubon Ratchathani University.

On 14 June 2016, H.E. Mr. Manopchai Vongphakdi, Ambassador of Thailand to Vietnam in Hanoi, met with Mr. Nguyen Thien Nhan, Chair of the Central Committee of the Vietnam Fatherland Front, in order to deliver financial assistance of 50,000 US dollars from the Royal Thai Government for the relief of drought and saltwater intrusion in Vietnam.

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## 1.2 Countries in Southeast Asia

### 1.2.1 Brunei Darussalam

On 5-10 October 2016, His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah, Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam paid a royal visit to Thailand as guest of the Government to attend the 2<sup>nd</sup> Asia Cooperation Dialogue (ACD) Summit. On 6 October, 2016, the Prime Minister was granted an audience with His Majesty the Sultan And Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam at His Majesty's residence hotel. His Majesty conversed about expanding cooperation on energy and agriculture. The latter requires acceleration for tangible cooperation, particularly in such industries as halal products, livestock and

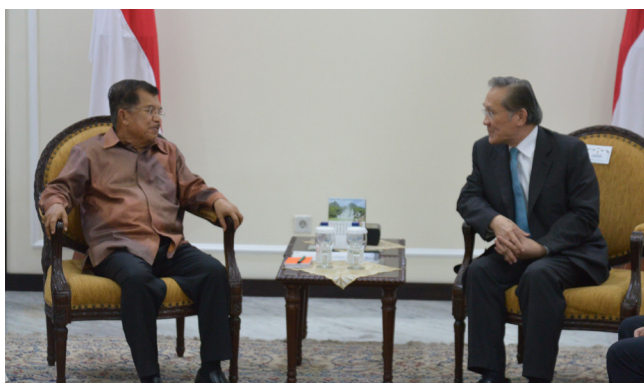
fisheries. His Majesty also mentioned expanding cooperation between security agencies of both countries to provide the region with greater security. In addition, the Prime Minister expressed his thanks to Brunei for helping promote understanding of the situation in the Southern Border Provinces of Thailand at the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) meeting.



His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah, Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam, paid a royal visit to Thailand as guest of the Government on 5-10 October 2016.

## 1.2.2 The Republic of Indonesia

On 10-11 February 2016, the Minister of Foreign Affairs made an official visit to the Republic of Indonesia and paid a courtesy call on H.E. Mr. Jusuf Kalla, Vice President of the Republic of Indonesia.



The Minister of Foreign Affairs made an official visit to Indonesia on 10-11 February 2016.

During their discussion, both of them agreed that as Indonesia and Thailand are the two largest economies in ASEAN, both countries have immense potential to strengthen cooperation in various dimensions such as fisheries and food security. On this occasion, the Foreign Minister also held a discussion with H.E. Mrs. Retno Marsudi, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia. Both of them were glad with close relations between the two countries and agreed on the exchange of high-level visits and the promotion of trade, investment and tourism. Moreover, they also agreed to promote cooperation to combat transnational crimes, international terrorism, extremism, drugs, human and wildlife trafficking, as well as cooperation in the international stage, especially in the ASEAN framework.



### 1.2.3 The Republic of the Philippines

On 10 June 2016, H.E. Mr. Jose Rene D. Almendras, Secretary of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Philippines met with the Foreign Minister of Thailand to exchange views on bilateral relations and regional issues. The Secretary of Foreign Affairs of the Philippines expressed his satisfaction with the longstanding relations between Thailand and the Philippines for 67 years and conveyed his admiration for the keynote address delivered by the Prime Minister of Thailand at the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) Shangri-La Dialogue 15<sup>th</sup> Asia Security Summit on June 3, 2016.



The Foreign Minister of Thailand exchanged views with H.E. Mr. Jose Rene D. Almendras, Secretary of Foreign Affairs of the Philippines on 10 June 2016.

## 2. Promoting Thailand's constructive roles in ASEAN to increase awareness among all sectors

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has been the key engine in driving the Government policy under the ASEAN cooperation framework to promote constructive relations between Thailand and ASEAN member states as well as dialogue partners. Major tasks include delegating various levels of representatives to attend meetings, hosting relevant meetings, implementing activities and managing collaboration in accordance with ASEAN policies and resolutions. The purpose is to preserve and promote Thailand's national political, economic and social interests in the ASEAN Community. In addition, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has worked to ensure Thailand's constructive roles through various mechanisms such as assuming the roles of country coordinator for ASEAN–EU dialogue relations, coordinator for ASEAN–UN specialized agencies dialogue relations to advance the Agenda for Sustainable Development, and coordinator for ASEAN–Pacific Alliance dialogue relations. Additionally, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has also raised awareness of the advantages and opportunities that Thai nationals can experience under the ASEAN Community by promoting public engagement.

### 2.1 Building awareness and promoting the benefits of ASEAN Community

On 8 January 2016, H.E. Mr. Chaisiri Anamarn, Advisor to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, hosted the ASEAN Music Concert and a reception at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The musical night was organized to celebrate the official establishment of the ASEAN Community and to promote awareness of diverse traditions, cultures and values in ASEAN by using music as a medium to connect diversity and create a common ASEAN identity. Mr. Hucky Eichelmann, a classically trained world guitarist, took the audience on a musical journey through the performance of ten ASEAN countries' folk songs which are diverse in

tune and style yet sharing similar roots. This reception was well attended by nearly 300 guests consisting of diplomatic corps, representatives of government agencies and private sector, and the media.

On 28–30 March 2016, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs held a training session in Bangkok, with the theme of “Harmony in ASEAN Diversity”, for faculties from higher educational institutions and Rajabhat Universities (polytechnic colleges) nationwide. H.E. Mr. Vitavas Srivihok, Deputy Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Thailand, presided over the opening ceremony and delivered a special lecture while H.E. Khunying Laxanachantorn Laohaphan, President of the ASEAN Association of Thailand, and Mr. Gwang-Jo Kim, Director of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), Bangkok, also gave special lectures. The ultimate goal of training was to increase understanding and awareness of the harmonious multiculturalism of ASEAN countries’ societies, which enabled peaceful coexistence. It was thus a government policy that the participants from 55 educational institutions could transfer knowledge and understanding gained from the lectures to their students as well as to local government agencies and the private sector.

On 4-6 August 2016, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs held a celebratory reception at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to mark the beginning of the 50<sup>th</sup> year of the establishment of ASEAN. On 4 August 2016, the Prime Minister presided over the ASEAN flag raising ceremony and the opening of the Royal Photography Exhibition, featuring photos taken and given by H.R.H. Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn. The Minister of Foreign Affairs, senior executives of the Ministry, and the ambassadors from nine ASEAN member countries attended the ceremony. In addition, the Department of ASEAN Affairs, together with the ASEAN Association of Thailand, held a special forum on “ASEAN Community: Unity in Diversity”, with H.E. Mr. Apinan Poshyananda, Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Culture, H.E. Mr. Vitavas Srivihok, Deputy Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Teeraparb Lohitkun, National Artist for Literature, and Mrs. Chiranan Pitpreecha, S.E.A. Write Award-winning writer and poet, as guest speakers.



A celebration at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to mark the beginning of the 50<sup>th</sup> year of the establishment of ASEAN on 4 August 2016.

On 15-16 November 2016, H.E. Mr. Chaisiri Anamarn, Advisor to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, presided over the ASEAN library delivery ceremony at Songkhla Wittayakom School, Songkhla Province and at Khuan Don Wittaya School, Satun Province, respectively. They are the 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> libraries under the “ASEAN Library: One Province, One School” project throughout Thailand. The project’s main objective was to launch these libraries as an activity center to encourage the engagement of all sectors in forging ahead the ASEAN community and to increase awareness of ASEAN among the local youth and communities. It is also expected that the participating schools would act as a model school to increase awareness of the ASEAN community among local schools within their vicinities.



ASEAN library delivery ceremony at Songkhla Wittayakom School, Songkhla Province,  
and at Khuan Don Wittaya School, Satun Province.

## 2.2 ASEAN cooperation in 2016

The Minister of Foreign Affairs of Thailand met with H.E. Mr. Le Luong Minh, Secretary-General of ASEAN, during his official visit to the Republic of Indonesia on 10–11 February 2016. Both of them expressed their contentment with the realization of the ASEAN community and the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the establishment of ASEAN in the year 2017. They also shared the same point of view to accelerate measures to strengthen ASEAN and to create a concrete people-centered community. In this occasion, the Secretary-General of ASEAN expressed his admiration for Thailand’s deep awareness of ASEAN.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs attended the ASEAN Foreign Ministers’ Retreat (AMM Retreat) on 25–26 February 2016 in Vientiane, Lao PDR. The main topic of the meeting was “Turning Vision into Reality for a Dynamic ASEAN Community”. The meeting discussed important and mutually beneficial issues, including the creation of ASEAN community that is people-centered and empowered. The Foreign Minister stressed the principles of inclusive engagement of all sectors and reducing development gap. Additionally, Thailand emphasized that sustainable development is an essential element in building the ASEAN community in line with the UN Sustainable Development Agenda. The meeting delegated Thailand to be the coordinator between ASEAN and UN specialized agencies to forge ahead with sustainable development in terms of connectivity. The meeting also agreed to accelerate the promotion of connectivity in transportation networks and regulations as it is viewed that strategic plans of member countries should be consistent with the ASEAN Community Vision 2025.



The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in collaboration with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crimes (UNODC), organized the 2<sup>nd</sup> regional meeting entitled “Strengthening ASEAN Border Management Cooperation: Towards a Better Connectivity and Security of ASEAN Community” on 25–26 April 2016 in Bangkok. The meeting discussed means to strengthen cooperation in land and water border management and to promote the exchange of information, knowledge, and expertise among ASEAN member states, as well as to find practical methods to mitigate emerging security threats and transnational crimes.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs attended the 49<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Ministerial Meeting (AMM) and related meetings on 23–26 July 2016 in Vientiane, Lao PDR. At the Post Ministerial Conference Plus One Sessions, the Foreign Minister mentioned socio-cultural and development cooperation, supporting the sharing of experiences and practices to strengthen development partnership. On the South China Sea, the Foreign Minister supported peaceful resolution through constructive negotiations and encouraged all parties to observe the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (DOC). Furthermore, the ASEAN-China Foreign Ministers’ Meeting adopted the Joint Statement of the Foreign Ministers of ASEAN Member States and China on the Full and Effective Implementation of the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea DOC and China’s proposal to designate the year 2017 as ASEAN-China Year of Tourism Cooperation.



The Minister of Foreign Affairs attended the 49<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Ministerial Meeting (AMM) and related meetings in Vientiane, Lao PDR, on 23–26 July 2016.

The Prime Minister and Foreign Minister attended the 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Summits and related meetings on 6–8 September 2016 in Vientiane, Lao PDR. Key issues that Thailand advanced included: (1) the ASEAN Plus Three Statement on Active Aging; (2) the promotion of sustainable development as Thailand is the ASEAN Coordinator on Sustainable Development Cooperation, promoting complementarities between the ASEAN Community Vision 2025 and the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development; (3) connectivity promotion according to the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity 2025, taking into account the security and safety of border areas through effective border management; (4) the transformation of the South China Sea into the Sea of Peace, Stability, and Sustainable Development; (5) the utilization of the ASEAN Connect program established by the United States in the construction of Creative ASEAN; and (6) Thailand’s proposal to host ASEAN–India Expo and Forum 2017 to commemorate the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of ASEAN–India Dialogue Partnership. On this occasion, the leaders adopted 19 important documents, such as the Initiative for ASEAN Integration (IAI) Work Plan III and the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity

2025. Moreover, the Prime Minister, together with the leaders of ASEAN Member States, and also signed the Declaration on One ASEAN, One Response: ASEAN Responding to Disasters as One in the Region and Outside the Region.



The Prime Minister and Foreign Minister attended the 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Summits and related meetings in Vientiane, Lao PDR, on 6–8 September 2016.

## 2.3 Promoting Dialogue Relations with Partners

### 2.3.1 ASEAN-U.S.

The Prime Minister attended the ASEAN-U.S. Special Leaders' Summit on 15–16 February 2016 in California, United States, upon the invitation of the Honorable Barack Obama, President of the United States of America. The key points of the meeting included: (1) Economy: the Prime Minister emphasized that the United States should continue its support to strengthen Thailand and ASEAN, focusing on economic partnership and sustainable development, especially by empowering entrepreneurs through the development of technology, innovation, digital economy and creative economy. The President of the United States also announced the establishment of U.S.–ASEAN Connect, planning to establish Connect Centers as a mechanism to advance such initiatives in Jakarta, Singapore, and Bangkok; (2) Security: the meeting exchanged views on the situations in the South China Sea and on the Korean Peninsula, maritime security, and transnational challenges. The Prime Minister expressed Thailand's readiness and determination to cooperate with many countries in dealing with challenges, especially human trafficking, irregular migration, and illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing (IUU Fishing). The meeting also issued the Sunnylands Declaration that reiterates fundamental rationales for the implementation of ASEAN-U.S. dialogue relations as a strategic partnership.



The Prime Minister attended the ASEAN-U.S. Special Leaders' Summit in California, United States, on 15–16 February 2016.

### 2.3.2 ASEAN–Russia

On 17–20 May 2016, the Prime Minister attended the ASEAN–Russia Commemorative Summit in Sochi, the Russian Federation. The leaders of ASEAN and Russia discussed ways to promote cooperation in various areas, focusing on dealing with non-traditional security threats, particularly transnational crimes, terrorism, food and energy security, and disaster management. The Prime Minister highlighted the roles of ASEAN Center of Military Medicine located in Thailand and encouraged ASEAN and Russia to expand anti-narcotics cooperation through the ASEAN Narcotics



The Prime Minister attended the ASEAN–Russia Commemorative Summit in Sochi, Russia, on 17–20 May 2016.

Cooperation Center (ASEAN-NARCO). In terms of economic cooperation, both parties agreed to expand trade and investment. In this respect, Thailand expressed support for the reduction of reciprocal trade barriers and encouraged the ‘plus one’ cooperation to avail Russia of the advantages of each country, together with the feasibility study of a comprehensive free trade agreement between ASEAN and the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU), and strengthened strategic connectivity in regional and inter-regional areas. In addition, the leaders of ASEAN and Russia adopted the Sochi Declaration and acknowledged the Comprehensive Plan of Action to Promote Cooperation between ASEAN and Russia (CPA) 2016-2020. The leaders also accepted the recommendations from the ASEAN–Russia Eminent Persons Group (AREPG) Report as guidelines to reinforce cooperation that covers all dimensions and yields more tangible results.

### 2.3.3 ASEAN–China

On 13–14 June 2016, the Foreign Minister attended the ASEAN–China Commemorative Summit held in Kunming, People’s Republic of China. The meeting discussed ways to strengthen dialogue relations and cooperation between ASEAN and the People’s Republic of China as well as the commemorative activities to celebrate the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of ASEAN–China dialogue relations. The meeting endorsed China’s proposal to announce the year 2017 as the ASEAN–China Year of Tourism Cooperation, expecting to welcome 30 million tourists between the two countries by 2020. As for the South China Sea, the Foreign Minister reiterated the importance of firmly complying with the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (DOC) in order to maintain mutual trust while expediting negotiations on the Code of Conduct in the South China Sea. The Foreign Minister also emphasized the need to jointly seek mutually beneficial solutions.



### 2.3.4 ASEAN–Japan

On 22–24 June 2016, the representative of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs attended the ASEAN–Japan Forum held in Tokyo, Japan. The meeting agreed to enhance cooperation in cyber security, anti-terrorism, and maritime security. Japan also proposed the Implementation Plan on Vision Statement on ASEAN–Japan Friendship and Cooperation. Moreover, ASEAN and Japan reiterated their wish to see a safe and nuclear-free Korean Peninsula and they supported ASEAN unity to tackle all types of challenges.

### 2.3.5 ASEAN–EU

On 15–16 September 2016, Thailand, as the country coordinator for ASEAN–EU dialogue relations during 2015–2018, together with the European Union, co-organized the 3<sup>rd</sup> ASEAN–EU High Level Dialogue on Maritime Security Cooperation in Bangkok to discuss and exchange views among high-level officials and experts on maritime security. The meeting emphasized the means to promote dialogue and cooperation between ASEAN and the European Union, particularly in terms of the following: (1) the promotion of mutual trust and the roles of preventive diplomacy in reducing tensions; (2) the awareness building and exchange of information and intelligence on maritime security in order to create a secure communication channel, and (3) the tackling of maritime piracy and armed robbery at sea, as well as increasing port facility security. This meeting was attended by representatives of foreign embassies in Thailand, international organizations, academics, the media and private sector.

On 13–14 October 2016, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Thailand and H.E. Mr. Miroslav Lajčák, Minister of Foreign and European Affairs of the Slovak Republic, holding the Presidency of the Council of the European Union, co-presided over the 21<sup>st</sup> ASEAN–EU Ministerial Meeting held in Bangkok. This meeting was arranged with the theme, “Towards a Strategic Partnership”, focusing on strengthening ASEAN–EU cooperation in all dimensions to elevate dialogue relations to a strategic partnership, as well as to outline future relations. Significant outcomes included adopting the Bangkok Declaration on Promoting an ASEAN–EU Global Partnership for Shared Strategic Goals and Bangkok Roadmap for Elevating the ASEAN–EU Enhanced Partnership to a Strategic Level (2016–2017), which show the intention of ASEAN and the European Union to move towards a strategic partnership and the emphasis on the principles to conduct relations such as non-use of force, respect for human rights and differences, promotion of economic cooperation, and inclusive engagement of all sectors in society.



The Minister of Foreign Affairs of Thailand  
co-presided over the 21<sup>st</sup> ASEAN–EU  
Ministerial Meeting held in Bangkok  
on 13–14 October 2016.

### 2.3.6 ASEAN–ROK

On 1–4 June 2016, the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs attended the ASEAN–ROK Dialogue Meeting held in Pyeongchang, Republic of Korea. The meeting extensively discussed the Korean Peninsula issue, calling on all parties to abide by the resolutions of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) and supporting the six-party talks. Thailand encouraged North Korea, as a member of ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), to use the ARF platform to discuss the matter with countries in the region. In addition, the Permanent Secretary informed the meeting of Thailand's four areas of interest, namely (1) the connectivity enhancement in the region (2) the cooperation promotion to prevent the spread of contagious diseases (3) the follow-up to the 17<sup>th</sup> ASEAN–Republic of Korea (South Korea) Summit and (4) the global economic and financial situation while also presenting Thailand's economic policy and development.

### 2.3.7 ASEAN–UN

On 24 September 2016, the Minister of Foreign Affairs chaired and delivered a keynote address at the seminar entitled “The Promotion of Regional Sustainable Development: Promoting Complementarities between the ASEAN Community Vision 2025 and the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development” at the Headquarters of the United Nations, New York City. This seminar was initiated by Thailand as the ASEAN Coordinator on Sustainable Development Cooperation. The speakers expressed their opinions on achieving sustainable development goals and agreed that it is expedient to promote complementarities between the ASEAN Community Vision 2025 and the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in various aspects, namely poverty reduction, solutions to reducing economic disparities, sustainable production and consumption, solutions to environmental problems, and fundraising for development. The panelists of this seminar included Mrs. Shamshad Akhtar, Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. David Nabarro, Special Advisor to the Secretary-General of the United Nations on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, Mr. Hirubalan VP, Deputy Secretary-General of ASEAN on the ASEAN Political–Security Community, and Mr. Xu Haoliang, Assistant Secretary-General of the United Nations and Director for the Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific of the United Nations Development Programme.



The Minister of Foreign Affairs chaired and delivered a keynote address at the seminar entitled “The Promotion of Regional Sustainable Development: Promoting Complementarities between the ASEAN Community Vision 2025 and the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development” at the Headquarters of the United Nations, New York City, on 24 September 2016.

### 2.3.8 ASEAN-PA

On 9–12 May 2016, Thailand, as the country coordinator for ASEAN–the Pacific Alliance (PA) dialogue relations, hosted a meeting between the Committee of Permanent Representative to ASEAN and the Group of External Relations of the Pacific Alliance. The delegates mainly discussed cooperation in four core issues, namely SMEs, education, science, technology and innovation, and trade facilitation. Moreover, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs organized for the delegation to meet with the President of the Federation of Thai Industries and the representatives from the private sector to discuss measures to promote trade and investment between Thailand and the Pacific Alliance in various businesses.

## 3. Enhancing cordial relations with strategic partners

The relations between Thailand and strategic partners have advanced remarkably, and countries that previously had restrictions have adjusted their standpoints positively. While leaders and important persons from all regions have continuously made official visits to Thailand, the Prime Minister and high-level representatives of Thailand have also visited countries in different regions to promote mutually beneficial cooperation in different dimensions.

### 3.1 East Asia

#### 3.1.1 The People's Republic of China

On 10–11 May 2016, H.E. Mr. Han Zheng, Secretary of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Shanghai Municipal Committee and Member of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee, made an official visit to Thailand as guest of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to boost overall Thailand–China relations and Thailand–Shanghai cooperation. Secretary Han Zheng paid a courtesy call on the Prime Minister and H.E. Mr. Somkid Jatusripitak, Deputy Prime Minister. At the luncheon hosted by the Thai Foreign Minister, both parties reaffirmed a long-standing, close and cordial relations between Thailand and China and agreed that Thailand and Shanghai have the potential to expand cooperation in various fields such as the economy, trade, investment, tourism and culture. Both parties also exchanged views and experiences on reform, development and economic restructuring, especially innovation. The delegates also met with Shanghai-based Thai investors and Thailand-based Shanghai investors and enjoyed cultural shows and activities by artists and performers from Shanghai at the China Cultural Center in Bangkok.



H.E. Mr. Han Zheng,  
Secretary of the Communist Party of China (CPC)  
Shanghai Municipal Committee and Member of  
the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee  
made an official visit to Thailand on 10–11 May 2016.



### 3.1.2 Japan

On 11 March 2016, the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Thailand attended the 6th Japan–Thailand Political Partnership Consultations (JTPPC) meeting held in Tokyo, Japan. During the meeting, both parties exchanged information and opinions on how to promote bilateral cooperation in several areas, such as the exchange of visits at all levels, important economic cooperation, and military and security ties. Both parties agreed that the future direction of Thailand–Japan cooperation should be geared towards the development in the Greater Mekong Subregion. Both parties also discussed regional situations and international issues of concern such as ASEAN and UN cooperation and the situations in the South China Sea and on the Korean Peninsula.

On 1–2 May 2016, H.E. Mr. Fumio Kishida, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan, made an official visit to Thailand as guest of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The discussion during his courtesy call on the Prime Minister and H.E. Mr. Somkid Jatusripitak, Deputy Prime Minister, centered on means to elevate cooperation in various fields such as trade and investment, Mekong–Japan cooperation, rail system development, human resource development, investment in Thailand-promoted industries, and resolutions to conflicts in the South China Sea. Furthermore, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Japan met with the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Thailand to have a bilateral discussion on the strengthening of economic cooperation, trade in agricultural products, and the results of the feasibility study on Bangkok–Chiang Mai high-speed rail, the Southern Economic Corridor, the maritime security issues, and the drive towards the Sustainable Development Goals.



H.E. Mr. Fumio Kishida, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan, made an official visit to Thailand as guest of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on 1–2 May 2016.

On 13 December 2016, H.E. Mr. Virasakdi Futrakul, Vice Minister for Foreign Affairs and Adviser to the Prime Minister, and H.E. Mr. Hiroto Izumi, Special Advisor to the Prime Minister of Japan, co-chaired the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thailand–Japan High Level Joint Commission (HLJC) meeting held at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The meeting discussed trade issues with Thailand wishing to increase import quotas for pork products from Thailand. Both parties also agreed to closely discuss the opening up of new markets under the Japan–Thailand Economic Partnership Agreement (JTEPA). In terms of investment, Thailand invited Japan to invest in ten targeted industries—First S-Curve and New S-Curve—as well as in the development of infrastructure in the Eastern Economic Corridor (EEC).

### 3.1.3 The Republic of Korea

On 11 October 2016, H.E. Mr. Hwang Kyo-ahn, Prime Minister of the Republic of Korea, had a bilateral discussion with the Prime Minister of Thailand, while attending the 2<sup>nd</sup> Asia Cooperation Dialogue

(ACD) in Bangkok. Both sides agreed to expedite the preparation of the 5-year master plan for Thailand–Korea New Economic Cooperation Initiative and to revive the Joint Trade Commission meeting mechanism to pursue measures to increase the trade value. In addition, the Prime Minister of the Republic of Korea promised to revoke a ban on imports of frozen and chilled poultry meat from Thailand due to bird flu epidemic in Thailand since 2004 and to consider increasing the purchase of rubber as a special case. The Prime Minister of the Republic of Korea also expressed interest to conduct a feasibility study on rail system development for the East–West Economic Corridor (EWEC) from Mae Sot to Mukdahan. After the discussion, both Prime Ministers witnessed the signing of two documents, namely (1) the Agreement to renew the Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation in the Railways Sector between the Ministry of Transport of the Kingdom of Thailand and the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport of the Republic of Korea, and (2) the Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation in Education between the Ministry of Education of the Kingdom of Thailand and the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Korea



H.E. Mr. Hwang Kyo-ahn, Prime Minister of the Republic of Korea, while attending the 2<sup>nd</sup> Asia Cooperation Dialogue (ACD) in Bangkok on 11 October 2016.

## 3.2 South Asia and the Middle East

### 3.2.1 The Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka

On 8–12 March 2016, H.E. Mr. Somkid Jatusripitak, Deputy Prime Minister, and H.E. Mr. Virasakdi Futrakul, Vice Minister for Foreign Affairs, made an official visit to the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, to follow up on the official visit to Thailand made by the President of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka on November 2015, especially progress in trade, investment, tourism, agriculture and fisheries, and technical cooperation. During the visit, the Vice Minister for Foreign Affairs acted as the representative of Thailand in signing two documents, namely (1) the Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka and the Government of the Kingdom of Thailand on Technical Cooperation and (2) the Joint Action Program for the period 2016 - 2018 for the implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation in the Field of Tourism between the Ministry of Tourism and Sports of the Kingdom of Thailand and the Ministry of Tourism Development and Christian Religious Affairs of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka





H.E. Mr. Somkid Jatusripitak, Deputy Prime Minister, made an official visit to Sri Lanka on 8–12 March 2016.

On 7–9 October 2016, H.E. Mr. Maithripala Sirisena, President of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, and his wife, paid a working visit to Thailand as guest of the Government. On 8 October 2016, President Sirisena met with the Prime Minister of Thailand to discuss enhancing cooperation in all dimensions, such as increasing trade and investment values, multilateral economic cooperation, military and security cooperation, tourism cooperation, and academic and development cooperation, particularly the development of public utility systems and agriculture.



H.E. Mr. Maithripala Sirisena, President of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, and his wife, visited Thailand on 7–9 October 2016.

Both sides stressed the close Buddhist bond and Thailand expressed appreciation to the Government of Sri Lanka for temporarily enshrining the Buddha's relics in Thailand for veneration by Thai Buddhists in the past year. This official visit to Thailand of President Sirisena was a good opportunity to follow up on his official visit to Thailand in November 2015 and the Deputy Prime Minister Somkid Jatusripitak's official visit to the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka in March 2016 as well as to showcase the over-6 decade long official relations that have even deeper historical, religious and cultural associations. These ties now act as a solid foundation for strengthening regional cooperation and creating an Asian community with greater stability, prosperity and sustainability in the future.

The Government of Thailand, by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, also approved a donation of 2,500,000 Thai baht for disaster relief in the areas affected by floods and landslides in May 2016. Regarding this matter, the Royal Thai Embassy in Colombo was assigned to deliver the donations to the representatives of the Government of Sri Lanka.



### 3.2.2 The Republic of India

On 16–18 June 2016, the Prime Minister of Thailand made an official visit to the Republic of India and had a bilateral meeting with H.E. Mr. Narendra Modi, Prime Minister of India, on 17 June 2016. After the discussion, the Prime Minister co-witnessed the signing and exchange of agreements and later joined the luncheon hosted by the Prime Minister of the Republic of India. Furthermore, the Prime Minister paid a courtesy call on H.E. Mr. Mohammad Hamid Ansari, Vice President of the Republic of India and received a courtesy call by H.E. Mrs. Sushma Swaraj, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of India. Thailand and India discussed courses of action to promote cooperation and forge political, security, economic,



The Prime Minister of Thailand made an official visit to India  
on 16–18 June 2016.

cultural, religious, and educational ties and multilateral partnerships under frameworks where Thailand and India have close cooperation, particularly ASEAN, UN, the Bay of Bengal Initiative Framework for Multi-Sectorial Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC), the Group of 77 (G77) and the Asia Cooperation Dialogue (ACD). Additionally, both sides discussed the issues of connectivity and expediting the Thailand-India Free Trade Agreement negotiation. In terms of trade and investment promotion, Thailand encouraged the Thai private sector to invest in the Republic of India to support economic policies such as “Make in India” and “Smart Cities”, and at the same time, the Prime Minister of Thailand also invited Indian investors to invest more in Thailand in such industries as software, medicine and automotive parts.

On 4–6 August 2016, H.E. Mr. Apichart Chinwanno, Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs paid a visit to the Republic of India and co-chaired the 4<sup>th</sup> meeting of Thailand–India Foreign Office Consultations (FOC) to follow up on progress in implementing the outcomes of the official visit of the Prime Minister of Thailand to the Republic of India in June 2016. Permanent Secretary Apichart Chinwanno also advanced the objectives of the Prime Minister’s visit and discussed courses to promote bilateral relations and cooperation in all dimensions, including economic, political, security, regional connectivity, cultural cooperation, and people-to-people relations, as well as multilateral cooperation such as under the Asia Cooperation Dialogue (ACD).

### 3.2.3 The Sultanate of Oman

On 31 January–1 February 2016, H.E. Mr. Somkid Jatusripitak, Deputy Prime Minister of Thailand, accompanied by the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Minister of Commerce, paid an official visit to the Sultanate of Oman. During the visit, Thailand and Oman discussed means to bolster relations and expand cooperation in such areas as energy, trade and investment, tourism, medical tourism, and technical cooperation. Oman welcomed Thai investment in various projects, such as the Duqm Special Economic Zone and Health City, and called on Thailand to jointly invest in the seafood processing industry in the Sultanate of Oman. Both sides signed four documents: (1) the Agreed Minutes of the Meeting Expression of Intent between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Thailand and the Public Authority for Investment Promotion and Export Development of the Sultanate of Oman on cooperation between the Thailand Future Fund and Oman Investment Fund Holding Company; (2) the Agreed Minutes of the Meeting Expression of Intent for Cooperation between the Ministry of Industry of Thailand and the Public Authority for Investment Promotion and Export Development for the Sultanate of Oman on the Development of Thailand Special Economic Zones and Industrial Clusters and Joint Cross Border Investments (3) Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Thailand and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Sultanate of Oman on Political Consultations, and (4) the Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Public Health of the Kingdom of Thailand and the Ministry of Health of the Sultanate of Oman in the Field of Health Cooperation.

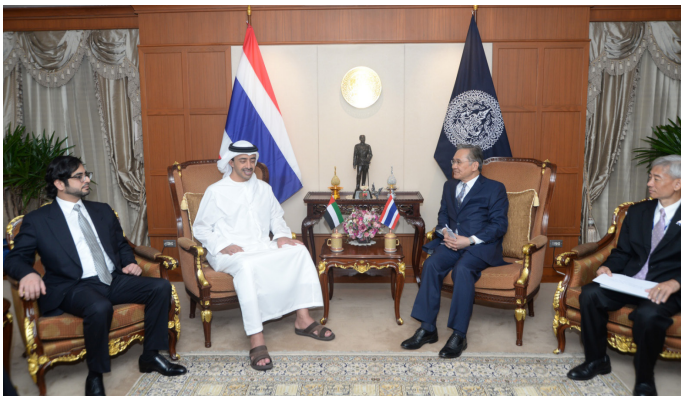


H.E. Mr. Somkid Jatusripitak, Deputy Prime Minister of Thailand, accompanied by the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Minister of Commerce, paid an official visit to Oman on 31 January–1 February 2016.



### 3.2.4 The United Arab Emirates

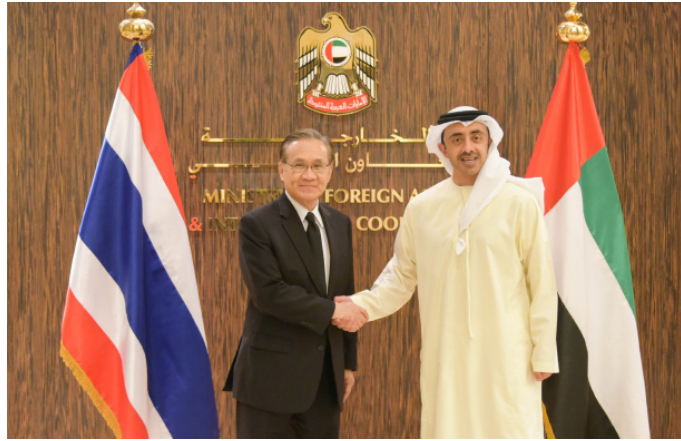
On 11–12 May 2016, Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of the United Arab Emirates, made an official visit to Thailand as guest of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to attend the 1<sup>st</sup> Meeting of the Joint Commission on Trade, Economic and Technical Cooperation between Thailand and the United Arab Emirates. Both countries signed the Memorandum of Understanding on Political Consultations between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Thailand and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of the United Arab Emirates. The Minister of Foreign Affairs of the United Arab Emirates also paid a courtesy call on the Prime Minister and had a bilateral discussion on the economic potential of Thailand, the role of the two countries as gateways to the regions, trade and investment cooperation, medical tourism cooperation, food and energy security cooperation, trilateral cooperation for third country development, and multilateral cooperation.



Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan,  
Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of the United Arab Emirates,  
made an official visit to Thailand on 11–12 May 2016.

On 11–12 December 2016, the Foreign Minister made an official visit to the United Arab Emirates, upon the invitation of Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of the United Arab Emirates, to enhance bilateral relations and cooperation as well as to follow up on the outcomes of the 1<sup>st</sup> Meeting of the Joint Commission on Trade, Economic and Technical Cooperation between the two countries held on May 2016. They exchanged opinions on significant global and regional situations, including security, food and energy security, economy, trade and investment, tourism, regional and multilateral cooperation.





The Foreign Minister made an official visit to the United Arab Emirates on 11–12 December 2016.

### 3.2.5 The Islamic Republic of Iran

On 22–25 January 2016, the Foreign Minister of Thailand paid an official visit to the Islamic Republic of Iran to co-chair the 9<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Joint Commission on Economic, Commercial, Industrial, Technical, Agricultural and Scientific Cooperation between Thailand and Iran that covers five key areas, namely (1) industry, trade, finance and tax, (2) agriculture, (3) science, tourism and mass media, (4) energy and mining, and (5) transportation and infrastructure. On this visit, the Foreign Minister paid a courtesy call on H.E. Dr. Hassan Rouhani, President of the Islamic Republic of Iran, which was also attended by H.E. Mr. Mohammad Javad Zarif, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran, and H.E. Mr. Mohammad Reza Nematzadeh, Minister of Industry, Mining and Trade of the Islamic Republic of Iran. The Foreign Minister stated that both sides should cooperate to complement each other in the fields of strength of each country. The meeting also exchanged views on economic, trade, and cultural relations, and regional and international issues.



The Foreign Minister of Thailand paid an official visit to Iran on 22–25 January 2016.

## 3.3 America and South Pacific

### 3.3.1 The Republic of Cuba

On 6–8 April 2016, the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Thailand led a delegation from the Thai public and private sectors on a visit to the Republic of Cuba to attend the First Meeting of the Consultations between the Republic of Cuba and the Kingdom of Thailand. On 8 April 2016, the Permanent Secretary, together with H.E. Mr. Marcelino Medina González, First Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Cuba, co-chaired the meeting. Both sides agreed on expanding cooperation in various dimensions, such as trade and investment. Cuba invited Thailand to invest in constructing hotels in the Republic of Cuba to accommodate the increasing number of foreign tourists. In terms of technical cooperation, both sides were willing to exchange knowledge in each country's fields of expertise, such as Cuba's public health, medicine and pharmacy and Thailand's tourism and agriculture. Both sides also agreed to expedite the process of negotiating bilateral agreements and discussed cooperation in the international stage, such as the United Nations and the Group of 77 (G77). During this visit, the Permanent Secretary also paid a courtesy call on H.E. Mr. Bruno Rodríguez Parrilla, Foreign Minister of Cuba, and led the Thai private sector to meet with H.E. Ms. Ileana Nunez, Deputy Minister of Foreign Trade and Investment, and attend a trade seminar and business matching event with the Cuban private sector.



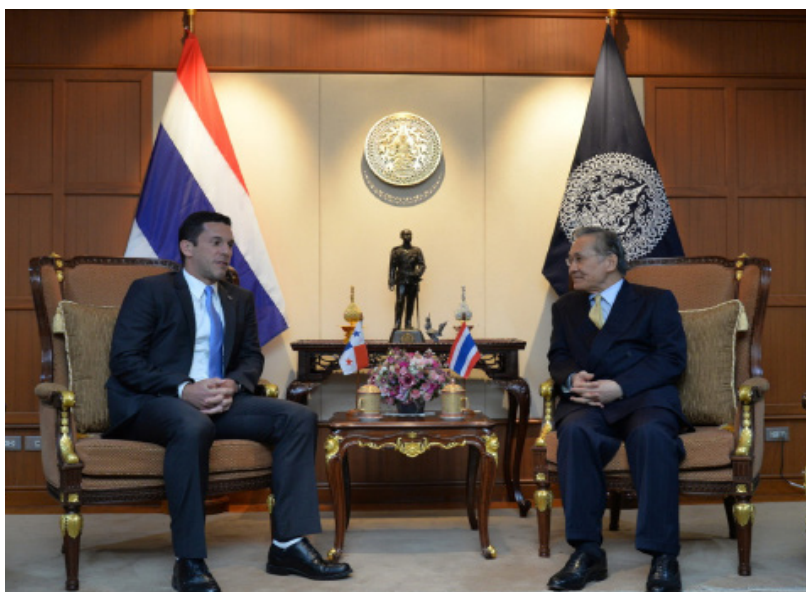
The Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Thailand led a delegation from the Thai public and private sectors on a visit to Cuba on 6–8 April 2016.

### 3.3.2 The Republic of Panama

On 23 May 2016, H.E. Mr. Luis Miguel Hincapié, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Panama, paid a courtesy call on the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Thailand and had a discussion with the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Thailand, during his visit to Thailand to chair the Meeting of Ambassadors and Consulates of Panama in Asia and Africa, held in Thailand. Thailand and Panama discussed the issues of trade and investment promotion, technical cooperation in agriculture and logistics, and cooperation under the United Nations. In addition, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Thailand organized a meeting between the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Panama and the President of the Thai



National Shippers' Council (TNSC), during which Panama invited the Thai private sector to visit Panama to explore opportunities to increase trade and investment.



H.E. Mr. Luis Miguel Hincapié, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Panama, paid a courtesy call on the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Thailand on 23 May 2016.

### 3.3.3 New Zealand

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Thailand and the Embassy of New Zealand in Bangkok organized various activities to commemorate the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the establishment of Thailand–New Zealand diplomatic relations in 2016. Major events included a logo design contest to celebrate the anniversary of relations under the theme “New Zealand–Thailand, Looking to the Future”, a reception chaired by H.E. Mr. Virasakdi Futrakul, Vice Minister for Foreign Affairs, on 29 March 2016, along with a traditional masked dance depicting the Ramayana epic, or Khon, at St. James Theater, and a Thai Festival in Wellington.

Activities to commemorate the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the establishment of Thailand–New Zealand diplomatic relations on 29 March 2016.





## 3.4 Europe

### 3.4.1 The Russian Federation

On 17–19 May 2016, the Prime Minister of Thailand paid an official visit to Russia, marking the first prime minister's visit in eleven years. The Prime Minister paid a courtesy call on H.E. Mr. Vladimir Putin, President of the Russian Federation, and had a bilateral meeting with H.E. Mr. Dmitry Medvedev, Prime Minister of the Russian Federation, and pledged to develop cooperation in various areas. In term of economic relations, both sides agreed to increase mutual trade value by five times or up to ten billion dollars within five years. Thailand expressed its readiness to be one of trade and investment centers in ASEAN and to invest in the agro-industry in Russia, while inviting Russia to invest in the super cluster in Thailand's Special Economic Zones and in the aircraft maintenance, repair, and overhaul services. At the same time, Russia was willing to support Thailand's development in infrastructure, advanced technology transfer, energy security, and scholarships for Thai students. In terms of tourism, Thailand proposed a direct flight connecting St. Petersburg to Chiang Mai/Phuket, which would help increase the number of tourists between the two countries. In addition, both sides discussed the preparation of the commemorative activities, to be held in Bangkok, Moscow and St. Petersburg, to celebrate the 120<sup>th</sup> anniversary of diplomatic relations in 2017.



The Prime Minister of Thailand paid a courtesy call on H.E. Mr. Vladimir Putin, President of Russia, and had a bilateral meeting with H.E. Mr. Dmitry Medvedev, Prime Minister of Russia during his official visit to Russia on 17–19 May 2016.

### 3.4.2 The Federal Republic of Germany

On 4 April 2016, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs held the 1<sup>st</sup> meeting of Thailand–Germany Political Consultations at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, co-chaired by H.E. Mr. Panyarak Poolthup, Deputy Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Thailand. Both sides discussed the enhancement of cooperation in economics, trade, education and alternative energy. The meeting also exchanged views on the situations in Asia and Europe including the situations in the South China Sea and political development in Myanmar. Germany shared its experiences in addressing migration problems such as through a proper classification of asylum seekers and refugees as well as a strengthened cooperation with non-EU strategic partners.



The 1<sup>st</sup> meeting of Thailand–Germany Political Consultations at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on 4 April 2016.

### 3.4.3 The Portuguese Republic

On 8 July 2016, Mr. Songpol Sukchan, Director-General of the Department of European Affairs, led a Thai delegation to attend the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thai–Portuguese Political Dialogue in Lisbon, Portugal. Both sides discussed ways to expand economic cooperation, proposing to exchange more economic and investment information and to promote cooperation in renewable energy and the marine economy, which are potential sectors of Portugal. With regard to education and culture, both sides were pleased with the ongoing cooperation in various dimensions and discussed cooperation in the maintenance of Portuguese community in Ayutthaya Province, the exchange of Thai and Portuguese language teachers between educational institutions of both countries, the drafting of a new agreement on educational cooperation, and cooperation in research and innovation. In addition, both sides also exchanged views on regional issues such as the development of ASEAN, terrorism, and the situations in the European Union, especially the case of the withdrawal of the United Kingdom from the European Union (Brexit).

## 4. Raising Thailand's status on the international stage and in the global community

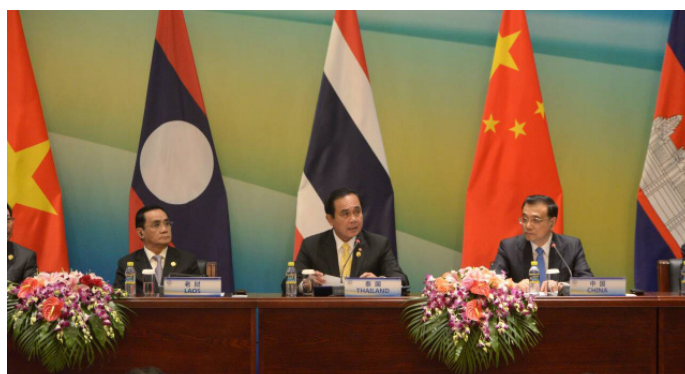
The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has proactively strengthened the recognition of Thailand in the global community in the realms of politics, security, connectivity promotion, and inclusive and sustainable economic and social development. Particularly as the Chair of the Group of 77 (G77), Thailand has played a constructive role to assist friendly countries to meet the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, proposing the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy as an alternative to achieve such goals. Key implementations in 2016 are as follows.

### 4.1 Subregional cooperation

#### 4.1.1 The Mekong-Lancang Cooperation (MLC)

On 22–23 March 2016, the Prime Minister of Thailand co-chaired the 1<sup>st</sup> Mekong-Lancang Cooperation Leaders' Summit held in Sanya City on Hainan Island, China. The meeting reviewed the progress of the Mekong-Lancang Cooperation and laid out the foundation for future cooperation, endorsing five key priority areas: connectivity, production and industry, cross-border economic cooperation, water management, agriculture, and poverty reduction. The leaders adopted three outcomes: (1) the

Sanya Declaration of the First MLC Leaders Meeting; (2) the Joint Statement of the Production Capacity Cooperation Among MLC Countries, and (3) the Joint List of the MLC Early Harvest Projects. Moreover, the Prime Minister and other member countries thanked the Government of China for the release of water downstream to the Greater Mekong Subregion during the drought.



The Prime Minister of Thailand co-chaired the 1<sup>st</sup> Mekong-Lancang Cooperation Leaders' Summit in Sanya City, Hainan Island, China, on 22–23 March 2016.

On 23 December 2016, the Foreign Minister of Thailand attended the Second Mekong-Lancang Cooperation Leaders' Summit held in Siem Reap, the Kingdom of Cambodia, co-chaired by Cambodia and China. The meeting reviewed the progress of implementation of the visions and initiatives, which were the outcomes of the 1<sup>st</sup> Mekong-Lancang Cooperation Leaders' Summit on 22–23 March 2016, especially the creation of working mechanisms for the endorsed key priority areas and the implementation of urgent projects approved by the leaders.

#### 4.1.2 The Mekong–Japan Cooperation (MJC)

On 25 July 2016, the Foreign Minister of Thailand attended the Mekong–Japan Foreign Ministers' Meeting, held in Vientiane, Lao PDR, attended by Foreign Ministers of Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Vietnam, and Japan. The meeting appreciated Japan's prominent and continuous roles in providing aid for the development of the Greater Mekong Subregion and congratulated the official announcement of the Japan–Mekong Connectivity Initiative. The meeting then affirmed the guidelines for the development of the Greater Mekong Subregion with Japan in accordance with the New Tokyo Strategy 2015 for Mekong-Japan Cooperation and the Mekong–Japan Action Plan for Realization of the New Tokyo Strategy 2015. The meeting agreed to implement projects and plans under the 3-year action plan (2016–2018) to achieve tangible results and supported the establishment of Senior–Level Working Groups as mechanisms to implement the Japan–Mekong Connectivity Initiative, the first meeting of which was scheduled for August 2016 in Bangkok. In this regard, Thailand played a prominent role in establishing development partnerships with Japan and was praised by the other four Mekong countries, especially for pushing the trilateral cooperation projects with Japan for the Greater Mekong Subregion.



### 4.1.3 The 7<sup>th</sup> Ayeyawady–Chao Phraya–Mekong Economic Cooperation Strategy (ACMECS)

On 25 – 26 October 2016, H.E. Mr. Somkid Jatusripitak, Deputy Prime Minister as special representative of the Prime Minister, accompanied by H.E. Mr. Virasakdi Futrakul, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, made a visit to the Socialist Republic of Vietnam to attend the 7<sup>th</sup> Ayeyawady–Chao Phraya–Mekong Economic Cooperation Strategy (ACMECS) Summit in Hanoi, the Socialist Republic of Vietnam. The meeting discussed directions to strengthen cooperation among ACMECS member countries in the areas of transportation, trade and investment facilitation, tourism, sustainable development, and management efficiency. In this regard, the meeting adopted the Hanoi Declaration as the outcome document. In addition, Thailand confirmed its readiness to host the 8th ACMECS Leaders' Summit in 2018.



H.E. Mr. Somkid Jatusripitak, Deputy Prime Minister as special representative of the Prime Minister, attended the 7<sup>th</sup> Ayeyawady–Chao Phraya–Mekong Economic Cooperation Strategy (ACMECS) Summit in Hanoi, Vietnam, on 25 – 26 October 2016.

## 4.2 Regional and global cooperation

### 4.2.1 Asia Cooperation Dialogue (ACD)

On 9–10 March 2016, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs held the 14<sup>th</sup> Asia Cooperation Dialogue Foreign Ministers' Meeting (ACD MM) in Bangkok with theme “ACD–The Way Forward”, attended by high-level representatives from 33 member countries. The meeting discussed ways to promote future cooperation in several areas, namely (1) the ACD regional connectivity development, (2) the prioritization of ACD pillars of cooperation, (3) the promotion of private sector's partnership role, (4) the educational cooperation promotion, and (5) the establishment of permanent headquarters of the ACD's Secretariat. The meeting also welcomed the Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal as the 34<sup>th</sup> Member State to join ACD officially.

On 9–10 October 2016, the Royal Thai Government hosted the 2<sup>nd</sup> Summit of Asia Cooperation Dialogue (ACD Summit) under the theme “One Asia, Diverse Strengths”, attended by leaders and high-level delegates from 34 member states. As the host, Thailand encouraged the utilization of Asia's diverse strengths to build capacity in creating balance with the global economy and eradicate inequality among sub-regions in Asia. The meeting endorsed the following: (1) ACD Vision for Asia Cooperation 2030; (2) Bangkok Declaration and ACD Blueprint 2017–2021 to put the shared vision into practice with

Thailand offering to take the lead in the promotion of inclusive growth and sustainable development; (3) ACD Statement on Reigniting Growth through Partnerships for Connectivity under which Thailand has proposed to work with member countries and all sectors to establish the Sub-Working Group on Reigniting Growth under the connectivity pillar; and (4) the establishment of headquarters of the ACD's Secretariat in the State of Kuwait as a mechanism to enhance ACD's operations. In addition, Thailand also arranged for the senior delegates to meet with the private sector at the ACD Connect 2016 Business Forum to hear their recommendations on public-private partnerships for the development of Asia in several dimensions. Priorities included the promotion of financial connectivity via technology and innovation, or FinTech, and fundraising for regional infrastructure development to achieve Asia's sustainable development.



The 2<sup>nd</sup> Summit of Asia Cooperation Dialogue (ACD Summit) at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Bangkok on 9–10 March 2016.

#### 4.2.2 (Thailand – Pacific Island Countries Forum – TPIF)

On 20–21 May 2016, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs held the 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting of the Thailand–Pacific Island Countries Forum (TPIF) in Bangkok, chaired by H.E. Mr. Suwit Mesinsee, Deputy Minister of Commerce and attended by high-level delegates of Thailand and 14 Pacific Island countries. The meeting reviewed the progress and courses of cooperation and development partnerships, especially in agriculture, fisheries, climate change, public health, Sufficiency Economy Philosophy, and trade and investment. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs also took the delegates from the Pacific Island countries on an excursion to Sampran Model Project and to Ban Hua Ao Community Learning Center, Nakhon Pathom, to learn about organic agriculture and community development to enhance capacity in implementing the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy.





The 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting of the Thailand–Pacific Island Countries Forum (TPIF) at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Bangkok on 20–21 May 2016.

#### 4.2.3 The Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA)

On 27 – 29 April 2016, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Thailand attended the 5<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA) held in Beijing, China. In this Meeting, the Foreign Minister stated that the promotion of peace and security was inseparable from economic well-being and sustainable development. He proposed that sustainable development be a part of the confidence building measures of CICA cooperation. In this regard, the meeting unanimously endorsed the Declaration on Promoting Peace, Security, Stability and Sustainable Development in Asia through Dialogue.



The Minister of Foreign Affairs of Thailand attended the 5<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA) held in Beijing, China, on 27 – 29 April 2016.

#### 4.2.4 The International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) Shangri-La Dialogue

On 3 June 2016, the Prime Minister of Thailand attended the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) Shangri-La Dialogue 15<sup>th</sup> Asia Security Summit in the Republic of Singapore upon the invitation of the Prime Minister of Singapore and IISS. In his Keynote Speech entitled “Towards Strategic New Equilibrium of the Asia – Pacific”, the Prime Minister stressed the globalized and interconnected nature of the world and the need for rebalancing measures and security cooperation. As for national, regional and global security challenges, it was stated that the equilibrium and strength of Thailand would calibrate the balance of ASEAN that should, in turn, contribute to equilibrium in the Asia-Pacific region. The Prime Minister also suggested that the enhancement of sustainable regional security would require time, mutual trust, and political will from all countries, based on mutual respect for sovereignty and international law, and not stipulating one’s ideology as a precondition for cooperation.



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The Prime Minister of Thailand delivered a keynote speech at the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) Shangri-La Dialogue 15<sup>th</sup> Asia Security Summit in Singapore on 3 June 2016.

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#### 4.2.5 The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE)

On 6–7 June 2016, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs hosted the 2016 OSCE Asian Conference under the theme “Strengthening Comprehensive Security”, with the participation of over 100 delegates from Europe and Asia as well as relevant international organizations. H.E. Mr. Panyarak Poolthup, Deputy Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Thailand, delivered the opening remarks, followed by keynote speeches from H.E. Mr. Lamberto Zannier, OSCE Secretary-General, H.E. Mr. Le Luong Minh, ASEAN Secretary-General, Ambassador Vuk Žugić, Head of the Permanent Mission of the Republic of Serbia to the OSCE and Chairperson of the OSCE Asian Contact Group, and Ambassador Norbert Riedel, Regional Director for Asia and the Pacific of the Federal Foreign Office of Germany and the OSCE Chairperson-in-office. The Conference was divided into three main sessions: (1) anti-terrorism and cyber security; 2) the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and 3) human trafficking and irregular migration. On 7 June 2016, OSCE Secretary-General Lamberto Zannier had a discussion with H.E. Mr. Apichart Chinwanno, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Thailand and gave a special lecture entitled “The OSCE: A Regional Model of Security Cooperation?” to the Foreign Affairs Executive Programme participants and representatives of relevant agencies and educational institutions as well as the interested public at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.



The 2016 OSCE Asian Conference at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs  
on 6–7 June 2016.

#### 4.2.6 The Asia–Europe Meeting (ASEM)

On 14–16 July 2016, the Prime Minister of Thailand attended the 11<sup>th</sup> Asia–Europe Meeting Summit (ASEM Summit) in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolian People's Republic. The Prime Minister stated Thailand's positions on such issues as cooperation in addressing various challenges, people-to-people links, connectivity for sustainable development, and economic connectivity. At the same time, the Prime Minister also informed the meeting of developments in Thailand's political stability and the progress in rebuilding a sustainable democracy as planned. In addition, during the informal meeting, the Prime Minister also raised important regional and international issues, including the challenges of a borderless world and collaboration in addressing challenges such as irregular migration, human trafficking and terrorism.



The Prime Minister of Thailand attended the 11<sup>th</sup> Asia–Europe Meeting Summit (ASEM Summit) in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, on 14–16 July 2016.

#### 4.2.7 The Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA)

On 27 October 2016, H.E. Mrs. Nongnuch Pecharach, Ambassador attached to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as special representative of the Foreign Minister, attended the 16<sup>th</sup> Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) Meeting of the Council of Ministers (COM) in Bali, Indonesia, with the participation of Foreign Ministers or their representatives from 21 Member States as well as Dialogue Partners. The meeting affirmed states' intention to strengthen economic cooperation in the most beneficial areas for member countries, especially in facilitation of trade and investment among Member States, exchange of knowledge and expertise, and safety and security in the Indian Ocean region. Thailand expressed the viewpoint that with the economic potential of IORA, Member States should push forward and accelerate



tangible results in trade and investment facilitation, tourism, and people-to-people connectivity. In this regard, Thailand also expressed readiness to cooperate with Dialogue Partners such as the Federal Republic of Germany, the French Republic, the People's Republic of China, the United States of America, Japan, and the United Kingdom on the exchange of knowledge and expertise in science, technology and innovation and human resource development to increase the capacity of member countries, as well as promotion of economic connectivity in the Indian Ocean region. In addition, the meeting endorsed the Bali Communiqué and reviewed the IORA Concord and Action Plan for 2017–2021 to lay out guidelines and directions of IORA cooperation.



The 16<sup>th</sup> Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) Meeting of the Council of Ministers (COM) in Bali, Indonesia, on 27 October 2016.

#### 4.2.8 The Group of 77 (G77)

Well recognized for its efforts by developing countries, Thailand was elected to assume a leadership role of the 2016 Chairmanship of the Group of 77, which consists of 134 member states. Thailand took this occasion to play three main roles, namely encouraging friendly countries to adopt the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy (SEP) as an alternative to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), acting as a bridge builder, and being a South–South cooperation partner.



The Minister of Foreign Affairs of Thailand received the G77 Chair's gavel from H.E. Mr. Luwellyn Landers, Deputy Minister of International Relations and Cooperation of South Africa.



(1) The building of a solid foundation to ensure full and effective implementation of UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: Thailand proposed three issues, namely (1) the implementation of Sufficiency Economy Philosophy to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, (2) the promotion of sustainable international investment, and (3) the utilization of information and communication technology (ICT) as a key factor in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030.

**The application of Sufficiency Economy Philosophy in achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals 2030:** the Ministry of Foreign Affairs organized international conferences and study visits on the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy such as the following: (1) the G77 Bangkok Roundtable on Sufficiency Economy: An Approach to ImpleMeeting of Experts on ICT and Sustainable Development for South-South Cooperation in Bangkok on 1-2 March 2016; (3) the High-Level Panel of Eminent Personalities of the South on South-South Cooperation in Bangkok along with the study visit to the Khao Hin Sorn Royal Development Study Center, Chachoengsao Province on 9-10 March 2016; (4) the G77 Meeting on Investment for Sustainable Development in Pattaya on 4-5 May 2016; (5) the G77 Meeting entitled “SEP in Business: A G77 Forum on the Implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals” in Bangkok along with the study visit to Sampran District, Nakhon Pathom Province, on 1-2 June 2016 to learn about the Sampran Model which is an inclusive business model based on organic social movement and fair trade.



The Prime Minister of Thailand presided over the opening ceremony of the G77 Meeting entitled “SEP in Business: A G77 Forum on the Implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals” in Bangkok on 1-2 June 2016.

The Ministry also distributed knowledge kits such as books, publications and exhibitions, domestically and internationally, providing grants for short training courses, scholarships for master’s degrees, and funding for studies on Sufficiency Economy Philosophy to representatives from developing countries. The tasks were successful and 10 countries showed their interest in the application of SEP for SDGs to their community development projects. These countries included the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, the Republic of Niger, the Republic of Togo, Burkina Faso, the Republic of Mozambique, the Republic of Tajikistan, the Kyrgyz Republic, the Republic of Paraguay, the Republic



Thailand hosted the G77 Meeting on Investment for Sustainable Development in Pattaya on 4-5 May 2016.

of Costa Rica, and the Republic of Senegal. These countries were 10 additions to the 9 countries that had already been implementing the Philosophy, namely the Kingdom of Lesotho, the Kingdom of Cambodia, the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste, Lao People's Democratic Republic, the Republic of Tonga, and the Republic of Fiji. The project implemented in Timor-Leste is a form of trilateral cooperation between Thailand, Germany (by GIZ), and Timor-Leste. On September 23, 2016, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs held a discussion session on "SEP for SDGs" during the 2016 Ministerial Meeting of the Group of 77 to discuss the integration of basic principles of the Philosophy and the concept of sustainable development as portrayed in national development plans. The meeting agreed to clearly state the adoption of the Philosophy as an alternative for the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals. This was the first time that an official document by the Group of 77 within the UN framework clearly acknowledged the internationalization of the Philosophy and determined it as an approach to support the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals.

**The promotion of sustainable international investment:** Thailand hosted the G77 Meeting on Investment for Sustainable Development in Pattaya on 4-5 May 2016 to raise awareness of the importance of promoting sustainable investment. On this occasion, Thailand showcased its experience in supporting community enterprises and the Village Fund Project which was well recognized by the Group of 77 member states. In this regard, Thailand and some members of the Group of 77, including the Republic of Brazil, the Republic of Indonesia, the Republic of Argentina, and some international organizations, namely the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD), and the South Centre, have expanded upon the results of the meeting and developed them into the South Principles on Investment.

**The utilization of ICT:** Thailand hosted the G77 Meeting of Experts on ICT and Sustainable Development for South-South Cooperation in Bangkok on March 1-2, 2016. During the meeting, Thailand illustrated to the Group of 77 member states concrete examples of the application of information and communication technology (ICT) and other technologies to serve the needs of developing countries in the economy and society in accordance with the 17 Sustainable Development Goals. Important results, such as the Smart Nation and the reduction of ICT access gap, were included in the 2016 Ministerial Declaration of the Group of 77.

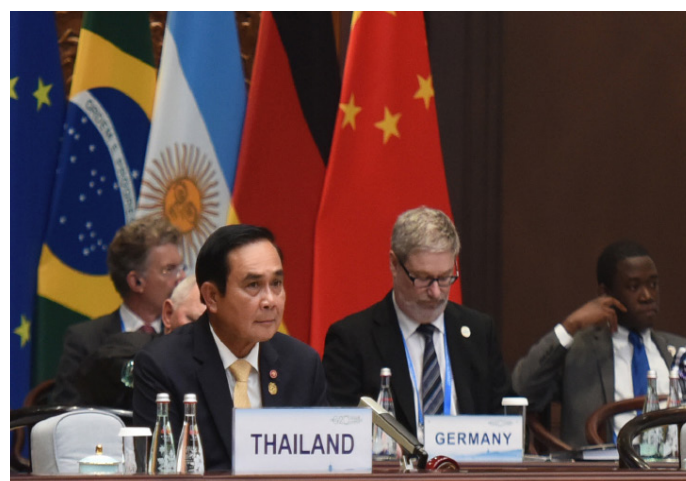
**(2) Thailand as a bridge builder connecting various parties within the Group of 77:** Thailand has played a constructive role in addressing socially and culturally delicate subjects by taking similarities among member countries as standpoints of the Group, taking into accounts opinions of all countries to achieve common goals and mutual benefits.

**Among the Coordinators of the Group of 77:** Thailand organized the Meeting of the Chairs and Coordinators of the Group of 77's Chapters in Geneva, Nairobi, Paris, Rome, Vienna and Washington, in Thailand on March 11, 2016. The meeting aimed at fostering the Group's common position and familiarity among members. Later, Thailand was granted the honor to present the report on the performance of the Group of 77 at the G77 Ministerial Meeting convened in Nairobi in order to prepare the Group's standpoint for the 14<sup>th</sup> session of the UNCTAD in Nairobi in July 2016.

**Between the Group of 77 and other groups:** Thailand has succeeded in leading the Group of 77 to participate in important negotiating processes, such as the Intergovernmental Negotiations for the implementation of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals, the consideration process of budget allocation to support the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and the Intergovernmental Negotiations to endorse the New Urban Agenda. This was successful that several documents were adopted in response to the needs of the Group of 77 member states during the critical period of laying the foundation to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

**Between the Group of 77 and international organizations, especially the Group of 20 (G20):** Thailand, as the Chair of the Group of 77, attended the G20 Summit in Hangzhou, China, on 4–5 September 2016. This was the first time the Group of 77 was invited to attend the G20 Meeting.

**(3) As a partner for South–South cooperation:** Thailand hosted the High-Level Panel of Eminent Personalities of South–South Cooperation on 9-10 March 2016 to discuss the paradigm shift in South–South cooperation in response to the Sustainable



The Prime Minister of Thailand, as Chair of G77, attended the G20 Summit in Hangzhou, China, on 4-5 September 2016.

Development Goals and carried out the SEP for SDGs Partnership project with the Group of 77 member states with Sufficiency Economy Philosophy as a guiding principle. In this regard, the United Nations Office for South–South Cooperation (UNOSSC) for Asia and the Pacific region has confirmed the reopening of the Asia-Pacific Regional Office after the temporary closure earlier. This should be beneficial to Thailand as a way to coordinate with the UNOSSC's operations to achieve common goals. In addition, the UNOSSC also urged Thailand to share experiences in the first issue of the journal titled *South–South in Action*, which was launched on 12 January 2016, and to participate in the additional events to launch the journal in four cities around the world, including Bangkok, Geneva, Addis Ababa, and Istanbul.



#### 4.2.9 The Bali Process

On 2 February 2016, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Thailand, together with the Governments of the Commonwealth of Australia and the Republic of Indonesia, hosted the 10<sup>th</sup> Bali Process Ad Hoc Group Senior Officials Meeting (AHG SOM) in Bangkok to address challenges posed by irregular migration in the Asia-Pacific region and the world. The meeting was attended by high-level delegates from 16 countries, such as Australia, Indonesia, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, and the United States, as well as representatives from the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC).

On 8–9 December 2016, H.E. Mr. Vitavas Srivihok, Deputy Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, led Thai delegates to attend the 9<sup>th</sup> Bali Democracy Forum (BDF) in Bali, Indonesia. The meeting was well-attended with participants including Ministers and Ambassadors from 94 countries in Asia and the Pacific, Europe, America, and Africa, who exchanged views and experience in democracy development under the theme of “Democracy, Religion and Diversity”. This BDF forum was initiated in 2008 by H.E. Mr. Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, former President of Indonesia, aiming to promote regional cooperation for democracy and political development, with focus on an open and constructive dialogue and an exchange of lessons and experiences of each country.

#### 4.2.10 United Nations

On 16–26 February 2016, the Permanent Representatives of the Kingdom of Thailand to the United Nations in New York organized an exhibition on Thailand's roles and contributions to UN peace missions and peacekeeping operations at the United Nations Headquarters, New York, the United States, during the 2016 Session of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations (C-34). The objective of the exhibition was to present Thailand's long-standing prominence and continuous contribution in maintaining international peace and security as well as to showcase Thailand's participation in peacekeeping missions around the world. The exhibition took into account important reports that review the peace operations of the High-level Independent Panel on Peacekeeping Operations and the Prime Minister's statement delivered at the Leaders' Summit on Peacekeeping 2015 expressing willingness to support the peacekeeping missions and to send additional contributing forces of Thai peacekeepers with an emphasis on development missions. In addition,



The exhibition on Thailand's roles and contributions to UN peace missions and peacekeeping operations at the United Nations Headquarters, New York, on 16–26 February 2016.

other parallel activities were also organized, including the talk entitled “More than Mission Mandate: Towards Sustainable Peace” discussing Thailand’s unique role in joining the UN peacekeeping operations and trends of peacekeeping operations in the future.

On 18 May 2016, H.E. Mr. Vitavas Srivihok, Deputy Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Thailand, and acting Permanent Secretary, attended the 72<sup>nd</sup> session of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) at the United Nations Conference Centre in Bangkok. The Deputy Permanent Secretary delivered a statement to the plenary session informing them of Thailand’s economic development to achieve Thailand 4.0 and exchanged viewpoints on the utilization of science, technology, and innovation. He also reviewed the progress of economic and social development in various areas that are important to the region, forging ahead with the issues which Thailand attached importance to and providing feedback to regional mechanisms on sustainable development policies.

On 26–30 June 2016, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Thailand attended the UN General Assembly for the election of non-permanent members of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) in New York, United States, where the Republic of Kazakhstan was elected as UNSC non-permanent member for Asia to serve a term of 2017–2018. The campaign for the election of UNSC non-permanent member elevated Thailand’s role as a UN member and has been an opportunity for Thailand to build friendships and continue long-term cooperation with friendly countries around the world, particularly in the realm of development cooperation, such as sharing experiences on sustainable development through training programmes, study visits, and provision of technical assistance in the areas of Thai expertise.

On 17–22 July 2016, the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Thailand, as special representative of the Foreign Minister, attended the 14<sup>th</sup> session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) in Nairobi, the Republic of Kenya. The theme of the conference was “From Decision to Action: Moving towards an Inclusive and Equitable Global Economic Environment for Trade and Development”. The meeting discussed the Group’s priority issues and endorsed policies and strategies to be in line with the operations of UNCTAD for the next four-year term. In this regard, the Permanent Secretary also delivered a statement illustrating the past work of Thailand as the Chair of the Group of 77.

On 19 – 25 September 2016, the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Thailand attended the 71<sup>st</sup> session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) and related important meetings in New York, United States, with the theme “The SDGs: A Universal Push to Transform Our World”. This session has two important implications for Thailand: (1) 16 December 2016 marks the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Thailand’s becoming the 55<sup>th</sup> member of the United Nations, reflecting the long-standing relations and cooperation between Thailand and the United Nations, the largest multilateral diplomatic stage, and (2) it is the year in which Thailand assumed the chairmanship of the Group of 77 (G77), the largest negotiating group within the UN system, containing a vast number of 134 developing countries as member states. On 23

September 2016, the Prime Minister delivered a statement at the General Debate of the UNGA to express the vision and share the experiences of Thailand on efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. This included economic policies to enhance competitiveness and human resource development, social policies to increase equality for people, human rights protection, provision of assistance to migrants and promotion of access to basic services, as well as foreign policies on peace and security associated with development. He also shared the views on comprehensive security, especially on critical international situations.



The Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Thailand attended the 71<sup>st</sup> session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) and related important meetings in New York, United States, on 19 – 25 September 2016.

#### 4.2.11 The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)

On 20 January 2016, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, together with the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), organized a seminar to present the report entitled “OECD Economic Outlook for Southeast Asia, China and India 2016: Enhancing Regional Ties” at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Bangkok. The OECD representative reported that ASEAN seems to have a better economic growth rate than any other regions in the world. The panelists expressed their views that, since an economic slowdown and fluctuations in oil prices could affect the growth of Thailand and ASEAN, Thailand should thus focus on macroeconomic policies and ASEAN should set common economic goals among ASEAN Member States and conduct harmonized policies for trade, investment and finance, as



The seminar entitled “OECD Economic Outlook for Southeast Asia, China and India 2016: Enhancing Regional Ties” at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Bangkok on 20 January 2016.

well as increasing cooperation with OECD which could provide policy advice. In order to support the realization of ASEAN Economic Community, it was suggested that there should be an increase in the harmonization of economic policies, a reduction in development discrepancies, and an improvement in the monitoring and follow-up system for the establishment of the ASEAN Economic Community.

On 1–4 June 2016, delegates from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Thailand attended two meetings as follows: (1) the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development Forum (OECD Forum) which

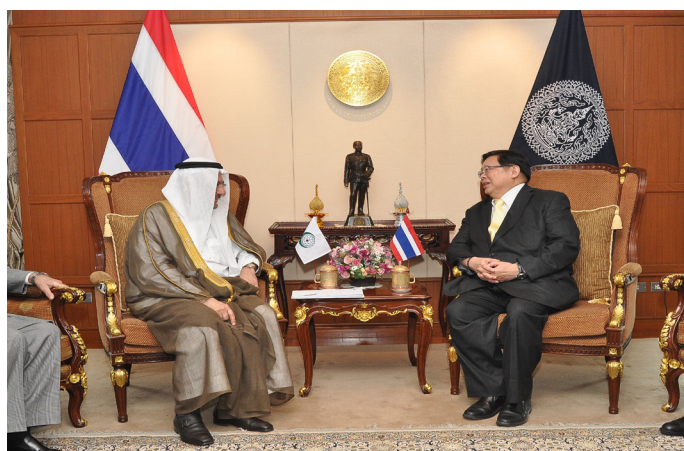


is an annual forum to discuss economic and social issues that are in the interest of global community; (2) the 3<sup>rd</sup> OECD Development Center's High-level Meeting (HLM), which is a forum for high-level delegates from the OECD Development Center member countries and observers from international organizations to exchange visions for cooperation.

#### 4.2.12 The Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC)

On 18–19 October 2016, H.E. Mr. Panyarak Poolthup, Deputy Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Thailand, led the delegation from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to attend the 43<sup>rd</sup> session of the OIC Council of Foreign Ministers (CFM) in Tashkent, the Republic of Uzbekistan. The Thai delegation met with representatives from the OIC, including the Republic of Turkey, the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, the Republic of Gambia, the Republic of Indonesia, the Kingdom of Bahrain, the Kyrgyz Republic, as well as the representative from the office of OIC Secretary-General to strengthen cooperation with the OIC member states and to negotiate the text of resolutions on the Southern Border Provinces of Thailand. The meeting of the 43<sup>rd</sup> CFM approved the resolution on the Muslim Communities and Minorities in Non-OIC Member States, which does not contain messages or words with negative implications for Thailand's measures to resolve the situation in the Southern Border Provinces.

On 11 January 2016, H.E. Mr. Iyad Ameen Madani, Secretary-General of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), met with H.E. Mr. Virasakdi Futrakul, Vice Minister for Foreign Affairs, at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Bangkok, during an official visit to Thailand to attend the Symposium on Interfaith Dialogue and Peaceful Coexistence in Multicultural Societies. Both sides agreed to deepen cordial relations and expand cooperation between Thailand and OIC, such as the export of Thai halal food products and public health cooperation, particularly vaccine production and medical tourism, between Thailand and OIC member states.



H.E. Mr. Iyad Ameen Madani, Secretary-General of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), met with H.E. Mr. Virasakdi Futrakul, Vice Minister for Foreign Affairs, at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Bangkok on 11 January 2016.

#### 4.2.13 The Nuclear Security Summit (NSS)

On 31 March – 1 April 2016, the Prime Minister of Thailand attended the 4<sup>th</sup> Nuclear Security Summit in Washington, United States, to discuss courses to strengthen cooperation in nuclear security and counter-nuclear terrorism. The meeting adopted the 2016 Nuclear Security Summit Statement and five Action Plans to express the political intent in reducing the threat of nuclear terrorism. Besides the above documents, Thailand has voluntarily joined the 11 Gift Baskets scheme in order to expand cooperation in nuclear security in various areas. This will help upgrade the capacity of agencies and improve the effectiveness of Thailand's operational system. In this meeting, the United States Nuclear Energy Institute (NEI) presented the Nuclear Industry Summit (NIS) Award to the Prime Minister to express their appreciation to Thailand for the cooperation in the complete removal of highly enriched uranium.



The Prime Minister of Thailand attended the 4<sup>th</sup> Nuclear Security Summit in Washington, United States, and received the Nuclear Industry Summit (NIS) Award from the United States Nuclear Energy Institute (NEI) on 31 March – 1 April 2016.



The Prime Minister of Thailand attended the Leaders' Summit on Refugees in Washington, D.C. on 20 September 2016.

#### 4.2.14 The Leaders' Summit on Refugees

On 20 September 2016, the Prime Minister of Thailand attended the Leaders' Summit on Refugees, held during the 71<sup>st</sup> United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) in New York, the United States of America. The purpose was to join international efforts in pledging assistance and solving the global problems of displaced persons. The Prime Minister of Thailand was one among leaders and representatives from 50 countries, and the only ASEAN Member Country, invited by the US Government to join the Summit. The Prime Minister reiterated Thailand's longstanding roles in providing humanitarian assistance to various



groups of displaced persons during the past four decades. He also announced Thailand's 10 pledges which included, for example, the following: (1) the development of a screening system in accordance with international standards in order to distinguish displaced persons from economic migrants and to prevent trafficking; (2) the commitment to end the practice of immigration detention of displaced children; (3) the provision of education and skill training to migrants from Myanmar to ensure their sustainable livelihood upon their return to their home countries. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has acted as the focal point in the organization of preparatory meetings and coordination among Thai line agencies, especially in formulating Thailand's positions and pledges, which were aimed at not only meeting international standards, but also contributing to long-term and systematic solutions to the global problems.



Alibaba Group Founder and Executive Chairman Jack Ma paid a courtesy call on the Prime Minister of Thailand at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs during the 2<sup>nd</sup> Asia Cooperation Dialogue (ACD) Summit on 10 October 2016.

## Promoting Prosperity

As one of the economic ministries, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has strived to enhance the growth of Thailand's economy and private sector amid the challenging global economic context. Among other things, the major tasks include strengthening and enhancing the competitiveness of Thai private sector, exploring opportunities and expanding cooperation in trade and investment, and pursuing technology, innovation and technical knowledge suitable for laying the foundation for the country's sustainable economic development. Ultimately, the goal is to boost people's wellbeing and to increase the country's prosperity.

### 1 Creating opportunities and expanding trade and investment cooperation

#### 1.1 Meeting with important people to increase trade and investment cooperation

##### 1.1.1 Mr. Jack Ma, Founder and Executive Chairman of Alibaba Group

The Prime Minister of Thailand, as Chair of the Group of 77 (G77), met with Alibaba Group founder and Executive Chairman Jack Ma, during the Group of 20 (G20) Summit, held on 4–5 September 2016 in Hangzhou, China. Both sides discussed the application of Alibaba's system to promote the marketing of Thai SMEs and OTOP products.



On 10 October 2016, during the 2<sup>nd</sup> Asia Cooperation Dialogue (ACD) Summit, Alibaba Group Founder and Executive Chairman Jack Ma paid a courtesy call on the Prime Minister of Thailand at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, also attended by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Minister of Tourism and Sports, Minister of Commerce, and Minister of Education. The discussion covered four main areas. Firstly, to empower Thai SMEs and young entrepreneurs, Alibaba would collaborate with Thai agencies to organize training sessions for entrepreneurs and business leaders to promote the use of e-commerce and would support Thailand to become the regional e-hub in the long run. Secondly, in the area of tourism, Alibaba proposed to sign a Memorandum of Understanding with the Tourism Authority of Thailand to jointly encourage quality tourists to visit Thailand and support SMEs by using Alibaba database and applications. For instance, the quality of tourists can be ascertained from their history of spending via Alibaba application. Regarding this, the Prime Minister suggested that importance should be given to security risks and public awareness. Thirdly, Alibaba displayed willingness to provide technology and expertise to advocate the cashless society policy to promote access to financial services. Finally, Thai youth would be welcomed to take part in a two-year internship program in Alibaba businesses. The Prime Minister commented on the promotion of education and personnel development that should be carried out to expand the knowledge of educated groups and to prepare the new generations with new forms of knowledge. Eventually, both sides agreed to establish a joint working group as a mechanism of collaboration.

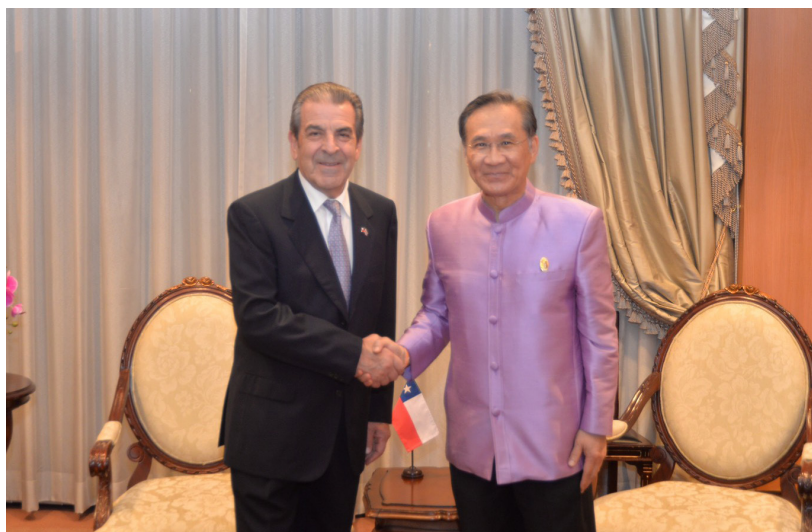


Alibaba Group Founder and Executive Chairman Jack Ma paid a courtesy call on the Prime Minister of Thailand at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs during the 2<sup>nd</sup> Asia Cooperation Dialogue (ACD) Summit on 10 October 2016.

### 1.1.2 H.E. Mr. Eduardo Frei Ruiz-Tagle, Former President of the Republic of Chile and Special Envoy of the President of the Republic of Chile for the Asia-Pacific

On 7 April, 2016, H.E. Mr. Eduardo Frei Ruiz-Tagle, former President of the Republic of Chile and Special Envoy of the President of the Republic of Chile for the Asia-Pacific, met with the Foreign Minister of Thailand at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Both sides agreed to encourage the private sectors to capitalize on the Thailand–Chile Free Trade Agreement, which had come into force since

5 November 2015. They also perceived the capacity of both countries to act as gateways to the regions: Chile as the gateway to Latin America and Thailand as the gateway to ASEAN and Asia.



H.E. Mr. Eduardo Frei Ruiz-Tagle, former President of Chile and Special Envoy of the President of Chile for the Asia-Pacific, met with the Foreign Minister of Thailand at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on 7 April, 2016.

## 1.2 The Business Information Centers

The Business Information Centers (BICs) are one of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' mechanisms to implement public diplomacy and to drive proactive economic diplomacy aiming to increase the Thai private sector's economic capacity and competitiveness. The BICs is operated by the Department of International Economic Affairs via [globthailand.com](http://globthailand.com), the upgraded and optimized version of the previous [ThaiBiz.net](http://ThaiBiz.net). It has a modernized image and more user-friendly and target-oriented features focusing on the Thai private sector, under the concept of "Global Business, Great Thailand". In addition, the website—[globthailand.com](http://globthailand.com)—is linked with the 32 BICs of the Royal Thai Embassies and Consulates around the world, to guide the private sector by disseminating updates and opportunities of global markets and businesses so that entrepreneurs can use them to develop their business plans. The website also provides information on rules and regulations, upcoming exhibitions and consumer trends, as well as guidelines on how to access "major players" in both public and private sectors in various countries. All in all, these have helped enhance economic opportunities and resulted in the increased capacity and competitiveness of Thai businesses on the global stage.

The BICs also provide preliminary advice for doing business overseas, via face-to-face, telephone and email consultations. The clients include SMEs and large enterprises in the country, mainly in the food and beverage, restaurants, health and beauty, and oil and petroleum industries. The most frequently asked questions include such topics as import and export, trade and investment regulations, and company establishment procedures.

### 1.3 Overseas business trips

The Department of International Economic Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Thailand, invited Thai businesspeople with high potential to join overseas business trips to enhance their experience, broaden their vision, and explore business opportunities abroad. Examples were the following 5 projects. The first project was the exploration of emerging markets for cosmeceutical products in Latin America on 6-15 April 2016, providing an opportunity to create networks with the private sector in Cuba, Peru, and Ecuador. The second project was the path-finding for the opening of distribution centres, leading representatives from logistics and distribution companies to visit Germany on 19–24 September 2016. The business mission explored channels to expand logistics investment in Germany, a major logistics hub of Europe, and had a chance to create business networks with German businesspeople that may lead to future business partnerships. The third was the fishery industry trip arranged on 22–30 August 2016, taking the Thai private sector to visit the Sultanate of Oman and the Islamic Republic of Iran. Delegates from the public and private sectors explored the feasibility to invest in comprehensive fisheries, logistics and the establishment of Thai goods distribution centers. The fourth project was the 1<sup>st</sup> trip of Ambassadors' Overseas Business Guidance Project, leading the new generations of entrepreneurs to visit Myanmar on 5–7 September 2016. The mission conducted a study trip to the Thilawa Special Economic Zone and built up networks with the government and business sector of Myanmar, matching Thai businesses with Myanmar entrepreneurs in the fields of machinery parts and interior design. The fifth project was on commercial diplomacy to increase the competitiveness of Thai agriculture and food industry, arranged on 23–29 April 2016 in the Kingdom of Denmark. The project aimed at opening new markets and connecting food and industrial networks from upstream to midstream and downstream. The delegation made a study trip to a well-known agro-industrial institute of Denmark and had the opportunity to create networks to exchange knowledge and expand cooperation in the food and agricultural industries.

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### 1.4 Inbound business trips

On 22–30 May 2016, H.E. Mr. Pitchayaphant Charnbhumidol, Ambassador of Thailand to Brazil, led a business mission in the commodity and halal industry from the Republic of Brazil to visit Thailand and attend the seminar on the Thailand–Brazil trade and investment promotion. The Brazilian business mission paid a call on H.E. Mr. Virasakdi Futrakul, Vice Minister for Foreign Affairs, who emphasized Thailand's economic potential and ability to be the hub of the region and urged Brazil to consider Thailand as the gateway to trade and investment in Asia. Furthermore, in their discussion, both sides agreed to expand trade cooperation, including the export of Brazilian products, such as halal food and coffee, to Thailand and the export of Thai shrimp and tuna to Brazil. In addition, the Ambassador led the group to attend the ThaiFEX Expo organized by the Ministry of Industry and met with senior executives of the Thai public and private sectors.





A business mission in the commodity and halal industry  
from the Republic of Brazil visited Thailand on 22–30 May 2016.

On 27 June – 1 July 2016, the Ambassador of Thailand to the Republic of India, together with the Tourism Authority of Thailand and the Thai Airways International Public Company Limited in New Delhi, led leading Indian delegates from the film industry to visit Thailand under the program entitled “Thailand–India Cine Connect: Exploring Potentials to Bridge Our Film Industries”. On this occasion, the delegation also paid a courtesy call on General Thanasak Patimaprakorn, Deputy Prime Minister and Chairperson of the National Board of Film and Video of Thailand at the Department of Cultural Promotion, Ministry of Culture. The Deputy Prime Minister encouraged cooperation between the two countries in the film industry that would not only yield economic benefits but also strengthen people-to-people connections.

On 21 July 2016, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Thailand hosted a reception in honor of the business delegation from the US-ASEAN Business Council (USABC) at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The Foreign Minister welcomed the delegates from the US-ASEAN Business Council (USABC), which includes executives and representatives from over 60 leading companies in the United States, such as Chevron, Ford, General Motors, and relevant government agencies, the Thai private sector, trade associations, and the United States Embassy in Thailand. Mr. Alexander Feldman, President and CEO of USABC, expressed his appreciation to the Thai side and showed USABC's intention to increase long-term investment in Thailand and ASEAN.



The reception in honor of the business delegation from the US-ASEAN Business Council (USABC)  
at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on 21 July 2016.

On 9 October 2016, the Department of International Economic Affairs organized the ACD Connect 2016 under the theme “Innovative Financial Connectivity for a Sustainable Asia”, the first business forum which was held in parallel with the 2<sup>nd</sup> Asia Cooperation Dialogue Summit (ACD Summit), hosted by Thailand. This event was well attended by delegates from public and private sectors of 28 member states, among which were ministerial representatives from 10 countries, namely the Sultanate of Oman, the Republic of Tajikistan, the United Arab Emirates, the Kingdom of Bahrain, the Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal, the Republic of the Philippines, the Kingdom of Bhutan, the People’s Republic of Bangladesh, the Kyrgyz Republic, and the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka. The business meeting also launched the “ACD Connect Network Portal”, which is a database and a platform to create business networks of member countries and presented the results and policy proposals derived from the ACD Connect Business Forum on the topic of “Awakening the Power of Financial Innovation for Sustainable Asia” to the 2<sup>nd</sup> ACD Leadership Summit.

## 1.5 MFA CEO FORUM

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Thailand organized the MFA CEO Forum to support the country’s development through economic diplomacy. This forum is held to provide leading Thai business organizations an opportunity to present information on the Thai private sector’s trade and investment potentials directly to the foreign diplomatic corps. The purpose was to build up confidence in the Thai economy, to display the role of the Thai private sector in sustainable development on the global stage, to provide market access for the Thai private sector, and to create networks and expand trade and investment cooperation. In 2016, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs organized 7 events, inviting top executives of leading companies to give lectures and share their vision as follows:

(1) On 25 February 2016, Mr. Roongrote Rangsiyopash, President and Chief Executive Officer of the Siam Cement Public Company Limited, shared SCG’s profile, vision, and commitment to corporate social responsibility;



(2) On 9 March 2016, Mr. Suphachai Chearavanont, Vice Chairman of Charoen Pokphand Group and Chairman of the Board of True Corporation Public Company Limited, shared the corporates’ policies, business performances, and the application of Sufficiency Economy Philosophy in the businesses.

(3) On 30 May 2016, Mrs. Chadatip Chutrakul, Chief Executive Officer of Siam Piwat Company



Limited, as one of the leading female CEOs and executives of the country, shared her vision on the company's administration in the realms of real estate, retail industry, and business development through technology and innovation to cope with challenges from ever-changing consumer behavior.

(4) On 1 July 2016, Mr. Tevin Vongvanich, President and Chief Executive Officer of PTT Public Company Limited, shared his vision on the operation of the country's largest energy business to create energy security and sustainable economic development based on the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy as well as business expansion into other fields significant to the Thai and global economy.

(5) On 18 August 2016, Mr. Yuthachai Charanachitta, Chief Executive Officer of ItalThai Group, shared his vision on the two main business areas of the company, namely (1) the heavy machinery industry and the one-stop or comprehensive construction services and (2) the service and lifestyle industry. He also talked about strategies in conducting business both domestically and internationally to propel the country's economy and world economy, including strengthening the competitiveness to support business expansion based on good governance and sustainable development.

(6) On 15 September 2016, Mr. William E. Heinecke, Chief Executive Officer of Minor International Public Company Limited, presented the service capacity of the company which was an important driving force of Thailand's economy. He talked about the corporate profile and vision in the three main pillars of the company, namely restaurants, hotels, and lifestyle products. The companies' creation of business alliances both domestically and internationally, led to the company's improved operational efficiency to generate sustainable revenue growth.



(7) On 11 October 2016, Mr. Jack Ma, Founder and Executive Chairman of Alibaba Group, delivered a speech entitled "Global Trade Revolution: Building a New e-Trade Platform for SMEs". The purpose was to encourage all groups of people, especially entrepreneurs, to access financial services and make use of e-commerce.





## 1.6 Thai Festivals

The Thai Festivals are one of important activities of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, co-organized by the Royal Thai Embassies and Consulates-General around the world together with relevant agencies, Thai communities abroad, and the Thai private sector. The goal is to enhance Thailand's image and popularity as well as to create networks and promote Thailand's trade and investment opportunities. The organization of Thai Festivals overseas is greatly successful, many of which have become so well-known and widely popular that locals perceive them as annual events not to be missed, such as the Thai Festival in Tokyo held in every third week of May. Moreover,



The 14<sup>th</sup> Thai Festival in Osaka on 21-22 May 2016.

Thai Festivals in many cities have entertained over a hundred thousand visitors, such as over 350,000 visitors at the Thai Festival in Tokyo, 100,000 visitors in Osaka, 120,000 visitors in Nagoya, over 150,000 visitors in London, and over 450,000 participants visiting the Thai Festival during the International Green Week in Berlin. The main activities include the Thai food exhibition, cultural performances, booths and stalls of Thai entrepreneurs and associations selling Thai goods and products, such as organic products, OTOP products or community enterprises illustrating Thai local wisdom, and products of projects under royal patronage. The above activities have enabled people from different parts of the world to know more about the Thai cultural identity and uniqueness, which have increased popularity and recognition of Thai products and services, increasing tourism, investment, and business agreements. At the same time, Thai entrepreneurs have also increased competitiveness and awareness of business opportunities with more windows of information and networks.



The seminar entitled "Green Production and Rural Development"  
at the Thai Festival booth during the International Green Week in Berlin  
on 18 January 2016.

## 1.7 Enhancing economic capacity of Thailand

On 31 March 2016, the Prime Minister of Thailand attended a dinner hosted by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce during the 4<sup>th</sup> Nuclear Security Summit in Washington, the United States. The Prime Minister delivered a speech to raise the U.S. private sector's confidence in Thailand's strong economy and economic reform, and then he shared his vision on business opportunities in the ASEAN community of which Thailand is located at the center. This event was attended by over 200 delegates from leading companies in the United States. On 1 April 2016, the Prime Minister also met with Thai nationals working in the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in Washington to hear their perspective on the Thai economy and to discuss courses to strengthen cooperation between Thailand and both organizations.

On 17 June 2016, the Prime Minister of Thailand attended a dinner with the Indian private sector and Thai investors in India during his official visit to the Republic of India on 16–18 June 2016. The reception was co-organized by the Royal Thai Embassy in New Delhi and three business associations of the Republic of India, including the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI), the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), and the Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India (ASSOCHAM). The Prime Minister gave a speech to boost economic confidence, encouraging the Thai private sector to invest in India as this would support Prime Minister Modi's economic policy, such as Make in India and Smart Cities, and, at the same time, inviting Indian investors to invest more in Thailand, especially in the fields that India has capacity, such as software, pharmaceuticals, and automotive parts.

On 4 March 2016, the Royal Thai Consulate-General in Vancouver, alongside the Board of Investment of Thailand, New York Office, and the Richmond Municipality, organized a seminar and briefing on trade and investment opportunities in Thailand for Canadian businesspeople at the Richmond City Hall. Ms. Ajarin Pattanapanchai, Deputy Secretary-General of the Board of Investment, and Mrs. Nisabudh Virabutr, Director of the International Trade Promotion Office, Vancouver Office, gave insight into Thailand's trade and investment in several topics, including (1) the advantages of the strategic location of Thailand in ASEAN, (2) Thailand's major role in the global supply chain, (3) infrastructure and important developments of Thai transportation systems and connectivity plans to neighbouring countries and countries in the region, (4) Thailand's potential and competitiveness on the international stage, (5) Thailand's Special Economic Zone development plan, and (6) rules, regulations and privileges related to trade and investment in Thailand. This seminar attracted a large audience of Canadian businesspeople of various fields, including food, beverages, gems and jewelry, mining, international schools, land and operation-area development, including industrial estates and Special Economic Zones.

On 25 May 2016, the Royal Thai Consulate-General in Nanning, China, together with the China-

ASEAN Expo Secretariat, held a seminar to disseminate information on trade and investment in Thailand for the Guangxi private sector in Nanning Province. There was participation by approximately 100 businesspeople from Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region. In this event, H.E. Mr. Chairat Porntipwarawet, Consul General of Thailand in Nanning, showed foreign investors wishing to do business in ASEAN the important role of Thailand as gateway to the “ASEAN Community” due to its geographical location at the heart of Southeast Asia and its connectivity with China by land, air and sea. The development of Special Economic Zones in ten border provinces, particularly in the Northeast, could be the connecting point that can link to the R8, R9, and R12 routes. The present Government has focused on economic reform to enhance Thailand’s competitiveness, such as law and regulation changes, clustered investment promotion, and improvement of infrastructure: road, rail, water and air systems.

On 13 September 2016, the Royal Thai Embassy in Santiago organized a seminar on the Thailand–Chile Free Trade Agreement in Viña del Mar, the Republic of Chile. The guest speakers included H.E. Mr. Saroj Thanasanti, Ambassador of Thailand in Santiago, Mr. Andrés Rebolledo, Director-General of the Department of International Economic Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Chile, Mr. Pedro Reus, International Manager of the Federation of Chilean Industries, Mr. Juan Mackenna, Chairman of Chilean–Thai Business Council, and Chilean businesspeople who have experience trading with Thailand while the participants were from both the public and private sectors of Chile. The main purpose was to give an overview of the Thai economy and market potential. The trade between Thailand and Chile was expected to expand after the Thailand–Chile Free Trade Agreement had come into force on 5 November 2016. It was estimated that by 2020 the trade between Thailand and Chile could double, increasing by 2 billion dollars from the present volume.

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## 1.8 Exploring new areas of trade and investment

On 30 April – 12 May 2016, H.E. Mr. Chanchai Jiamboonsri, Consul-General of Thailand in Antananarivo, Madagascar, led a delegation to visit Diégo Suarez, the Republic of Madagascar, and met with the Governor of Diégo Suarez to explore opportunities and cooperation in trade, investment and tourism. The Governor mentioned that the city of Diégo Suarez is rich in agriculture and minerals, though still lacked all infrastructure systems, especially roads, electricity and water supply. It was therefore a good opportunity for Thai businesspeople to come and invest, particularly in tourism and mining. The Governor expressed willingness to coordinate and facilitate Thai business people and investors who were interested in doing business, trade and investment in the said city.

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## 2. Enhancing competitiveness and economic potential

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has worked to strengthen the capacity of the Thai private sector and entrepreneurs in accordance with the Government policies to ensure Thailand’s sustainable economic development under the Thailand 4.0 scheme. Several measures have been carried out including the



pursuit of knowledge and best practices to enhance the development of the country, the support of the exchange and transfer of knowledge with international experts in the fields of business, science, technology and innovation, as well as the promotion of personnel development to propel the country's long-term economic construction.

## 2.1 Organizing seminars to enhance economic understanding

On 20 January 2016, the Department of International Economic Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Thailand, together with the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), organized a seminar to present the report entitled “OECD Economic Outlook for Southeast Asia, China and India 2016: Enhancing Regional Ties” to provide the participants with knowledge and understanding on growth trends, along with positive and negative factors that influence the economy in the region. The OECD representatives reported that the uniformity of economic policies of countries in the region, the reduction of development disparities, and the improvement of economic integration monitoring were significant factors supporting the economic integration of the region. It was viewed that Thailand should put emphasis on improving macroeconomic policies to enhance medium-term growth.

On 4 February 2016, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs organized a seminar on the topic of “TPP from the perspective of academia” at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to increase knowledge and understanding on the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), with the participation of approximately 200 participants. The discussion covered the benefits of joining TPP, impacts on the economic sector, effects on intellectual property, and the overview of TPP Investment Chapter in terms of liberalization, investment protection, and investor-state dispute settlement (ISDS).

On 28 April – 1 May 2016, the Royal Thai Embassy in Copenhagen invited two experts, namely Mr. Claus Risager, Partner and Co-Chief Executive Officer of Blue Ocean Robotics of the Kingdom of Denmark, and Mr. Rokas Tamosiunas, Director of Kavos investicija, UAB of the Republic of Lithuania, to deliver lectures entitled “Tips for Starting up and Growing Robotic Startup Businesses” and “Investing in Early Stage Startups” at the Startup Thailand 2016 Expo, held at Queen Sirikit National Convention Center, Bangkok. The aim was to enable young entrepreneurs to gain knowledge from successful business operations and be inspired to advance their businesses with science, technology and innovation.

On 8 July 2016, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs organized the Seminar on Africa at the Queen Sirikit National Convention Center. H.E. Mr. Chaisiri Anamarn, Advisor to the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Thailand, and H.E. Mr. Bahar Idris Abu Garda, Federal Minister of Health of the Republic of Sudan, delivered speeches on the relations and cooperation between Thailand and the Republic of Sudan. The Seminar consisted of three sessions as follows: (1) the seminar entitled “Thailand and Africa: Opportunity, Friendship and Cooperation”; (2) the seminar entitled “Trade and Investment Opportunities in Africa”; (3) the seminar entitled “Trade and Investment Opportunities in Mozambique”. The seminars provided over 250 participants with knowledge of Africa, especially trade and investment potential in Mozambique

and Sudan. It led to the exchange of views among all sectors to practically set out directions for foreign relations in Africa.

On 12–13 July 2016, the Department of International Economic Affairs, together with the Office of Small and Medium Enterprise Promotion (OSMEP), organized the APEC Greening MSMEs (Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises) conference on the theme “A Pathway Towards Sustainable Economic Growth in the Region” held in Bangkok. The conference was participated by delegates from APEC’s Member Economies and international organisations such as the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the UN Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), as well as the private sector and related Thai government agencies. The purpose was to discuss courses to encourage the micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) to apply green business concepts to enhance their competitiveness and participation in the global value chains (GVCs).

On 27 July 2016, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs organized a seminar to exchange experiences entitled “From Inspiration to Innovation: Experiences from Silicon Valley for Thailand’s Startups” at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. This seminar was geared towards interested individuals from government agencies, the private sector and academia, students and the public to learn from the experience of the United States in the growth cycle and management to promote startups in digital, technological and innovation businesses in the United States. This event was one of the activities organized by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in accordance with the Government’s national sustainable development policy.



The seminar entitled “From Inspiration to Innovation: Experiences from Silicon Valley for Thailand’s Startups” at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on 27 July 2016.

On 20 September 2016, H.E. Mrs. Parichat Luepaiboonpan, Consul-General of Thailand in Shanghai, organized a seminar for Thai businesspeople in Shanghai and Provinces under the supervision of the Royal Thai Consulate-General in Shanghai under the theme of “Keeping a Close Watch on the yuan currency and Shanghai’s Investment Promotion Policy”, in Shanghai, China. Experts from Kasikorn Bank Public Company Limited and the Thailand Overseas Investment Promotion, Shanghai Office, were invited to give lectures on the overview of the global economy, foreign currency volatility, especially the Chinese yuan, which affected investment decisions of Thai entrepreneurs. At the same time, Mr. Jiang Min, Director of Asia and Africa Affairs of the Shanghai Foreign Investment Development Board, gave a briefing on the

policy to promote foreign investment in Shanghai, particularly the company establishment and registration application procedures, along with information on the services of the Foreign Investment Development Board. This event was one of activities that the Royal Thai Consulate-General, by the Thai Business Information Center in Shanghai, organized to provide Thai businesspeople with local insight and latest updates on the economy, trade and investment to facilitate business operation in China. It also serves as a platform to strengthen the relations between government agencies and the Thai private sector in the area.

On 23 September 2016, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs led by the Department of East Asian Affairs, together with the Thai-Myanmar Business Council and the Thai-Myanmar Association for Friendship, organized a seminar entitled “Myanmar’s Trade and Investment Insight: Keys to Unlocking a Successful Business Endeavor”, at Dusit Thani Hotel, Bangkok, to promote investment cooperation with Myanmar. The purpose was to provide knowledge to the Thai private sector and those interested in trends in Myanmar’s economic development, including information on investment opportunities, relevant measures and regulations. H.E. Mr. Pisanu Suvanajata, Ambassador of Thailand to Myanmar in Yangon, gave remarks on the overall direction and potential of Myanmar’s economy, and Mr. Panitarn Pavarolavidya, Chairman of Thai-Myanmar Business Council and Vice Chairman of the Federation of Thai Industries, gave advice on business lines with potential for investment in Myanmar.

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## 2.2 Outbound technological and innovation study visits

On 4–11 June 2016, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Thailand organized an economic diplomacy project to enhance competitiveness in the food and agricultural sectors of the country. Over 20 delegates from the public and private sectors in the agricultural and processed food businesses joined the trip to the Kingdom of the Netherlands to study agricultural and food innovation from high capacity institutions such as the Top Institute Food and Nutrition (TIFN) and Wageningen University and Research (WUR) in Wageningen. This project achieved excellent results since the participants learnt about agricultural and food product improvement to create added value as well as the application of suitable technology and innovation to boost competitiveness. The delegation also had a chance to create a collaborative network to exchange knowledge and technology on renowned agricultural innovations of the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

On 22 June – 2 July 2016, the Department of International Economic Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Thailand, led the Thai delegation consisting of entrepreneurs from seven startups, along with researchers of the National Science and Technology Development Agency (NSTDA) and NSTDA-selected students, on a study visit on green economy in Japan. The delegation met with representatives from the Ministry of Environment of Japan to hear and share government policies on the management of household waste and industrial waste. They also visited hydroelectric power turbines, along with the Tsuneishi Company’s incinerated ash recycling plant, the Saitama Prefectural Environment Management Center, biogas power plant, waste incineration plant, and the Renewable Energy 2016 exhibition. The group also



met with researchers at the National Institute of Advanced Industrial Science and Technology of Japan. This project enabled the participants to apply best practices and technologies in Thailand to support the establishment of environmentally friendly businesses such as wet waste treatment, electricity generation from municipal waste (waste-to-energy), and various forms of alternative energy production. The knowledge would serve both commercial purposes and the development of Thailand's green economy.

## 2.3 Pursuing technical and vocational education cooperation

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has supported the Government policy in driving national economic development, especially in the production and development of labour in compliance with the requirements of the country. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, therefore, has collaborated with the Office of Vocational Education Commission, Ministry of Education as well as other related agencies to elevate the quality of technical and vocational education personnel to be able to support the development of target industries that require technology and innovation. This will eventually enhance Thailand's economic competitiveness. Efforts have been made to coordinate and push forward Mekong-Lancang Cooperation Leaders' Summit and cooperation with high capacity countries such as the Federal Republic of Germany and the Republic of Austria.

### 2.3.1 Thai-German technical and vocational education cooperation

Thailand and Germany have had bilateral cooperation in technical and vocational education and training since 1956. The most outstanding tangible cooperation is the 1959 co-establishment of the Thai-German Technical College, which has become King Mongkut's University of Technology North Bangkok at present. In addition, the German-Thai Chamber of Commerce and the Ministry of Education together with the Association of German Chambers of Industry and Commerce (DIHK) have launched the Vocational Education and Training Network (VETnet) program for professional training in various fields such as automotive mechanics, power and electronics. On 1 March 2016, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs organized the 2<sup>nd</sup> conference on the German-Thai Technical and Vocational Education Cooperation, presided over by H.E. Mrs. Nongnuth Phetcharatana, Ambassador of Thailand in Berlin. The purpose was to follow up on the 1<sup>st</sup> meeting on 23 December 2015, and to explore future cooperation, including a plan to set up an official joint-committee on vocational education between Thailand and Germany. Regarding this matter, the Royal Thai Embassy in Berlin continuously worked to strengthen cooperation in vocational education development between Thailand and Germany. The major works carried out in 2016 consisted of the following: (1) the Train the Trainers Project, leading 30 teachers from technical and vocational institutions nationwide to attend workshops and training sessions by experts from the Innovation Research Analysis Technology Education Consulting, or IRATEC, which has expertise in technical and vocational curriculum development in Berlin, and (2) continued coordination with the Senior Experten Service to allow senior German experts in vocational education in various fields to assume the visiting faculty position in Thai technical and vocational institutes, such as Chitralada Technology College, Rajamangala University of Technology Krungthep, and Rajamangala University of Technology Isan.

### 2.3.2 Thai-Austrian technical and vocational education cooperation

The Republic of Austria's vocational education system has an internationally recognized and widely accepted quality and standard. In 1994, Austria, Thailand, Indonesia, and Vietnam established the ASEAN-European Academic University Network (ASEA-UNINET), selecting Thailand as the center of Southeast Asia. On 13 October 2016, H.E. Mr. Virasakdi Futrakul, Vice Minister for Foreign Affairs of Thailand, met with the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Austria. Both sides expressed their readiness to strengthen cooperation in technical and vocational education development, especially in terms of the expertise in rail system and medical technology. The aim was to produce skilled labour to support the industrial sector, particularly the 10 targeted industries such as the digital industry, biofuel and biochemical industries, and comprehensive medical industry

## Promoting Sustainability

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs attaches great importance to the strengthening of the country and Thai society to maintain stability, prosperity and sustainable development. The emphasis has been placed on enhancing the image, building international confidence in and a positive attitude towards Thailand, especially the role of the monarchy, the political situation, economic and social development, as well as other issues of global interests. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has also adopted the people-centered “inclusive diplomacy” through the enhancement of knowledge of foreign affairs and through people engagement in the conduct of foreign affairs.

### 1. Confidence and positive attitude towards Thailand

#### 1.1 Upholding the monarchy and promoting accurate information

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, together with the Royal Thai Embassies and Consulates-General around the world, have carried out important tasks to protect, uphold, and build up the stability of Thailand under the democratic regime of government with the King as Head of State. The tasks include the dissemination of information about royal duties and leadership vision, or the role of monarchy and his interest and concern for overseas Thai nationals and communities as well as the international public. Major activities in the past year were as follows:

##### 1.1.1 The royal kathina robe offering ceremony

In celebration of the 2016 Kathina Festival, during 17 October – 14 November 2016, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs respectfully brought the royal kathina robes bestowed by His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej to offer to 10 Buddhist monasteries in 10 countries, namely China, Malaysia, Bhutan, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Vietnam, Myanmar, Cambodia, India, and Lao PDR. The participants of ceremonies paid tribute to King Bhumibol's contribution to the promotion of Buddhism, as the royal patron of all religions in Thailand and overseas. In addition, the organization of royal kathina robe offering ceremonies abroad also promoted government-to-government and people-to-people relations between Thailand and friendly countries of common Buddhist faith.



The organization of royal kathina robe offering ceremony to 10 Buddhist monasteries in 10 countries during 17 October – 14 November 2016.

### 1.1.2 Events in honour of the monarchy

On 10 August 2016, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs arranged the majestic Khon performance, depicting the traditional Thai classical masked dance titled “The Battle of Mangkornkan” to pay tribute to Her Majesty Queen Sirikit, as part of the Celebrations on the Auspicious Occasion of Her Majesty the Queen’s 7<sup>th</sup> Cycle Birthday Anniversary on 12 August 2016. The event was organized at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs with over 300 participants attending, including foreign diplomatic corps in Thailand.

On 28 November 2016, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs held an exhibition with the theme “Carrying on Goodwill Relations” at the Rattanakosin Exhibition Hall to commemorate and pay tribute to King Bhumibol in developing friendly relations with many countries. The opening ceremony was presided over by the Vice Minister for Foreign Affairs of Thailand and attended by foreign diplomatic corps in Thailand, as well as delegates from international organizations, government agencies, and the private sector.



The majestic Khon performance, depicting the traditional Thai classical masked dance titled “The Battle of Mangkornkan” to pay tribute to Her Majesty Queen Sirikit, as part of the Celebrations on the Auspicious Occasion of Her Majesty the Queen’s 7<sup>th</sup> Cycle Birthday Anniversary on 12 August 2016, at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on 10 August 2016.



### 1.1.3 Activities to express profound condolences to His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Royal Thai Embassies and Consulates-General around the world mourned the passing of King Bhumibol and arranged the signing of Book of Condolences. Foreign government representatives, foreigners, and Thai nationals abroad gathered to sign this Book. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs also arranged the singing of Book of Condolences for ministerial delegates attending the 21<sup>st</sup> ASEAN-EU Ministerial Meeting (AEMM) on 13–14 October 2016 to express their condolences at the Ministry Foreign Affairs.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, together with the Royal Thai Embassies and Consulates-General around the world, organized a Buddhist merit-making ceremony in dedication to King Bhumibol on the occasion of the 7<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup>, 50<sup>th</sup>, and 100<sup>th</sup> days since His Late Majesty's passing. The ceremonies were attended by government agencies as well as overseas Thai communities to express their profound condolences.

On 28 October 2016, at the special session of the United Nations General Assembly, H.E. Mr. Peter Thomson, President of the General Assembly of the United Nations, delivered a statement to pay special tribute to King Bhumibol. On this occasion, H.E. Mr. Ban Ki-moon, Secretary-General of the United Nations as well as representatives of each region also delivered their eulogies. On the same occasion, H.E. Mr. Virachai Plasai, Permanent Representative of Thailand to the United Nations, expressed his appreciation for the tributes from the United Nations and delivered his statement in remembrance of King Bhumibol's contributions to his Thai subjects for over the past 70 years, resulting in the betterment of the people and the country's transition from underdeveloped to upper-middle-income economy.

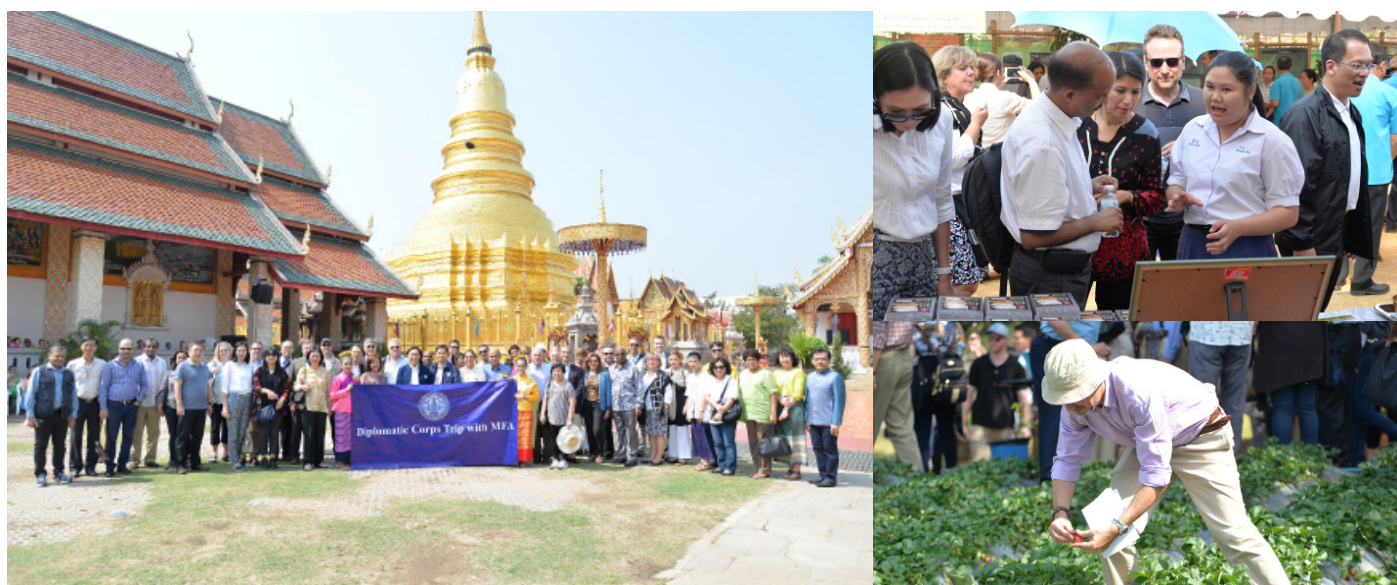


The special session of the United Nations General Assembly paying tributes to King Bhumibol on 28 October 2016.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs organized the “Ruam Palang Haeng Kwam Pakdi”, or the “United Power of Reverence” ceremony on 22 November 2016, to pay homage to King Bhumibol and express loyalty to the monarchy and the Chakri Dynasty royal family. H.E. Mrs. Busaya Mathelin, Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Thailand, led government officials and staff of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in taking an oath of allegiance and singing the Thai Royal Anthem as an expression of loyalty and remembrance of King Bhumibol's rule and merits on the auspicious occasion of His Late Majesty's 89th birthday anniversary. During 18-22 November 2016, the Royal Thai Embassies and Consulates-General around the world organized the “United Power of Reverence” ceremonies taking an oath of allegiance and singing the Thai Royal Anthem before His Majesty the late King's portrait, attended by overseas Thai nationals and friends of Thailand.

### 1.1.4 Events to disseminate accurate information on the role of the monarchy

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs led approximately 50 members of the foreign diplomatic corps and their spouses in Thailand from 33 countries on a study visit to projects under royal patronage in Lamphun and Chiang Mai on 19-21 February 2016. The Ministry also led 49 members of the foreign diplomatic corps and their spouses from 19 countries to the SUPPORT Arts and Crafts International Centre of Thailand (SACICT) in Ayutthaya on 5 August 2016. These trips were organized to promote the accurate understanding of the importance of monarchy and the contributions of royal family to Thailand and Thai people. This also helped circulate and publicize information on King Bhumibol's royal development projects and the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy that are in accord with the United Nations' 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (SEP for SDGs) and has enhanced Thailand's role in promoting development partnership.



The study visit of foreign diplomatic corps and their spouses to projects under royal patronage in Lamphun and Chiang Mai on 19-21 February 2016.

On 9 September 2016, H.E. Mr. Tej Bunnag, Assistant Secretary General for Administration of the Thai Red Cross Society and former Foreign Minister, gave a special lecture on King Bhumibol's royal duties, royally initiated projects, and the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy to Thai nationals and friends of Thailand in Switzerland. The lecture was attended by over 160 distinguished guests, such as the Minister of Education and Culture of the Canton of Vaud, the Mayor of Lausanne, Ambassadors and representatives of various Embassies to the Swiss Confederation, and Thai communities.

On 22 September 2016, M.L. Panadda Diskul, Minister Attached to the Prime Minister's Office, and H.E. Mr. Norachit Sinhaseni, Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Thailand and Spokesperson of the Constitutional Drafting Committee, gave special talks on the topic of "the King and his roles in International relations", describing King Bhumibol's and Queen Sirikit's royal duties on foreign affairs in developing diplomatic relations with various countries during 1959–1967. In addition, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs assisted in the production of a television documentary series entitled "Sai Tharn

Phra Ratcha Maitri (stream of royal diplomatic relation)” with MCOT Public Company Limited, facilitating their travel to the countries Their Majesties visited during that period, including interviews with ambassadors and consuls-general about the overall relations and the development of relations and cooperation that arose from Their Majesties’ diplomatic conduct.

### 1.1.5 Promoting King Bhumibol’s Sufficiency Economy Philosophy in the world community

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has disseminated King Bhumibol’s Sufficiency Economy Philosophy for the international community to witness the late King’s wisdom and development duties and observe the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy as one of the alternatives to achieve Sustainable Development Goals. Major activities are as follows:

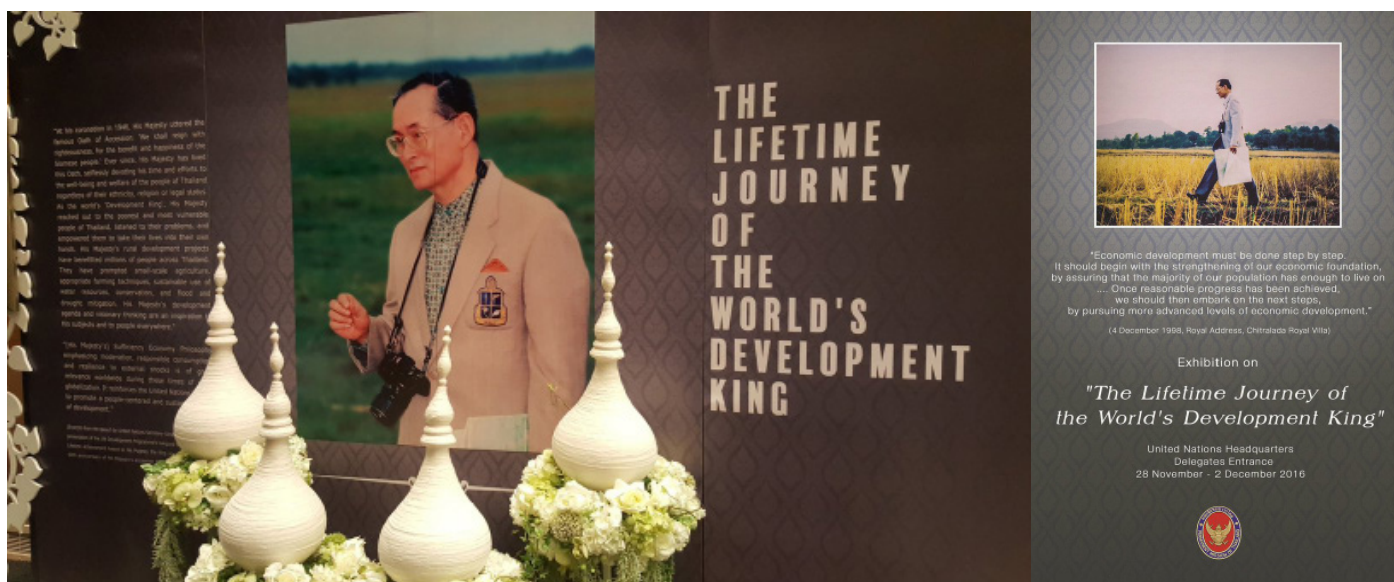
**Disseminating the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy as Chair of the Group of 77 (G77) for 2016:** During the 40<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Group of 77 on 23 September 2016, the Ministers adopted the G77 Ministerial Declaration and accepted the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy (SEP) as a practical approach to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. Other activities carried out by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Thailand included the following: (1) the “G-77 Bangkok Roundtable on Sufficiency Economy: an Approach to Implementing the Sustainable Development Goals” in Bangkok on 29 February 2016; (2) the exhibition entitled “the Lifetime Journey of the World’s Development King” on 28 November – 2 December 2016 at the main foyer of the United Nations Headquarters, New York, and (3) the study visit for the G77 delegates to the royal development project centers.

**Publication of books on the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy:** For instance, A Practical Approach toward Sustainable Development: Thailand Sufficiency Economy Philosophy, and Sufficiency Economy Philosophy: Thailand’s Path towards Sustainable Development Goals were published to disseminate knowledge and understanding on the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy and widen the acceptance as a universal practice that enables countries to achieve the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. The publication has been sent to all the Royal Thai Embassies and Consulates-General around the world to distribute on various occasions as well.

**Implementing development cooperation projects to disseminate the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy:**

**(1) Trilateral and multilateral development cooperation projects:** major works covered the following projects: (1.1) the support for Sufficiency Economy Village projects in neighbouring countries to raise the quality of life of people in the target areas; (1.2) supporting the Sufficiency Economy and Business Promotion in the Agriculture Sector in Timor-Leste, a trilateral cooperation project between Thailand, Germany, and Timor-Leste to help develop agricultural products in line with market demands and to improve the standard and quality of processed agricultural products of local people; (1.3) the Thailand-Republic of Korea trilateral cooperation with ASEAN Member States (except Brunei and Singapore) arranging the KOICA-TICA Joint Training Program on Sustainable Rural Development and Sufficiency Economy at Kasetsart University, Kamphaeng Saen Campus; (1.4) the Thailand-Tonga cooperation projects on the development of





The exhibition entitled “the Lifetime Journey of the World’s Development King” at the main foyer of the United Nations Headquarters, New York, on 28 November – 2 December 2016.

agricultural land plots in the Royal Palace of Tonga in accordance with the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy, along with the development of prototype villages by applying the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy and the development of integrated agriculture based on King Bhumibol’s “New Theory” of farm land management, and the establishment of demonstration farms as a learning center for Tonga farmers.

## (2) Thailand International Postgraduate Program (TIPP) and Annual International Training Course (AITC):

First, the TIPP scholarships were awarded to 14 recipients from 9 countries to attend 5 graduate programs related to the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy. These included, for instance, the Master of Rural Development Management at Khon Kaen University and the Master of Science in Tropical Agriculture at Kasetsart University. In 2016, 6 scholarship recipients from 3 countries are currently enrolled in 3 programs, such as the Master of Sciences in Bioscience for Sustainable Agriculture at Silpakorn University and the Master of Science in Agriculture (International Program) at Naresuan University.

Second, the AITC grants were awarded to approximately 100 recipients from 45 developing countries. These courses were, for instance, (1) the intensive course entitled “Grassroots Economic Development Following Sufficiency Economy Philosophy” on 26 September – 28 October 2016 at Kasetsart University (17 grant recipients from 9 countries), (2) the training course entitled “Sufficiency Economy: Learning Organic Agriculture by Doing” on 31 October – 20 November 2016 at Maejo University (17 grant recipients from 13 countries), (3) the training course entitled “From Sufficiency Economy to Wealthiness of the Nations” on 22 November – 19 December 2016, (4) the training session entitled “Modern Technology for Sustainable Agricultural Systems” on 11–16 July 2016 at Naresuan University (17 grant recipients from 9 countries), and (5) the training course entitled “Royal Initiatives on Agriculture for Sustainable Development” at the Chaipattana Foundation on 15–22 August 2016 (15 grant recipients from 10 countries).

(3) Study visits for foreign representatives to the Royal Development Study Centres and sample projects that apply the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy in various fields:

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Thailand organized major trips as follows: (1) the study visit of 50 members of diplomatic corps and their spouses from 33 countries to the Royal Development Projects in Lamphun and Chiang Mai on 19–21 February 2016, and of 46 diplomatic corps and their spouses from 16 countries to the SUPPORT Arts and Crafts International Centre of Thailand in Ayutthaya on 5 August 2016; (2) the visit of Secretary-General of the Royal Civil Service Commission (RCSC), the Kingdom of Bhutan, and representatives from the Gross National Happiness Commission to view the application of the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy in educational institutions, private companies and communities on 15–19 May 2017 in Bangkok and Nakhon Pathom, (3) the 4<sup>th</sup> Youth Volunteer Project for Learning Royal Initiatives programme, along with the visit to the Phu Phan Royal Development Study Centre in Sakon Nakhon Province, co-organized with the Office of His Majesty Principal Private Secretary, Bureau of the Royal Household, for 12 youths from Australia, China, Russia, Austria, Denmark, Switzerland, and the United States on 4–29 July 2016, (4) the study visit to Khao Hin Sorn Royal Development Study Centre and the Sufficiency Economy Learning Centre in Chachoengsao Province for the leaders and delegates from the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) on 19 October 2016, and (5) the study visit to schools adopting the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy in Chachoengsao Province for the Minister of Education of the Republic of Senegal on 13–18 November 2016.

**(4) Overseas briefing sessions on the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy: the major events included:**

(1) the briefing entitled “Sufficiency Economy–Way to the SDGs” given by the Director-General of Thailand International Cooperation Agency (TICA) on 8 September 2016 at the headquarters of Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH in Eschborn, Germany; (2) the briefing entitled “TICA and SEP for SDGs Partnership” by the Director-General of Thailand International Cooperation Agency (TICA) on 28 September 2016 at the JICA headquarters in Tokyo, Japan, and (3) the briefing entitled “the Case Study of Thailand’s Successful South-South and Trilateral Cooperation” during the 8<sup>th</sup> High-level Forum of Directors-General (DG Forum) by the Deputy Director-General of TICA on 3 November 2016 in Dubai, United Arab Emirates.

## **1.2 Promoting international understanding on issues of global interests**

### **1.2.1 Thailand’s political development**

On 3 May 2016, H.E. Mr. Norachit Sinhaseni, Spokesperson of the Constitutional Drafting Committee and Former Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, gave a briefing to the diplomatic corps and representatives of international organizations on the Thai Constitution. The briefing covered such issues as the rights and liberties of the Thai people, the selection of the Prime Minister through the approval of the Senate and House of Representatives in the transitional period, the selection of the Senate and the election of Members of the House of Representatives, the dissemination of information about the Constitution, and the referendum.

On 11 August 2016, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs held a briefing for the diplomatic corps, representatives of international organizations and foreign chambers of commerce in Thailand to inform them of the results of the constitutional referendum. The briefing was given by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Professor Dr. Supachai Yavaprabhas, Member of the Constitutional Drafting Committee, and Professor Dr. Jade Donavanik, Advisor to the Constitutional Drafting Committee, with the participation of ambassadors and delegates from 48 countries and representatives from 4 international organizations.

### 1.2.2 Preventing and suppressing human trafficking and illegal fishing

It has been the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' priority to increase international awareness and understanding on the Government's efforts and commitment to prevent and suppress human trafficking which has been a universal and long-standing issue. The particular cases have been the U.S. Department of State's Trafficking in Persons Report (TIP Report) that has put Thailand in Tier 3 since 2015 and the European Union's issuance of the yellow card to Thailand for illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has been coordinating with Thai line agencies to compile information on the progress of annual operations of agencies involved in the prevention and suppression of human trafficking. The Ministry also invited representatives from line agencies to the United States to provide clarification and promote understanding on the issue. This allowed the agencies that prepare the TIP report, namely the U.S. Department of State, the U.S. Department of Labor, Members of the U.S. Congress, government agencies, the private sector, and the media in the United States. After that the report was drafted and distributed to relevant agencies. The follow-up and coordination was carried out to provide additional information to the United States as the evidence for the publication of annual TIP report. The above efforts resulted in the uplifted status of Thailand by the U.S. Department of State, promoting Thailand to Tier 2 Watch List in the Trafficking in Persons Report 2016. This reflected the United States' recognition of Thailand's commitment and progress in resolving human trafficking problems and value given to the bilateral cooperation between the two countries on the prevention and suppression of human trafficking, which includes cooperation in the protection of victims and law enforcement against the offenders that leads to tangible achievement and progress.

Since the "yellow card" was issued to Thailand by the European Union on 21 April 2015, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in collaboration with relevant agencies has worked continuously to disseminate information and raise awareness on the Government's determination and commitment to solving the IUU fishing problems. Ambassador Virachai Plasai, leader of the Thai negotiation mission, consistently discussed this matter with the European Union and informed them of the progress of actions taken by Thailand. Ambassador Plasai and his team promoted understanding on the obstacles arising from the complications of the problem which usually took time to resolve. He led the team in negotiating on the impediments to reach mutually acceptable solutions. This helped create confidence and a positive atmosphere for the discussion with the European Union and prevented Thailand from receiving the red card. In addition, the



Ministry of Foreign Affairs has attached importance to the integration of work through public-private-civil society partnership (PPCP) to promote the exchange of information and opinions and the improvement of comprehensive performance efficiency of Thailand, as well as the transfer of experience and best practices of the European Union and its Member States. A major activity included the seminar entitled “Turning the Tide: Partnership for Sustainable Fisheries” on 18 August 2016.



The seminar entitled “Turning the Tide : Partnership for Sustainable Fisheries on 18 August 2016.

On the United Nations platform, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs supported the report on the National Human Rights Review in accordance with the 2<sup>nd</sup> Universal Periodic Review (UPR) to the 25th session of the UPR Working Group on 11–13 May 2016 in Geneva, Switzerland. H.E. Mr. Chanchao Chaianukit, Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Justice as a representative of Thailand, gave a statement explaining Thailand’s adherence to the principles of the promotion and protection of human rights. Thailand implemented the recommendations given by friendly countries during the presentation of the first UPR Report in 2011, which yielded tangible results and concrete progress such as the improvement and issuance of laws and regulations on the promotion of human rights. Thailand has also been in the process of enacting laws that will be more compliant with international standards.

### 1.2.3 Addressing the international civil aviation issues

The International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) listed Thailand as a “red flag” country on 18 June 2016 following the inspection results that brought up significant safety concerns (SSC) within the country’s aviation sector. The Government therefore set up the Command Center for Resolving Civil Aviation Issues (CRCA) as a mechanism to supervise, monitor, and follow up on the operations related to the mitigation of civil aviation problems. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs was appointed as a member of the working group, responsible for providing accurate information to promote international understanding of the situation as well as Thailand’s commitment and progress in solving the problems in order to prevent any undesirable measures. For instance, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs organized a visit to meet with the leaders of the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) of the United States and with the Directorate-General for Mobility and Transport (DG MOVE), prior to each consideration of

country listing in the Air Safety List. As a result, the European Union did not include Thailand on the Air Safety List for the 2016 mid-year and year-end inspections. In addition, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs also assessed the situation and sent an early warning to relevant agencies in Thailand when any country was likely to issue undesirable measures against Thailand.

#### 1.2.4 The development of Southern Border Provinces

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs achieved positive results in promoting correct understanding of the international community, especially the Muslim world, about the situations in the Southern Border Provinces, peaceful coexistence in the Thai multicultural society, the government's policy conduct of peaceful resolution focusing on development and people's participation, and the improvement of the people's livelihood. An example of the Government's development projects included the "Triangle of security, prosperity, and sustainability model city project" in Pattani, Yala, and Narathiwat Provinces. The project contributed to the international community's positive attitudes that were favorable to the development of the Southern Border Provinces. Major activities undertaken by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs included the following: (1) the seminar entitled "the Interfaith Dialogue and Peaceful Coexistence in Multicultural Societies" held in collaboration with the OIC Research Centre for Islamic History, Art and Culture (IRCICA), an organ under the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), on 11 January 2016, with 165 participants; (2) the 2016 Iftar Dinner (fast-breaking dinner during the Holy Month of Ramadan) co-hosted with the Foundation of Islamic Centre of Thailand on 10 June 2016 at the Foundation of Islamic Centre of Thailand, with 250 guests including diplomatic corps from 20 Muslim countries and religious leaders of Muslim communities in Thailand;



The 2016 Iftar Dinner co-hosted by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Foundation of Islamic Centre of Thailand at the Foundation of Islamic Centre of Thailand on 10 June 2016.

(3) the participation of H.E. Mr. Panyarak Poolthup, Deputy Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in the 43<sup>rd</sup> meeting of the OIC Council of Foreign Ministers (CFM) on 18–19 October 2016 in Tashkent, the Republic of Uzbekistan. The meeting adopted the resolution on "Muslim Minorities in Non-OIC Member States" without any content or messages with negative implications for Thailand; (4) the participation in the Regional Workshop on Countering Daesh Narratives in Kuala Lumpur on 28 November

– 2 December 2016 to follow up on the developments that might affect or be connected to the situations in the Southern Border Provinces, and (5) the 50 projects throughout 2016 for Thai Muslim students, carried out by the Royal Thai Embassies and Consulates-General in 18 countries, where Thai Muslim students were currently studying, that gave support for education, skills and career development, welfare, as well as the provision of information on government activities to enhance the quality of life of people in the Southern Border Provinces.

## **2. Knowledge promotion and people's engagement in foreign affairs**

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has conducted foreign policy adopting inclusive diplomacy to collaborate with all sectors and raise public awareness. Various activities have been implemented, such as the ASEAN Department's community outreach programmes all over the country, the Young Ambassadors of Virtue activities, and the use of website, television, radio, and other social media to provide information on foreign affairs and warnings in case of emergency situations abroad.

### **2.1 Using multimedia to provide foreign affairs knowledge**

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has used various media to disseminate knowledge and increase understanding about foreign affairs to the public, protecting the interests and preventing the distress of Thai nationals. The main media consists of (1) the radio such as Saranrom Radio A.M. 1575, established since 1998, (2) publications such as Saranrom Radio Quarterly Journal and Saranrom Newsletter: People's Foreign Affairs, and (3) television such as news scoops, short documentaries and articles.

### **2.2 Organizing community outreach programmes**

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has carried out community outreach programmes, such as Bua Kaew Outreach Project and ASEAN Outreach Project. The aim is to allow senior executives and officials of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to meet with local people and authorities to increase mutual understanding and gather information and recommendations for the improvement in the conduct of foreign affairs. Moreover, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has also organized parallel activities such as giving interviews, co-hosting local radio stations, and giving lectures on such topics as international economy, ASEAN Community, and border issues. In 2016, executives and officials of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs have organized several community outreach programmes as follows: (1) Bua Kaew Outreach Project in Mae Hong Son and Chiang Mai on 2–6 February 2016, in Amnat Charoen and Yasothorn on 20–24 March 2016, in Buriram and Chaiyaphum on 3–7 July 2016, and in Si Sa Ket on 22 December 2016; (2) meetings with foreign consular delegates and government agencies in Khon Kaen on 25–27 April, and in Songkhla and Phuket on 25–27 July 2016 to enhance knowledge of diplomatic privileges and immunities and of receiving foreign dignitaries, as well as to collect information and opinions to develop and improve Thailand's guidelines on diplomatic protocol; (3) the workshop on the topic of Thailand–Myanmar relations: boundary and border management for sustainable development cooperation, held in collaboration with the Thai Border Policy



Practice Management Division on 4–6 July 2016 in Mae Sot District, Tak Province. The goal was to enhance knowledge and understanding on Thailand–Myanmar relations, especially on border issues, and to ensure the alignment of operational guidelines among relevant agencies for the effective and sustainable management of border areas.



The Bua Kaew Outreach Project in Buriram and Chaiyaphum on 3–7 July 2016.

## 2.3 Young Ambassadors of Virtue Foundation

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has established the Young Ambassadors of Virtue Foundation, initially the Young Ambassador of Virtue Project, under the royal patronage of Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn. The vision of the Project is “to instill a social conscience, a sense of altruism, and a broadened perspective” in the Thai youth. Currently, there are more than 2,154 network schools throughout the country. The Foundation aims to develop ethics, moral standards, and capabilities in the Thai youth, so as to enable them to contribute to the development of the nation with knowledge, well-roundedness, broadened perspective, and ability to respond to globalization. The main activities are as follows: (1) the Young Ambassadors of Virtue and ASEAN Community learning project; (2) the morality promotion campaign or the support for school projects that revolve around developing moral and intellectual qualities in line with the King’s guidance; (3) the organization of study tours abroad to strengthen relations with youths in neighbouring and ASEAN countries; (4) the organization of the Young Ambassadors’ Partnership Exchange Programme between participating schools with a focus on community development and social activities, and (5) the training programme on Sufficiency Economy Philosophy.

## 3. Improving public service quality

### 3.1 Improving public services

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has continuously worked to improve the quality and efficiency of consular services so that Thai people can access efficient and inclusive services. New services added to provide more efficient services include the express passport service (one official day), the passport online application service, the development of Thai Consular Application, and additional contact channels via official “Thaiconsular” LINE and WeChat mobile application and Facebook Page. Throughout 2016, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has provided a total of 1,874,411 passports, an increase of 137,372 passports from 2015. Moreover, the Ministry also cooperated with the Mass Rapid Transit Authority of Thailand (MRTA), Bangkok Expressway and Metro Public Company Limited, and Bangkok Metro Networks

Company Limited, and opened a new temporary passport office at Khlong Toei MRT Station on 9 December 2016. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has established a total of 113 passport service offices around the world, with 94 overseas offices and 14 provincial offices. In addition, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has also provided mobile passport services to people living in distant areas, such as in Narathiwat on 1–5 August 2016, in Yala on 12–16 September 2016, and in Prachuap Khiri Khan on 19–23 September 2016. At the same time, the Royal Thai Embassies and Consulates-General organized consular outreach projects, making 339 trips to various cities around the world, giving services to 34,713 customers. Additionally, throughout 2016, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has also provided other important consular services to both Thai nationals and foreigners, including 386,020 document authentication and legalization services, more than 5,000,000 visa services, and over 40,000 Call Center telephone service lines.



Consular outreach projects in Singapore on 18 September 2016.

### 3.2 Protecting Thai nationals abroad

One of the missions of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs under the Constitution of the Kingdom of Thailand is to provide assistance to Thai nationals in distress overseas. This includes the strengthening of overseas Thai communities, the suppression and prevention of Thai nationals from becoming illegal migrant workers, and the provision of accurate information to domestic Thai nationals to prevent them from becoming victims of illegal trafficking and reduce the number of Thai nationals in distress overseas.

The Royal Thai Embassies and Consulates-General around the world serve as the Damrongtham Center, through 137 hotline numbers worldwide to provide 24-hour services taking complaints and requests and coordinating with relevant agencies. Throughout 2016, the Royal Thai Embassies and Consulates-General provided assistance to 14,481 Thai nationals such as fishermen receiving unfair treatment from employers and Thai women seeking help to return to Thailand. Assistance has also been provided to disaster victims of the New Zealand and Japan earthquakes in April 2016, as well as to Thai nationals during the coup attempt in Turkey in July 2016, and Thai fishing crew from Ambon Island and nearby areas of Indonesia until present. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs also provides assistance and facilitation to Thai Buddhist pilgrims traveling to Bodh Gaya, the Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal annually and Thai Muslim pilgrims traveling to Hajj, an annual Islamic pilgrimage to Mecca, Saudi Arabia.

Apart from that, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs also gives priority to the protection of Thai nationals through preventive measures in order to reduce the number of Thai nationals in distress abroad. Community outreach projects have been undertaken to provide knowledge and enhance understanding of the vulnerable and target groups about working and traveling abroad. In this regard, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs collaborated with educational institutions, private organizations and independent organizations to organize activities and projects, such as (1) the seminar, organized in the Northeast of Thailand in collaboration with the Mirror Foundation, under the theme “what to consider before deciding to work abroad”, (2) the project under the theme “enhancing skills for laborers of the Northeast prior to working abroad”, organized in collaboration with Khon Kaen University, (3) the community outreach project, organized in the North of Thailand in collaboration with the Thailand Alliance Against Trafficking in Children and Women, under the theme “knowing the dangers before considering going abroad”, (4) the public forum under the theme “weaving Thai students’ dream with work and travel” in educational institutions in the Northeast, together with the Mirror Foundation. In addition, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has also encouraged overseas offices around the world to undertake other projects, such as creating a strong Thai community network and Thais-Help-Thais volunteer training programme, and supporting the establishment of shelters or consulting centers for victims. All the above measures and operations enabled the public, especially the vulnerable, to access accurate and useful information, preventing and suppressing human trafficking abroad, and strengthening networks of Thai communities in tackling problems in the long run.

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## 4. Organization development

### 4.1 2016 Meeting of Ambassadors and Consuls-General of Thailand

On 6–12 November 2016, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs organized the Meeting of Ambassadors and Consuls-General of Thailand to countries around the world at Centara Grand, Central Plaza Ladprao, and at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Bangkok. The aim of the meeting was to discuss and exchange ideas to set out guidelines for driving national development according to the goals of the National Strategy of the Kingdom of Thailand (2018-2037) and the National Reform Plans (2018-2022), including the Government’s major reform plans and policies. The main activities during the Meeting included the following: (1) receiving policies from the Prime Minister and reporting on the implementation of the Ministry’s proactive diplomacy to the Prime Minister and H.E. Mr. Somkid Jatusripitak, Deputy Prime Minister; (2) attending a special lecture given by H.E. Mr. Wissanu Krea-ngam, Deputy Prime Minister, under the theme “driving Thailand’s Roadmap and the development of the public administration system; (3) brainstorming for the making of the Foreign Affairs Masterplan of Thailand (2018–2037) to translate the National Strategy into practice. At the same time, the Meeting also discussed the implementation of Thai foreign strategies in each region, in ASEAN, and in the international community. It also set up guidelines to enhance the organizational and personnel performance to keep pace with the modern world.





The Meeting of Ambassadors and Consuls-General of Thailand on 6-12 November 2016.

## 4.2 2016 Annual Meeting of Consular Officers

On 26–29 July 2016, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs organized the 2016 annual meeting of Thai consular officers working around the world at Grand Hyatt Erawan Bangkok Hotel. The objective of the seminar was to enhance the efficiency in 5 areas of consular works: passport services, legalization and naturalization services, the protection of Thai nationals overseas, the issuance of visa and travel documents, and overseas elections. On this occasion, the Foreign Minister gave opening remarks on the importance of public or people-centered diplomacy and engagement of people in the tasks of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. H.E. Mr. Suvat Chirapant, Deputy Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, later talked about the 2020 Vision of the Department of Consular Affairs to become the best consular service agency in ASEAN, with the goal to improve the standards of Thai consular services to be more effective and comparable to international standards in all aspects, and able to respond to the needs of the people in a timely manner.



The 2016 annual meeting of Thai consular officers on 26–29 July 2016.

### 4.3 Developing the service system for diplomatic privileges and immunities

In 2016, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs developed the 2<sup>nd</sup> phase of e-Privilege System for filing online registration for diplomatic privileges and immunities under the website <https://eprivilege.mfa.go.th> via the web-based application system, connecting with databases and operations of 96 foreign embassies in Thailand and 37 international organizations to facilitate the submission of documents through an online system. These features, such as staff registration, stay permit and staff ID Card, helped reduce the number of documents of which over 7,000 sets have been submitted by the diplomatic delegation each year and help reduce the operating time from 30 days to approximately 14 days. On top of that, more stringent measures have been taken prior to the issuance of stay permit to prevent the avoidance of stay permit application fees. As a result of the above operations, in the fiscal year 2016, the Government received approximately 3.3 million baht of income from stay permit application fees from diplomatic delegations in Thailand, higher than the year 2015.





#### 4.4 Preparatory meeting for the overseas state administration committee

On 27 June 2016, H.E. Mr. Vitavas Srivihok, Deputy Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, chaired the meeting with 21 government agencies. The meeting was to prepare for the Overseas State Administration Committee, which were considered a key mechanism to steer the integration of foreign affairs of central Team Thailand to be in the same direction as Government policies. The meeting acknowledged the plan for conducting foreign relations with 12 groups of target countries that the Prime Minister has approved. The meeting also agreed to integrate and submit their respective action plans for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to adjust accordingly.





# Annual Report 2017

Throughout 2017, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has been committed and proactive as the primary driving force in national foreign affairs to support Thailand in realizing the vision of becoming “a developed country with security, prosperity and sustainability” based on the vision of the National Strategy 2018-2037. This is in accordance with the 2014 Policy Statement of the Government of Thailand that “foreign policy is a vital component of overall policy in national administration, whether in the area of politics, economics, or society.”

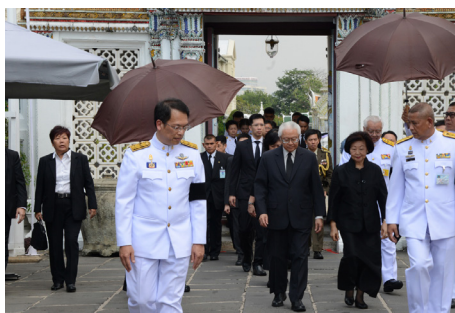
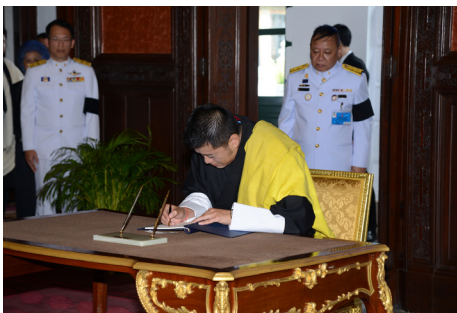
In this respect, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has strived to promote even deeper and broader international relations based on mutual benefit in order to maintain the cooperative atmosphere conducive to an expansion of cooperation. This includes the strengthening of national competence in responding to all types of security threats through active collaboration with the international community at the multilateral, regional, and sub-regional levels, the maximization of the country’s strength by developing human resource capacity and sustainably advancing national economic competitiveness, and the improvement and internationalization of the country’s standards. Apart from the promotion of correct understanding about Thailand, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has also focused on promoting international confidence and positive attitudes towards the country by utilizing Thailand’s traditional arts, culture, and way of life as a major channel for the conduct of foreign relations. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has given priority to implementing a people-centred approach in delivering services. This has been carried out by cross-sector coordination with both central and regional government agencies, the private sector, academic sector, and civil society so that the conduct of foreign affairs reflects the needs of the people from all localities and sectors of society. This is in accordance with the inclusive diplomacy in line with the government’s policy. At the same time, the Ministry has enhanced consular services, including the protection of Thai nationals abroad, with more convenience, promptness, and ease of access.

In carrying out this work, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has adopted the “5S Foreign Affairs Masterplan (2018-2037)” for Thailand to achieve Security, Sustainability, Standard, Status and Synergy. As a result, the Ministry’s 2017 key performance under this 5S Foreign Affairs strategy is as follows:

# 1. Security

## 1.1 Upholding national institutions

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has continued to earnestly protect and uphold the nation's principal institution by internationally raising awareness concerning Their Majesties' eminent roles and contributions to society through cultural events, sustainable development activities and provision of accurate information to both local and international public. In 2017, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in collaboration with other agencies, played a major part in facilitating and offering hospitality to foreign royals, dignitaries and distinguished representatives from 42 countries arriving to pay their final respect and attend the Royal Cremation Ceremony of His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej.





## 1.2 Maintaining cordial relations: promoting international understanding on Thailand's security situation

### 1.2.1 Promoting relations with neighbouring countries

Thailand and her neighbouring countries share geographical, social, and cultural proximity, including a wide range of mutual interests in various dimensions. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, thus, attaches great importance to maintaining and developing relations with these neighbouring countries, on the basis of mutual trust, mutual respect, and mutual benefit. As a result, relations between Thailand and neighbouring countries are at an excellent level with close socio-economic development cooperation, particularly through the promotion of borders as frontiers of cooperation, transportation connectivity by land, air, and sea, tourism, public health, and the addressing of transnational threats together. In 2017, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs implemented the following activities to accomplish these goals.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs arranged the exchange of high-level visits for the year 2017 to maintain a dynamic relationship. On 23-25 May 2017, H.E. Mr. Somkid Jatusripitak, Deputy Prime Minister, paid an official visit to Lao PDR to enhance economic and development cooperation in accordance with the Thailand-Plus-One policy. The Deputy Prime Minister met with H.E. Mr. Thongloun Sisulith, Prime Minister of Lao PDR, and had a bilateral discussion with Mr. Somdy Douangdy, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance of Lao PDR. On border security issues, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs arranged the surveys and senior officials meetings for the 4<sup>th</sup> Thai-Lao Joint Boundary Commission (JBC) Meeting on 1-3 February, 27-28 June, 19-21 July, and 4-5 October 2017 to monitor the progress in resolving the remaining issues of demarcation of land and river boundaries to achieve sustainable peace in the long run.



H.E. Mr. Somkid Jatusripitak, Deputy Prime Minister, paid an official visit to Lao PDR on 23-25 May 2017.

Thailand and Myanmar share a close friendship and mutual interests in various aspects at all levels. On his official visit to Myanmar on 2-5 February 2017, H.E. Mr. Somkid Jatusripitak, Deputy Prime Minister, met with the President of Myanmar and the State Counsellor of Myanmar, to promote the mutual interests of both countries. In addition, the Minister of Foreign Affairs made an official visit to Myanmar upon the invitation from H.E. Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, State Counsellor of Myanmar, on 29-30 October 2017, noting the progress and exchanged opinions on the situation in Rakhine State, reflecting the close friendship and readiness to support each other.





H.E. Mr. Somkid Jatusripitak, Deputy Prime Minister, paid an official visit to Myanmar on 2-5 February 2017.



The Minister of Foreign Affairs made an official visit to Myanmar on 29-30 October 2017.

Thailand continues to have vibrant relations with Vietnam. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs organized the 6<sup>th</sup> Thailand-Vietnam Political Consultation Group (PCG) Meeting on 15 February 2017 to strengthen the strategic partnership between the two countries in every dimension. On 17-19 August 2017, H.E. Mr. Nguyen Xuan Phuc, Prime Minister of Vietnam, paid an official visit to Thailand as Guest of the Prime Minister of Thailand. In reciprocation, the Prime Minister of Thailand also made a visit to Vietnam to attend the 25<sup>th</sup> APEC Economic Leaders' Meeting in Danang on 10-12 November 2017.



H.E. Mr. Nguyen Xuan Phuc, Prime Minister of Vietnam, paid an official visit to Thailand on 17-19 August 2017.

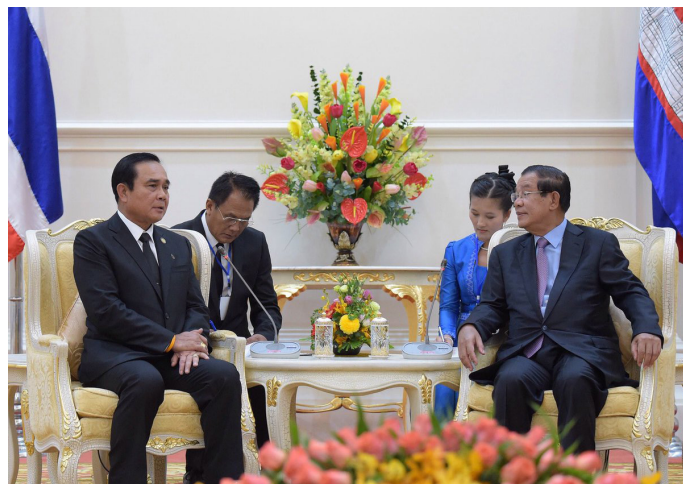


The Prime Minister of Thailand attended the 25<sup>th</sup> APEC Economic Leaders' Meeting in Vietnam on 10-12 November 2017.



Thailand has close and cordial relations with **Cambodia** at all levels. On 7 September 2017, the Prime Minister of Thailand led a Thai delegation on his official visit to Cambodia to attend the 3<sup>rd</sup> Joint Cabinet Retreat (JCR) Thailand-Cambodia. This is his second official visit to Cambodia after the first one in 2014.

Apart from that, to reflect the close relations between Thailand and **Malaysia**, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs also organized the events to celebrate the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the establishment of Thailand-Malaysia diplomatic relations. Among the many activities were a logo design competition to celebrate the 60 years of diplomatic relations, a special lecture, and a commemorative reception on 12 December 2017, with the participation of Ambassadors to Thailand as well as many delegates from the public, private, and academic sectors.



The Prime Minister of Thailand paid an official visit to Cambodia on 7 September 2017.



The logo design competition to celebrate the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the establishment of Thailand-Malaysia diplomatic relations in 2017.

## 1.2.2 Promoting relations with countries in Southeast Asia

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has been active in maintaining and enhancing warm relations with Southeast Asian countries on the basis of close friendship and mutual interests. Last year, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs continually arranged for an exchange of visits at all levels, especially between heads of government, in order to facilitate the discussion and drive cooperation to achieve tangible results in all aspects. The Prime Minister of Thailand cordially welcomed several leaders, including H.E. Mr. Rodrigo Duterte, President of the **Philippines**, on his official visit on 21 March 2017 and H.E. Mr. Jusuf Kalla, Vice President of **Indonesia**, who visited Thailand to receive an honorary doctorate degree awarded by Rajamangala University of Technology Isan during which he met with the Prime Minister on 23 March 2017.





H.E. Mr. Rodrigo Duterte, President of the Philippines, on his official visit to Thailand on 21 March 2017.

The Prime Minister of Thailand was also invited to make an official visit to several countries in the region, including to **Brunei** to attend the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration of His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah's Accession to the Throne on 6 October 2017, and to the **Philippines** to attend the 30<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> ASEAN Summits on 28-29 April 2017 and on 13-14 November 2017 respectively. At the ministerial level, the Minister of Foreign Affairs made an official visit to **Singapore** to co-preside with H.E. Mr. Vivian Balakrishnan, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Singapore, over the opening of the 13<sup>th</sup> Thailand-Singapore Civil Service Exchange Programme (CSEP) on 21-22 August 2017.



H.E. Mr. Jusuf Kalla, Vice President of Indonesia, on his visit to Thailand on 23 March 2017.



The Prime Minister of Thailand during his visit to Brunei on 6 October 2017 and to the Philippines to attend the 30<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Summit on 28-29 April 2017.





The Minister of Foreign Affairs made an official visit to Singapore to co-preside over the opening of the 13<sup>th</sup> Thailand-Singapore Civil Service Exchange Programme (CSEP) on 21-22 August 2017.

### 1.2.3 Promoting relations with strategic countries

**North America:** The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has taken a proactive role in strengthening ties with Thailand's strategic partners, including major powers, emerging economies with new potential, and Islamic countries. The key mechanisms covered dialogues, exchanges of high-level visits, and meetings and conferences. As a result, the relationship between Thailand and its partners continue to be constructive and based on mutual benefit. In particular, those countries that had put restrictions on their relations with Thailand resumed constructive relations with Thailand. The **United States** is a clear example. On 30 April 2017, the Honorable Donald J. Trump, President of the United States, made a phone call directly to the Prime Minister of Thailand to invite the Prime Minister to visit the United States. The Prime Minister of Thailand accepted the invitation and made an official visit to the United States on 30 September - 4 October 2017. Meanwhile, the Honorable Rex W. Tillerson, Secretary of State of the United States had several bilateral talks with the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Thailand on the sidelines of international forums and paid a visit to Thailand as Guest of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on 8 August 2017.



The Prime Minister of Thailand made an official visit to the United States on 30 September - 4 October 2017.

**Europe:** The **United Kingdom** also resumed ministerial-level relations with Thailand. The Right Honourable Boris Johnson MP, Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs of the United Kingdom, had a bilateral discussion with the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Thailand on 20 September 2017 during the 72nd Session of the United Nations General Assembly. The Right Honourable Alistair Burt MP, Minister of State for International Development and Minister of State for the Middle East, Foreign and Commonwealth Office of the United Kingdom, met bilaterally with the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Thailand on the occasion of his visit to Thailand on 27 September 2017. Similarly, the **European Union's** Foreign Affairs Council, on 11 December 2017, resolved to revive political interaction with Thailand at all levels.



The Minister of Foreign Affairs of Thailand had a bilateral discussion with the Right Honourable Boris Johnson MP, Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs of the United Kingdom, on 20 September 2017 during the 72<sup>nd</sup> Session of the United Nations General Assembly.

Relations between Thailand and its partners, especially **Russia**, continued to grow deeper and closer. Both countries organized events to celebrate the 120<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the establishment of Thailand-Russia diplomatic relations. In addition, the two leaders had several occasions for a bilateral meeting. In the year 2017, the two leaders again had a bilateral talk at the Emerging Markets and Developing Countries Dialogue (EMDCD) during the 9<sup>th</sup> BRICS Summit in Xiamen, China, on 5 September 2017. In addition, H.E. Mr. Sergei Lavrov, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Russia, visited Thailand on 9-10 August 2017, paid a courtesy call on the Prime Minister, and had a bilateral meeting with the Minister of Foreign Affairs to promote comprehensive mutual interests.



The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Thailand opened the exhibition on the occasion of celebration of the 120<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Thailand-Russia Diplomatic Relations at Siam Paragon, Bangkok, on 14-16 July 2017.



The Prime Minister of Thailand had a bilateral discussion with H.E. Mr. Vladimir Putin, President of Russia, at the Emerging Markets and Developing Countries Dialogue (EMDCD) during the 9<sup>th</sup> BRICS Summit in Xiamen, China, on 5 September 2017.



**East Asia:** In addition to the above countries, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs also maintains dynamic relations with other strategic partners in East Asia to enhance the country's economic, social and security interests, in accordance with the government's policy in driving Thailand to achieve security, prosperity and sustainability. Examples are as follows. **Japan:** Thailand and Japan share close bonds at all levels, from the royal families to the peoples. At the governmental level, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Thailand held several bilateral meetings with H.E. Mr. Taro Kono, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Japan, to promote comprehensive bilateral and regional cooperation. As the year 2017 marks the 130<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the establishment of Thailand-Japan diplomatic relations, both countries organized events to celebrate the occasion, including a welcome reception and the "130 Years of Thailand-Japan Friendship" exhibition. In addition, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Thailand paid a visit to Japan to co-preside with H.E. Mr. Taro Kono, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Japan, over the opening ceremony to commemorate the 130 years in Tokyo and met with H.E. Mr. Shinzo Abe, Prime Minister of Japan, on 26 September 2017 to present the Prime Minister of Thailand's message of congratulations.



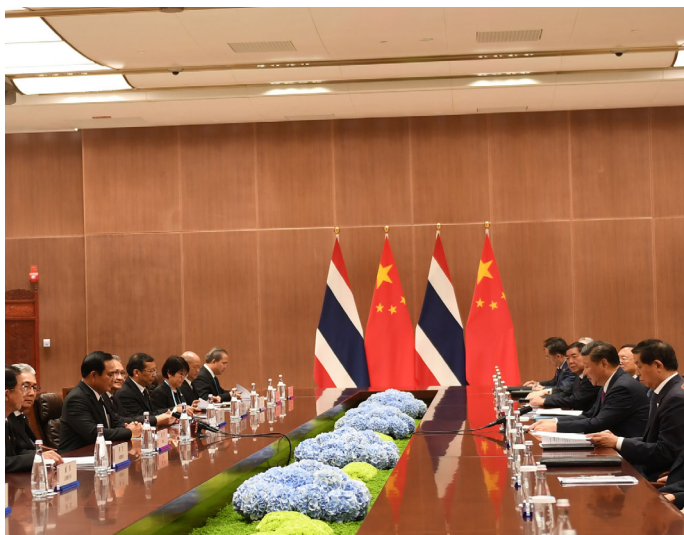
The Minister of Foreign Affairs of Thailand met with H.E. Mr. Shinzo Abe, Prime Minister of Japan, on 26 September 2017.



The "Concert in Commemoration of the 130<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Thailand-Japan Diplomatic Relations" at Suntory Hall in Tokyo, Japan, on 26 September 2017.

Thailand and **China** continue to be important strategic partners and have solid relations at all levels on the basis of equality and mutual interests. At the leadership level, the Prime Minister of Thailand was invited by H.E. Mr. Xi Jinping, President of China, to attend the Emerging Markets and Developing Countries Dialogue (EMDCD) during the 9<sup>th</sup> BRICS Summit on 4 September 2017 in Xiamen, China. The Prime Minister of Thailand had bilateral talks with the President of China. In addition, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs also had opportunities to welcome other key government leaders from China, for example, H.E. Mr. Wang Yi, Minister of Foreign Affairs of China, on 23-24 July 2017, and H.E. Mr. Xia Baolong, Zhejiang Provincial Communist Party Secretary and Chairman of Zhejiang Provincial People's Congress, on the occasion of his visit to Thailand as Guest of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on 5-8 April 2017.





The Prime Minister of Thailand attended the Emerging Markets and Developing Countries Dialogue (EMDCD) during the 9<sup>th</sup> BRICS Summit 2017 in Xiamen, China, and had bilateral talks with H.E. Mr. Xi Jinping, President of China, on 4 September

**South Asia:** the Ministry of Foreign Affairs also attaches great importance to enhancing relations with countries in South Asia. Many countries have economic potential and witnessed rapid technological advances. **India**, in particular, is strategically important due to the country's status as a major power and greatest potential market in the region. Moreover, India's current policies, such as the Act East Policy, Make in India, and Digital India, are in line with Thailand's development policy, particularly the Thailand 4.0 policy. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has strengthened relations with India, and on the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the establishment of Thailand-India diplomatic relations, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs organized events to celebrate this friendship, including an exhibition on Thailand-India relations and a commemorative reception at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, attended by Ambassadors to Thailand as well as many delegates from the public, private, and academic sectors. At the governmental level, to emphasize this mutual, close, and comprehensive partnership, the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, upon the invitation of H.E. Ms. Sushma Swaraj, Minister of Foreign Affairs of India, attended the 9<sup>th</sup> Delhi Dialogue on 4 July 2017.



The Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Thailand chaired a reception at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to celebrate the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the establishment of Thailand-India diplomatic relations on 1 August 2017.

Meanwhile, relations between Thailand and **Bangladesh** are dynamic. The Minister of Foreign Affairs of Thailand visited Bangladesh, co-chaired the 7<sup>th</sup> Thailand-Bangladesh Joint Commission Meeting, and then paid a courtesy call on H.E. Ms. Sheikh Hasina, Prime Minister of Bangladesh on 6 July 2017.



The Minister of Foreign Affairs of Thailand visited Bangladesh to co-chair the 7<sup>th</sup> Thailand-Bangladesh Joint Commission Meeting in Dhaka, Bangladesh, on 6 July 2017.

**The Middle East and North Africa** is strategically important for global geopolitics, connecting three continents: Asia, Africa, and Europe. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs places emphasis on building cordial relations with countries in the region, particularly the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC)<sup>1</sup> through the exchange of high-level visits. Examples of activities in 2017 were as follows. On 24-26 April 2017, the Prime Minister of Thailand paid an official visit to **Bahrain** and was granted an audience with His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa. On 19-21 September 2017, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Thailand had bilateral talks with several leaders, including H.E. Dr. Sultan bin Ahmad Sultan Al Jaber, Minister of State of the **United Arab Emirates**, H.E. Sheikh Sabah Khalid Al Hamed Al Sabah, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of **Kuwait**, H.E. Mr. Ayman Al Safadi, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Jordan, and H.E. Sheikh Khalid Bin Ahmed bin Mohamed Al Khalifa, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Bahrain, at the United Nations Headquarters in New York. On 15 November 2017, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Thailand met with H.E. Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of the United Arab Emirates on the occasion of his informal visit to Thailand.



The Prime Minister of Thailand paid an official visit to Bahrain on 24-26 April 2017.

**South Pacific Region:** Australia and New Zealand have a significant political and security role in the region. They are also a major export destination for Thailand. Meanwhile, the Pacific Island countries are emerging markets with high potential and are Thailand's important partners under the international cooperation framework. For these reasons, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs works to enhance cordial relations

<sup>1</sup> Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) consists of Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Oman, United Arab Emirates (UAE), and Qatar.



with the region through several key mechanisms, including the 4th Thailand–Pacific Island Countries Forum. This was held on 20-21 May 2017 in Bangkok to strengthen the close partnership between Thailand and 14 Pacific Island nations.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, the Honourable Julie Bishop MP, Minister for Foreign Affairs of **Australia**, was warmly welcomed on the occasion of her visit to Thailand on 2-5 August 2017 as Guest of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs following her previous visit in early 2015, which reflects the importance of Thailand to Australia.



The Honourable Julie Bishop MP, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Australia, visited Thailand on 2-5 August 2017.

In addition, bilateral relations with **New Zealand** have improved as well. The Minister of Foreign Affairs had an opportunity to meet with the Right Honourable Winston Peters MP, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of New Zealand during the 29<sup>th</sup> APEC Ministerial Meeting on 8 November 2017, in Danang, Vietnam.

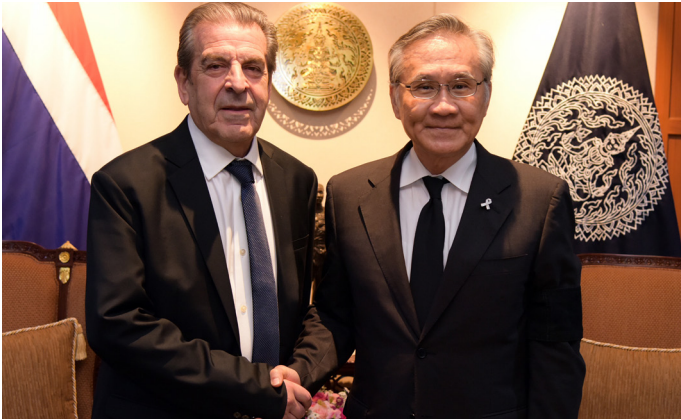


The Minister of Foreign Affairs had an opportunity to meet with the Right Honourable Winston Peters MP, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of New Zealand during the 29<sup>th</sup> APEC Ministerial Meeting in Danang, Vietnam, on 8 November 2017.

In addition to the above regions, Thailand also has cordial relations and good cooperation with other countries located in such regions as **Central Asia**, **Africa**, and **Latin America and the Caribbean**. In the past year, Thailand welcomed H.E. Mr. Eduardo Frei Ruiz-Tagle, former President of the **Republic of Chile** and Special Envoy of the President of the Republic of Chile for Asia-Pacific, on his visit to Thailand on 29 May 2017, which served to follow up on his visit to Thailand as Guest of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 2016.

<sup>2</sup> High-level delegates from 14 countries attending the 4<sup>th</sup> Thailand–Pacific Island Countries Forum on 20-21 May 2017 in Bangkok included Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Micronesia, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu.





H.E. Mr. Eduardo Frei Ruiz-Tagle,  
former President of Chile and Special Envoy  
of the President of Chile for Asia-Pacific,  
on his visit to Thailand on 29 May 2017.

In addition, Thailand also hosted the 5<sup>th</sup> Senior Officials Meeting between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Thailand and the Department of International Relations and Cooperation of the **Republic of South Africa** in Bangkok on 25 January 2017 and co-chaired the 3<sup>rd</sup> Meeting of the Joint Commission for Bilateral Cooperation between the Government of the Kingdom of Thailand and the Government of the **Republic of Kazakhstan** in Kazakhstan on 21-22 June 2017.

The 5<sup>th</sup> Senior Officials Meeting between the Ministry of  
Foreign Affairs of Thailand and the Department of  
International Relations and Cooperation of South Africa  
in Bangkok on 25 January 2017.



## 1.2.4 Promoting understanding of the development of the Southern Border Provinces of Thailand

The international community, especially the Islamic community, has an accurate understanding of development issues in the Southern Border Provinces, where the government has steadily applied King Bhumibol's approach of "understanding, reaching out, and development" together with the engagement of local people in order to achieve security, prosperity and sustainability. This resulted in the international community's favorable attitude that facilitates the government's efforts to develop the South of Thailand. In 2017, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs carried out its mission to increase international understanding among the global community with major activities as follows:

- 1) Participating in relevant international meetings and conferences to build confidence and report the government's progress in developing the Southern Border Provinces in international forums, including the 44<sup>th</sup> Session of the OIC Council of Foreign Ministers in the Republic of Cote d'Ivoire on 10-11 July 2017, and presenting the second report on the compliance with obligations under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) to the Human Rights Committee on 13-14 March 2017;
- 2) Inviting Ambassadors of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) member nations to visit

the Southern Border Provinces of Thailand on 13-19 February 2017; inviting the Grand Mufti of the Arab Republic of Egypt to make a visit to Thailand on 3-9 April 2017, and inviting the press and media from the Middle East to visit Thailand on 14-20 March 2017;

3) Co-organizing activities to promote the moderate religious belief in a multicultural society in Thailand with the Global Movement of Moderates Foundation (GMMF), a Malaysian NGO which advocates the principle of moderate Islam, on 26 January 2017;

4) Co-hosting an Iftar Dinner with the Foundation of Islamic Centre of Thailand for the Ambassadors of Muslim countries to Thailand, Islamic leaders, Muslim scholars and key persons of the Thai Muslim community at the Foundation of Islamic Centre of Thailand, on 2 June 2017;

5) Implementing projects by the Royal Thai Embassies and Consulates-General in 18 countries where Thai Muslim students are studying, to support their studies, develop their professional skills, enhance their well-being, and inform them of the current situation in their home country and the government's efforts. In the past year, the implementation was expanded to include educational institutions located far from capital cities so that more Thai students could engage in the programmes;

6) Organizing the 2017 annual photo contest with the theme of "the Diversity of Muslim Lives in Thailand" for the printing of Islamic desk calendars (English-Arabic bilingual) for the Hijri Era 1439-1440 (A.D. 2017 or B.E. 2560) for the 8<sup>th</sup> consecutive year.



Officials of the Royal Thai Embassy in Kuala Lumpur joined the Iftar Dinner with Thai Muslim students at the International Islamic University Malaysia on 31 May 2017.

### 1.3 Playing a constructive role in the regional and international community

During the past year, Thailand has been internationally praised for her constructive and responsible role in addressing challenging issues that pose a threat to regional and international security and stability, particularly in **Southeast Asia**. Taking into consideration such aspects as the shared interests of countries in the region, geographical and cultural proximity, and deep interdependence among people and between nations, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs attached great importance to promoting collaboration with countries in the region and external partners under major regional cooperation frameworks, especially the **Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)**. The ultimate goal is to strengthen the region with

peace, security, and stability, contributing to people's livelihood and economic activities. In 2017, at the 30<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> ASEAN Summits and the 50<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Foreign Ministers Meeting (AMM), and other related meetings in Manila, Philippines, Thailand actively upheld **ASEAN Centrality** in the regional architecture and promoted ASEAN collaboration to enable ASEAN to effectively tackle surrounding challenges and potential threats, such as terrorism and transnational crimes.



The Prime Minister of Thailand delivered a speech at the Prosperity for All Summit 2017 during the 30<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Summit and related events in Manila, Philippines, on 28 April 2017.

The Prime Minister of Thailand participated in the 31<sup>st</sup> ASEAN Summit in Manila, Philippines, on 13-14 November 2017.



With regard to the **South China Sea**, Thailand also played a key part pushing forward progress in the implementation of Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (DOC) and in the development of the Framework of a Code of Conduct in the South China Sea. As a result, the 14<sup>th</sup> ASEAN–China Senior Officials' Meeting on the Implementation of the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (SOM on DOC)<sup>3</sup> which was held on 18 May 2017 in Guiyang, China, resolved to review and approve the Framework of a Code of Conduct in the South China Sea. This shows major progress in the consultation phase to settle the disputes in the South China Sea, while was a crucial basis for the drafting of Code of Conduct in the South China Sea (COC) among relevant parties for further accomplishments. Apart from that, Thailand also played a role in promoting practical cooperation of mutual benefit to all parties by building maritime confidence such as the Marine Environment Protection Programme. This will eventually lead to the transformation of the South China Sea into the Sea of Peace, Stability, and Sustainable Development.

**On the situation on the Korean Peninsula**, Thailand, as a member of the United Nations, expressed her willingness to constructively cooperate with the international community to rapidly restore stability to the Korean Peninsula, and encouraged all concerned parties to support the implementation of the United

<sup>3</sup> On 18 May 2017, Ms. Busaya Mathelin, Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, attended the 14<sup>th</sup> ASEAN-China Senior Officials' Meeting on the Implementation of the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (SOM-DOC) held in Guiyang, Guizhou Province, China.



Nations Security Council resolutions and adhere to peaceful solutions. At the 50<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Foreign Ministers Meeting on 5 August 2017, Thailand supported the ASEAN statement on the Korean Peninsula, urging North Korea to adhere to the UN Security Council resolutions and rejoin the negotiation process. Thailand also held a meeting to enhance the implementation of the UN Security Council resolutions on North Korea on 22-24 August 2017, inviting over 100 delegates from the expert group established under UN Security Council Resolution No. 1874, ASEAN member states, and Thailand government representatives.



The Prime Minister of Thailand attended the ASEAN-US Summit to celebrate the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of ASEAN-US relations in Manila, Philippines, on 13 November 2017.

Thailand also played a constructive role on the issue of **irregular migration in the Indian Ocean**. Particularly, Thailand has distributed humanitarian assistance to people affected by the situation in Rakhine State, monetary assistance provided financial assistance of via the government of Myanmar and international organizations as relief to those affected in both Myanmar and Bangladesh, assistance in the resettlement process in collaboration with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), assistance for sustainable development in local areas in the bilateral and trilateral frameworks, such as the rice mill construction project, improvement of shrimp breeding centre in Rakhine state, and deliverance of relief supplies in collaboration with ASEAN through the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on Disaster Management (AHA Center). Also, in the UN framework, besides expressing willingness to support resources to resolve the issue of irregular migration,<sup>4</sup> Thailand also had close cooperation with international organizations working on human rights protection and migration, especially the International Organization for Migration (IOM). Major accomplishments included the organization of two events to raise awareness and exchange of views and policy recommendations concerning the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly, and Regular Migration (GCM) in Tak Province on 11 August 2017 and then in Samut Sakhon Province on 17 October 2017.

<sup>4</sup> The Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Thailand delivered a statement during the High-Level Segment of the Thirty-Fourth Session of the Human Rights Council in Geneva, Switzerland, on 27 February 2017, and then the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Thailand delivered a statement at the General Debate of the 72<sup>nd</sup> Session of the United Nations General Assembly in New York, USA, on 22 September 2017.




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The Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Thailand delivered a statement during the High-Level Segment of the Thirty-Fourth Session of the Human Rights Council at the United Nations in Geneva, Switzerland, on 27 February 2017.

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Apart from the security threats mentioned above, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs focused on addressing more complicated and diverse challenges in today's global context. Attaching great importance to the non-proliferation of **weapons of mass destruction** and supporting the reduction and elimination of **nuclear weapons**, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs played a significant role in pushing forward Thailand's signing and ratification of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, together with 48 other countries during the 72<sup>nd</sup> Session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA 72) at the United Nations Headquarters in New York on 20 September 2017, the first day it was opened for signing. The ratification of the Treaty was also undertaken on the same occasion, demonstrating Thailand's commitment and determination to eliminate nuclear weapons.




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The Minister of Foreign Affairs of Thailand signed and ratified the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons at the United Nations Headquarters in New York on 20 September 2017.

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Meanwhile, in terms of **cyber security**, Thailand is well aware of the increasing cyber threats of various scopes, sizes and forms arisen from information and communication technological advances that have a wider impact, especially on national security. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, therefore, has strengthened the awareness of cyber security and encouraged cooperation in cyberspace among ASEAN Member States. In 2017, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in collaboration with relevant Thai agencies, arranged the ASEAN Workshop on Strengthening and Enhancing Cybersecurity Cooperation in the ASEAN Region: Towards an Integrated Approach in Addressing Transnational Crimes on 29 June 2017 and organized ISU Lecture entitled "Disruptive Technology: FinTech and Its Implications on Security" on 28 August 2017.

## 2. Sustainability

### 2.1 Creating global partnership for sustainable development

The Royal Thai Government has adopted King Bhumibol Adulyadej's Sufficiency Economy Philosophy (SEP) as guidance for the country's economic and social development to realize the National Strategy (2018-2037) vision of **"becoming a developed country with security, prosperity and sustainability."** In 2016, Thailand, as Chair of the Group of 77, was successful in garnering endorsement of 134 member states that SEP is a universal principle consistent with sustainable development that can support member countries to achieve UN Sustainable Development Goals by 2030. Therefore, in 2017, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs continued to build on this success by advancing the **Sufficiency Economy Philosophy for Sustainable Development Goals Partnership (SEP for SDGs Partnership)** policy. This is in response to the government's policy promoting the SEP for widespread adoption as well as its priority of ensuring sustainable mutual growth by leaving no one behind.

At the **United Nations**, during the meeting to transfer the chairmanship of Group of 77 to the Republic of Ecuador on 13 January 2017, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, as the representative of the Royal Thai Government, expressed the country's intention to continue playing a role in promoting a close collaboration for the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals by leaving no one behind. On this occasion, he emphasized the cooperation with member countries of Group of 77 through the SEP for SDGs Partnership and South-South Cooperation.



The Meeting to transfer the chairmanship of Group of 77 from Thailand to the Republic of Ecuador on 13 January 2017.

In addition, at the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development meeting on 18 July 2017 at the UN headquarters in New York, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, as the representative of the Government of Thailand, **reported the country's progress under the Voluntary National Review (VNR)** and stressed Thailand's commitment to the issue. Moreover, Thailand also collaborates with the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC) to arrange the publication of 'South-South in Action– Sustainability in Thailand: Experience for Developing Countries' and exhibitions on 'The Life of the World's Development King' and 'The Sufficiency Economy Philosophy for SDGs'. As a result of this effort, UNOSSC reopened its office in Thailand in 2017, reflecting the significance of Thailand's development partnership to promote **South-South Cooperation** in the region. Furthermore, on 27 July 2017, the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the UN Resident Coordinator in Thailand signed the memorandum of agreement for the 2017-2021 United Nations Partnership to promote bilateral collaboration on Sufficiency Economy.





The Minister of Foreign Affairs, as the representative of the Government of Thailand, reported the country's progress under the Voluntary National Review (VNR) at the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development meeting on 18 July 2017 at the UN headquarters in New York.

In addition to the above issues, Thailand has also played a constructive role through bilateral and trilateral collaborations with various countries, especially developing countries, to support them in adopting and implementing SEP to achieve sustainable development. Among the many projects are the following major examples.

(1) The Sufficiency Economy and Business Promotion in the Agricultural Sector is a form of trilateral cooperation between Thailand, Germany and Timor-Leste.

(2) The Thailand-Japan cooperation was organized through the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) in Thailand to support cooperation in developing countries from the Greater Mekong Subregion and Africa.

(3) The Sustainable Agricultural Development Learning Center was launched at Technical College Vientiane in Lao PDR under the Technical Cooperation for Development between Thailand and the Lao PDR.

(4) Domestic study visits were arranged for the delegations from the Kingdom of Tonga, the Republic of Mozambique, the Kingdom of Bhutan, and the Republic of Uganda.

(5) Study trips were organized for ambassadors to Thailand and their spouses to the Royal-initiated Pak Phanang River Basin Development Project Coordination Centre and to the communities for environmental development and conservation at Nakhon Si Thammarat Province.

(6) Various training sessions on SEP principles and sustainable development were arranged, such as a course on "Sufficiency Economy Philosophy towards a Sustainable Development" on 22-26 March 2017.

As a result of this ongoing effort, SEP for SDGs, which was initiated in Thailand (homegrown approach), has received more recognition successively. Many countries have expressed their serious interest to implement sustainable community development projects based on Thailand's SEP for SDGs guidelines. These countries include Sri Lanka, Togo, Senegal, Madagascar, Benin, Niger, Burkina Faso, Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, Paraguay, Costa Rica, Vanuatu and the Philippines, to name but a few.



The Sustainable Agricultural Development Learning Center was launched at Technical College Vientiane in Lao PDR on 7 April 2017 under the Technical Cooperation for Development between Thailand and Lao PDR.

Moreover, Thailand has also promoted the SEP for SDGs through several **other multilateral cooperation frameworks**. Firstly, through the **Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM)**, the Minister of Foreign Affairs attended the Asia-Europe Foreign Ministers' Meeting on "Strengthening Partnership for Peace and Sustainable Development" on 20 November 2017, in Naypyidaw, Republic of the Union of Myanmar. At the meeting, he stressed the importance of sustainable and inclusive development and proposed the integration of sustainability into ASEM's three pillars of political, security, and economy. Secondly, through the **ASEAN Community**, Thailand, as ASEAN Coordinator to the United Nations to promote the complementarities between the ASEAN Community Vision 2025 and the achievement of the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, hosted the ASEAN–EU Dialogue on Sustainable Development on 17 November 2017 in Bangkok. Thirdly, through **Asia Cooperation Dialogue (ACD)**, Thailand, as the Prime Mover to promote approaches to sustainable development, organized SEP international training courses on 20 August–2 September 2017. Finally, through the **Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA)**, Thailand, as the Coordinator of CICA's confidence building measures for sustainable development, organized a training course on Sufficiency Economy Philosophy: Tools for Sustainable Rural Development on 29 October – 21 November 2017, and CICA member countries were invited to participate in this event.

## 2.2 Promoting economic diplomacy to enhance Thailand 4.0

As one of the government's economic cluster Ministries, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has adopted the proactive economic diplomacy of bridging Thailand to the world. This is in response to the government's policy of economic restructuring towards "Thailand 4.0" where innovation, technology and creativity are employed to enhance sustainable growth, overcome the middle-income trap, and undergo a transition to a developed country. Therefore, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' work in 2017 was geared toward an expansion of trade and investment opportunities between Thailand and foreign countries. This included promoting Thai products, enabling Thai investors to access markets of potential worldwide, and increasing competitiveness of the country and the people, particularly the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises or MSMEs. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs helped pursue best practices in technology and innovation to propel the country's economic development according to the government's Thailand 4.0 policy.

### 2.2.1 Pursuing economic partnership and cooperation

The exchange of high-level visits is one of Thailand's primary mechanisms for international economic policy. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has, therefore, worked to promote exchange of visits with various countries, especially those with outstanding economic potential, in order to strengthen economic cooperation as well as to increase Thailand's trade and investment opportunities. Throughout the year 2017, H.E. Mr. Somkid Jatusripitak, Deputy Prime Minister, paid visits to several countries.

1) The official visit to **Myanmar** was on 2-5 February 2017. During the bilateral discussion with H.E. Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, State Counsellor, the Deputy Prime Minister of Thailand emphasized key economic cooperation issues, including the East-West Economic Corridor transportation project, border trade and investment facilitation, through the establishment of Mae Sot-Myawaddy Special Economic Zone, energy cooperation projects, and small and medium enterprise development. In addition, the Deputy Prime Minister also went on a trip to Bagan and Mandalay to explore the investment possibilities for Thailand.

2) The official visit to **Lao PDR** was carried out on 23-25 May 2017. In the bilateral meeting with H.E. Mr. Somdee Duangdee, Deputy Prime Minister of Lao PDR, the Deputy Prime Minister of Thailand raised key economic and development cooperation issues. These included the joint economic and development strategy, the master plan for connectivity between the two countries, the expansion of connectivity within the Greater Mekong Subregion through infrastructure development and customs transit facilitation, the acceleration of construction of the Fifth Thai-Lao Friendship Bridge connecting Bueng Kan Province to Bolikhamxay Province and the construction of railway bridge at the First Friendship Bridge connecting Nong Khai to Vientiane. The Deputy Prime Minister of Thailand also proposed that the two sides set targets for bilateral trade to exceed 10 billion USD within five years, promote capital market cooperation, and develop special economic zone in border areas in a supportive manner.

3) The official visit to **Japan** to attend the Third Meeting of the Japan–Thailand High Level Joint Commission was made on 7 June 2017. On this occasion, the Deputy Prime Minister stressed key cooperation for comprehensive economic strategic partnership between Thailand and Japan, including the development of Eastern Economic Corridor (EEC), the “Four Core Areas – Fifteen Crucial Investment Projects – Five High Priority Projects to Start in 2017” such as the U-Tapao Airport and Aircraft Maintenance Facility, High-Speed Rail Linking 3 Airports, and Map Ta Phut Seaport. After the discussion, the Memorandum of Intent (MOI) was signed by the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry of Japan and the Ministry of Industry of Thailand to strengthen cooperation with Japan to enhance Thai industry.



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H.E. Mr. Somkid Jatusripitak, Deputy Prime Minister of Thailand, paid an official visit to Japan on 7 June 2017.

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Furthermore, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs arranged the official visit to Thailand of H.E. Mrs. Carrie Lam, Chief Executive of Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China, as Guest of H.E. Mr. Somkid Jatusripitak, Deputy Prime Minister, on 3-5 August 2017, in order to strengthen economic relations between Thailand and Hong Kong Special Administrative Region. During the bilateral discussion, the Deputy Prime Minister and the Chief Executive of Hong Kong Special Administrative Region discussed and stressed key issues regarding economic and investment cooperation. These included increasing the volume of trade and investment, developing new S-Curve industries, and the Eastern Economic Corridor (EEC), investment in the ACMECS and ASEAN through Thailand, exchanging expertise and skills in finance and urban administration disciplines, connecting the Thailand 4.0 strategy with China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and cooperating with the Guangdong - Hong Kong - Macao Greater Bay Area, and establishing Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office (HKETO) in Thailand,<sup>5</sup> which will be the third office of Hong Kong Special Administrative Region in Southeast Asia.



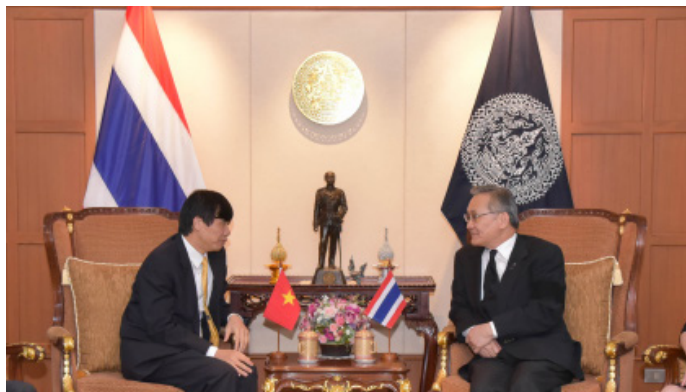
The official visit of H.E. Mrs. Carrie Lam, Chief Executive of Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, China, as Guest of H.E. Mr. Somkid Jatusripitak, Deputy Prime Minister, to Thailand on 3-4 August 2017.



The Cabinet approved in principle the establishment of Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office (HKETO) in Thailand on 7 August 2017.

<sup>5</sup> On 7 November 2017, the Cabinet approved in principle the establishment of HKETO

In addition to the above areas, bilateral meetings were also conducted to monitor and accelerate the progress of economic cooperation. This included the 6<sup>th</sup> Meeting of Thailand–Vietnam Political Consultation Group on 15 February 2017, the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thailand–China Strategic Dialogue on 30 March 2017, the 5<sup>th</sup> Round of Thailand–Turkey Political Consultations on 8 May 2017, the 3<sup>rd</sup> Meeting of the Joint Commission for the Bilateral Cooperation between Thailand and Kazakhstan on 21–22 June 2017, the 7<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Thailand–Bangladesh Joint Commission during 5–7 July 2017, and the 3<sup>rd</sup> Session of Thailand–Iran Political Consultations on 13 November 2017.




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H.E. Mr. Dang Dinh Quy,  
Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs of Vietnam,  
paid a courtesy call on H.E. Mr. Don Pramudwinai,  
Minister of Foreign Affairs of Thailand, during his visit to  
Thailand to co-chair the Sixth Meeting of  
Thailand–Vietnam Political Consultation Group  
on 15 February 2017.

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## 2.2.2 Pursuing best practices from abroad to increase Thailand's Competitiveness

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs gives importance to the government policy of local empowerment, particularly through the use of science, technology and innovation to enhance Thailand's sustainable development and economic activities. In early 2017, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs set up **the Working Group on the Implementation of Thailand 4.0 Policy** with a view to pursuing and disseminating international knowledge to relevant Thai agencies. Best practices pursued included expertise in the production of electric vehicles (EV)<sup>6</sup> from Belgium, the development of smart cities and medical precinct<sup>7</sup> from Australia, and the aviation and aircraft technology from Airbus, France. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs organized lectures and seminars, and created the webpage "**Foreign News for Thailand 4.0**" ([mfa.go.th/thailand4](http://mfa.go.th/thailand4)) as a channel for providing knowledge on innovation and technology from around the world to the Thai public.

Moreover, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has worked in collaboration with the Office of Vocational Education Commission, Ministry of Education, to develop vocational human resources to respond to the needs of the country, particularly the development of Thailand 4.0, 10 targeted S-curve industries, and the Eastern Economic Corridor (EEC). This was done through the Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics Education (STEM Education) Development cooperation project with the U.S., the curriculum development project in collaboration with the Meister vocational programme of Germany, the cooperation project with Austria to offer the first High Vocational Certificate Program in Railway Systems Engineering, and the cooperation with the Technical and Further Education (TAFE) to develop vocational curriculum and upgrade Thai professional skills under the Thai-Australian Creative Economy Programme.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>6</sup> On 8 June 2017, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs hosted a seminar on "IEVTEch" in Bangkok to disseminate knowledge to Thai agencies.

<sup>7</sup> On 29 November 2017, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs held a briefing session for government agencies and educational institutions.

<sup>8</sup> The Ministry of Foreign Affairs carried out the 4<sup>th</sup> Thai-Australian Creative Economy Project on 28 August – 3 September 2017.



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The Thai-German Meister Workshop  
for 25 vocational teachers from all over  
Thailand, held in Berlin, Germany,  
on 13-14 March 2017.

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In addition, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs also organized events abroad to raise international confidence in Thailand's halal food standards in the global market. This resulted in strengthened cooperation and closer strategic partnerships with friendly countries and international organizations that play important roles in the global halal food market. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs also enhanced competitiveness of Thai private sector with the knowhow to keep current customers while attracting new markets through 13 Royal Thai Embassies and Consulates-General around the world. Additionally, the international promotion of **"Thai Kitchen to the World"** policy augmented the reputation of Thai dishes worldwide, and the organization of Thai food festivals in 35 countries also increased awareness of Thai culinary arts via Thai cooking demonstration and sales of Thai food products and fruits. This eventually generated added value, raised quality and productivity, and promoted distribution channels of Thai agricultural and food products.

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### 2.2.3 Connecting international business opportunities

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has played a critical part in being the "bridge" connecting Thai businesses with international markets by identifying international marketing channels and economic opportunities to enhance competitiveness of Thai private sector. This has been done through the "Business Information Center or BIC" ([www.globthailand.com](http://www.globthailand.com)), with the overseas network of 97 offices worldwide (Thailand Business Information Centers and economic sections of the Royal Thai Embassies and Consulates-General), which provides in-depth economic intelligence. This included reports on trends, developments and challenges of foreign markets, products and services that have potential in international markets, consumer behavior in foreign markets, trade and investment regulations, as well as channels to reach key players in both the public and private sectors of various countries. At the same time, business trips for entrepreneurs and related sectors were arranged to explore business opportunities and create business networks for various industries, such as the fishery industry in Iran, Oman, and Mozambique, the organic agriculture and agricultural technology in Denmark, and the electric-vehicle industry in Japan. Currently, the Business Information Centers are expanding with over 700 members, consisting of entrepreneurs and representatives of small and large companies.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has also created a channel for Thai entrepreneurs to project their high potential products and services to a wider international audience via a trilingual (Thai, English, Chinese) website, "Thailand Presents" ([www.thailandpresents.com](http://www.thailandpresents.com)), created in 2017. The website features diverse and unique products and services in 11 categories, namely creative economy, organic products, jewelry



and fashion design, arts and crafts, health and wellness, products from the “Thai Kitchen to the World” project, halal products, premium OTOP products, travelling and hotels, education, research, development and technology. This resulted in greater renown for Thai products and services among foreigners and wider marketing opportunities.

In promoting the potential of Thai business sector, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has organized the “MFA CEO Forum” for two consecutive years. This forum aims to provide a platform for leading Thai private companies to create networks and expand business cooperation with various countries through the foreign diplomatic corps and the world’s leading companies who participate in this forum. At the same time, such events are also used to disseminate information on the government’s significant economic developments and policy, including the 10 targeted S-curve industries, the Eastern Economic Corridor (EEC) development project, and border-area development projects, so that investors can have greater confidence and decide to invest in Thailand. Last year, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs invited six leading individuals and companies in Thailand and abroad, namely Airbus, Central Group, Amitabh Kant, Namyong Terminal, Food Innopolis, and Amata Group to give lectures at the MFA CEO Forums.

Additionally, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs also conducted a seminar and invited Chinese private sector participants from Hong Kong, Shenzhen, and Shanghai to invest in the EEC area, encouraging Chinese business sectors with potential and advanced technology and innovation to start their businesses and investment in the EEC area.



MFA CEO Forum with Airbus  
at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Thailand  
on 4 March 2017.



MFA CEO Forum with Central Group  
at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Thailand  
on 15 June 2017.



MFA CEO Forum with AMATA  
at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Thailand  
on 5 December 2017.

## 2.2.4 Promoting connectivity

Thailand has a geographical advantage due to its location, which is at the heart of the Greater Mekong Subregion, Southeast Asia, and between the Pacific and Indian Oceans. With such an advantage, the country has the potential to drive the development of the country and the sub-region to progress together in sustainable ways. In this regard, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has promoted Thailand's constructive role as the bridge connecting the sub-region to the region and beyond. This has been carried out by various strategic cooperation frameworks to promote sustainable and inclusive growth. The focal point is on connectivity development in terms of physical infrastructure, regulations to facilitate trade and investment (soft infrastructure), and human resource development to achieve tangible and effective progress.

In addition to the implementation of the Thailand+1 policy to promote economic development in a supportive manner, Thailand has also played a remarkably constructive role together with partners outside the region to propel sustainable development and reduce development disparities among countries in the Greater Mekong Subregion (CLMV) through major strategic cooperation frameworks in the sub-region, examples of which are as follows. Through the Lower Mekong Initiative, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Thailand attended the 10<sup>th</sup> Lower Mekong Initiative (LMI) Ministerial Meeting in Manila, Philippines, on 6 August 2017. In terms of the Mekong–ROK Cooperation, the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs attended the 7<sup>th</sup> Mekong–ROK Foreign Minister's Meeting in Busan, Republic of Korea on 1 September 2017. Under the Mekong–Japan Cooperation, the Prime Minister attended the 9<sup>th</sup> Mekong–Japan Summit in Manila, Philippines, on 13 November 2017. Under the Mekong–Lancang Cooperation, the Minister of Foreign Affairs attended the 3<sup>rd</sup> Mekong–Lancang Cooperation (MLC) Foreign Minister's Meeting on 15 December 2017 in Dali, Yunnan Province, China. In addition, as Thailand will be Chair of the Ayeyawady–Chao Phraya–Mekong Economic Cooperation Strategy or ACMECS in 2018, it proposed the “Five-Year ACMECS Master Plan (2019-2023)” as the first master plan in the sub-region to enhance the performance of ACMECS and to establish key cooperation strategies for member countries. The master plan is aimed at addressing current challenges, enhancing “seamless connectivity” in the sub-region, harmonizing economic policies with emphasis on systems and regulations as well as fund raising for sustainable and innovative regional development. The ACMECS Master Plan will be officially adopted at the 8<sup>th</sup> ACMECS Summit in June 2018 in Bangkok.



The Minister of Foreign Affairs of Thailand participated in the 10<sup>th</sup> Lower Mekong Initiative (LMI) Ministerial Meeting in Manila, Philippines, on 6 August 2017.

The Prime Minister of Thailand  
attended the 9<sup>th</sup> Mekong-Japan Summit  
in Manila, Philippines,  
on 13 November 2017.



Additionally in 2017, Thailand formulated and proposed a concept paper entitled “BIMSTEC Master Plan for Connectivity” at the 15<sup>th</sup> Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectorial Technical and Economic Cooperation or BIMSTEC Ministerial Meeting in Nepal on 10-11 August 2017, which was later developed into the BIMSTEC Master Plan on Transport Connectivity under negotiation. In addition to BIMSTEC, Thailand also played a constructive role as the “bridge” connecting the Indian Ocean to the Pacific Ocean by means of the Indian Ocean Rim Association or IORA to encourage countries located in both oceans to achieve comprehensive growth sustainably and inclusively. During the IORA meetings last year,<sup>9</sup> Thailand played an active role in promoting the connectivity between the two regions, proposing to be the gateway to the global supply chain and value chain. This is considered an opportunity to promote access to trade and investment markets, tourism and services, and various logistics connectivity in Asia. Thailand also promoted economic cooperation in areas where member countries have potential, particularly fisheries and aquaculture, which are fields of Thai expertise, and proposed the development of IORA Master Plan on the Blue Economy and the integration of plans for infrastructure development connectivity and maritime connectivity in the Indian Ocean region with other regional strategic frameworks, including ASEAN, ACMECS, and BIMSTEC, to ensure that all connectivity plans are harmonized and effective.

In **Southeast Asia**, through **ASEAN**, Thailand has attached importance to “Strengthening ASEAN Centrality” in regional architecture so that all ASEAN member countries can prosper together sustainably amidst geopolitical dynamics and challenges. In addition to encouraging the member states and external parties to strictly follow the Initiative for ASEAN Integration Work Plan III (IAI 3) and the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity 2025 (MPAC 2025), Thailand has advanced the idea of “connecting the connectivities” between strategic cooperation frameworks at all levels to create well-balanced and inclusive connectivity. This was carried out through important meetings, including the Prime Minister’s participation in the 30<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> ASEAN Summits on 29 April 2017 and 13 November 2017 respectively, the ASEAN–U.S. Special Leaders’ Summit on 13 November 2017, the Foreign Minister’s participation in the 50<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Foreign

<sup>9</sup> On 2017, Thailand attended three of the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) meetings: (1) the Leaders’ Summit in Commemoration of the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of IORA in Jakarta, Indonesia, on 7 March 2017, with H.E. Mr. Somkid Jatusripitak, Deputy Prime Minister of Thailand, representative of the Prime Minister of Thailand, as head of the Thai delegation; (2) the 2<sup>nd</sup> Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) Ministerial Blue Economy Conference in Jakarta, Indonesia, under the theme “Financing Blue Economy” on 10 May 2017, with the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Thailand as representative, and (3) the 17<sup>th</sup> Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) Council of Ministers Meeting in Durban, South Africa, on 18 October 2017, with the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Thailand as head of the Thai delegation.



Ministers' Meeting (AMM) on 5 August 2017, and the Foreign Minister's and his representatives' participation in the ASEAN Post Ministerial Conference Sessions with the Dialogue Partners on 6 August 2017.

In East Asia, Thailand played a constructive role through the 12<sup>th</sup> EAS Summit (EAS) and the 20<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Plus Three (APT) on 14 November 2007 in Manila, Philippines, driving forward the integration of the region's economy. During the meetings, Thailand encouraged the negotiation on the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) agreement among relevant countries and promoted the concept of "connecting the connectivities" in order to generate inclusive and complementary development that would eventually lead to the establishment of the East Asia Economic Community (EAEC). Thailand also actively positioned herself as the "bridge" connecting ASEAN and East Asia via the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) in order to encourage more tangible infrastructure connectivity. This is carried out through the participation of the Minister of Foreign Affairs, together with the Ministers of Transport, Commerce, Digital Economy and Society, and Science and Technology, in the High-Level Dialogue Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation, held in Beijing, China, on 14 May 2017 and the participation of the Deputy Foreign Minister in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Belt and Road Summit, held in Hong Kong on 11 September 2017 as well as other related meetings under the "One Belt One Road (OBOR)" policy of China.



The High-Level Dialogue Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation,  
held in Beijing, China, on 14 May 2017.

In Asia, Thailand continued to play a leading role even after completing its term as Chair of Asia Cooperation Dialogue (ACD) in 2016. To illustrate, Thailand announced to be Co-Prime Mover on the nexus of food, energy and water security during the ACD Foreign Ministers' Meeting, on the sideline of the 72<sup>nd</sup> Session of the United Nations General Assembly in New York on 21 September 2017. In addition, Thailand hosted the ACD Workshop on Energy, which was conducted in Bangkok on 4 November 2017 and supported the relevant Prime Mover to propel the connectivity pillar.

Furthermore, Thailand played a vital role in the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) by promoting free trade and investment and forging ahead economic integration in **the Asia-Pacific region**, which covers 21 economies, to achieve tangible progress. In this regard, Thailand, together with the Republic of Peru, formulated the APEC Strategy for Green, Sustainable and Innovative Micro-, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (MSMEs). This Strategy was adopted at the 29<sup>th</sup> APEC Ministerial Meeting on 8 November 2017. At the same time, at the 29<sup>th</sup> APEC Ministerial Meeting on 8 November 2017 and the 25<sup>th</sup> APEC Economic Leaders' Meeting on 10 November 2017 in Danang, Vietnam, Thailand also pushed forward and supported the establishment of the Free Trade Area of the Asia-Pacific (FTAAP), encouraging the expansion of existing free trade agreements as well as those under negotiation, especially the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP).



The Prime Minister of Thailand attended the 25<sup>th</sup> APEC Economic Leaders' Meeting in Danang, Vietnam, on 10 November 2017.

### 3. Standard

#### 3.1 Thailand's development in line with international standards

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has worked with integrity and determination to enhance the potential of Thai agencies and people as well as to elevate domestic development to meet international standards. Several measures have been implemented to reach such goals, namely awareness raising and the promotion of task undertaking and law enforcement, in compliance with international standards, regulations, and obligations, with an aim to promote international recognition and confidence, and to increase competitiveness and sustainable development. In 2017, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs focused on efforts to resolve pending issues, including the improvement of Thailand's civil aviation standards and the addressing of human trafficking issues, especially the illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing and the United States Department of State's Trafficking in Person Report (TIP Report). At the same time,

the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is well aware of the essential need to apply knowledge and best practices of international organizations with expertise in economics and development to improve national standards to achieve the goal of becoming a developed country.

In terms of the **civil aviation standards**, the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) came to inspect Thailand's supervision of civil aviation safety standards in 2015 and found that Thailand had limitations in the air operator certification procedures that implied Significant Safety Concerns (SSC) in civil aviation. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs supported the improvement of such safety standards, in order to make progress continuously and comprehensively in accordance with the standards of ICAO. The effort included the facilitation of the visit of ICAO Coordinated Validation Mission (ICVM) 2017 to verify the progress and completeness of actions to comply with the standards of ICAO on 20–27 September 2017. This resulted in the ICAO headquarters' approval to revoke Thailand's status as a country with significant safety concerns (SSC) on 6 October 2017. The ICAO removed Thailand's "red flag" status of Safety Audit Results on the ICAO website, signifying the country's success in dealing with problems in complying with international standards.

Furthermore, the Royal Thai government put emphasis on the issue of **prevention and suppression of human trafficking**, a long-standing unresolved problem in the interest of international community. Predominantly, the EU's attention on the **illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing** and the United States Department of State's Trafficking in Person Report (TIP Report) not only affected the image of Thailand directly, but also disrupted economic interests of the country, in particular the fishery industry as Thailand is the world's third largest fishery product exporter. Regarding this matter, in addition to the promotion of understanding among the international community to recognize Thailand's commitment and efforts to resolve these prolonged problems, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs also encouraged Thai government agencies and related sectors to observe the 5P strategic guidelines: Policy, Prosecution, Protection, Prevention, and Partnership, in compliance with universal practices and international obligations.<sup>10</sup> Major examples of work of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 2017 included the following: (1) the Workshop entitled the "United Nations Global Plan of Action on Combatting Trafficking in Persons: Appraisal of Implementation and the Challenges Ahead" co-hosted with the United Nations Actions for Cooperation against Trafficking in Persons (UNACT) on 31 August 2017 to raise relevant sectors' awareness of the United Nations Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons (UNGPA); (2) The participation of Minister of Foreign Affairs and delegates from the private sector (Thai Union Group Public Company Limited) in the Bali Process Government and Business Forum on 24-25 August 2017 in Perth, Australia. The aim was to increase the business sector's awareness in constructive engagement in the comprehensive prevention and suppression of human trafficking through the promotion of best practices of business

<sup>10</sup> For example, the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children and the United Nations Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons.



sector and the development of relevant state laws and regulations in accordance with the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGPR), and (3) the seminar on the role of civil society in combating human trafficking in Thailand” in Bangkok on 4 September 2017 to exchange ideas with various sectors that played an important role in solving human trafficking problems and to ensure constructive cooperation and effectiveness in resolving the problems in accordance with universal practices. The above mentioned activities resulted in the decision of International Labour Organization (ILO) to close the investigation of complaints against Thailand’s violation of the obligations under the Convention No. 29 on 24 March 2017. In addition, the United States Department of State decided to retain Thailand’s status in Tier 2 Watch List (the same as 2016) in their Trafficking in Person Report (TIP Report) 2017.



The seminar on the role of civil society in fighting human trafficking in Thailand, held in Bangkok on 4 September 2017.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs also recognized the importance of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), an organization of knowledge and best practices with an important role in setting standards and guidelines for the global economy and development. In this regard, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs strengthened cooperation with OECD continuously in order to bring advanced knowledge and expertise of OECD and its member countries to enhance the development of Thai government agencies’ operational capacity as well as to reform domestic regulations according to OECD’s advanced standards. In addition to the cooperation framework of OECD Development Centre, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs pushed forward the restoration of the Country Programme (CP) in 2017.<sup>11</sup> The purpose was to enable Thai agencies to access knowledge and best practices that promote sustainable development and national reform according to government policies, in four aspects: (1) good governance and transparency; (2) business environment and competitiveness; (3) Thailand 4.0, and (4) inclusive growth.

## 3.2 Playing a leading role in sharing best practices

Thailand has played a leading role and has been praised by the international community for best practices in public health, including the elimination of mother-to-child transmission of HIV, sexually transmitted diseases and elephantiasis. Particularly, Thailand has been widely recognized as a middle

<sup>11</sup> In 2013, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) initiated the implementation of the Country Programme in Thailand. In June 2014, it resolved to suspend the programme due to Thailand’s political situation.



income country that is successful in its healthcare provision through the Universal Health Coverage or UHC scheme for the people including vulnerable groups such as immigrants and stateless people. Thailand has, therefore, shared experiences and expertise in public health to help other countries achieve their goal of the universal health coverage by organizing several training sessions and knowledge transfer programmes. For example, the “Promoting Migrant Health: Striving for Peace and Decent Life for All” event was organized on 22 September 2017, during the 72<sup>nd</sup> Session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA 72) in collaboration with the World Health Organization (WHO), the International Organization for Migration (IOM), and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), along with the Government of Argentina, Ecuador, Italy, Portugal, and Switzerland. In 2017, Thailand has also taken the opportunity as Chair of the Foreign Policy and Global Health Initiative (FPGH) to move forward the concept of universal health coverage (UHC) by advocating the theme “Global Health and Foreign Policy (GHFP): Addressing the Health of the Most Vulnerable for an Inclusive Society” via the United Nations platform. The advocacy was successful in convincing the United Nations General Assembly to approve Thailand’s proposal to mark 12 December of every year (International UHC Day) as the “International Universal Health Coverage Day”. As a result of the adoption of the above resolution, the High-Level Meeting on Universal Health Coverage (HLM on UHC) will be organized in 2019 by the UN Secretary-General and the President of the 74<sup>th</sup> Session of the UN General Assembly at the UN Headquarters in New York on 23 September 2017.

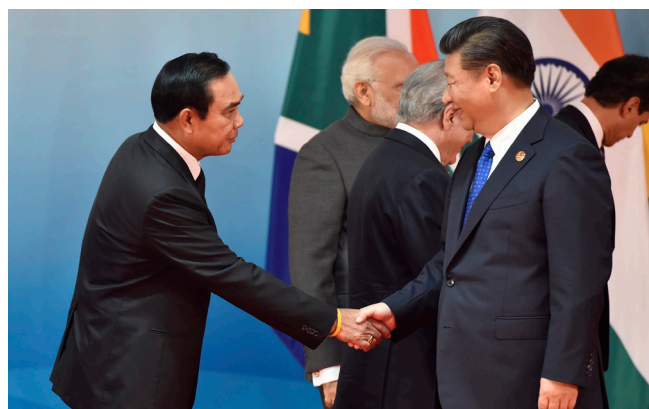
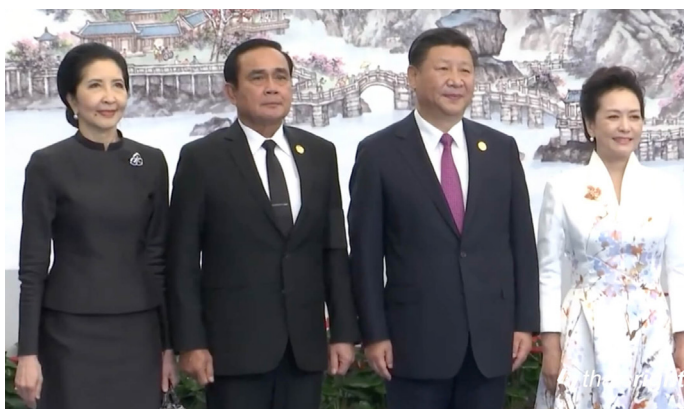


The Minister of Foreign Affairs of Thailand delivered an opening speech at the side event on the topic of migrants’ health promotion during the UNGA 75 in New York, United States, on 22 September 2017.

## 4. Status

### 4.1 Raising the recognizable role and greater status of Thailand and Thai people on the international stage

In 2017, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs succeeded in enhancing the status of Thailand, thus gaining recognition in the international community. Thailand assumed the role of Country Coordinator for ASEAN-EU Dialogue Relations from 2015-2018 and has been entrusted by ASEAN Member States to serve as the ASEAN Coordinator on Sustainable Development Cooperation since 2016. In the framework of Asia Cooperation Dialogue (ACD), Thailand was designated as Prime Mover in Promoting Approaches to Inclusive and Sustainable Development and Co-Prime Mover on Energy under the Interrelation of Food, Water, and Energy Security pillar since its announcement during the 2<sup>nd</sup> ACD Summit in 2016 and the 72<sup>nd</sup> Session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA 72) in September 2017 respectively.



The Prime Minister of Thailand participated in the Emerging Markets and Developing Countries Dialogue during the 9<sup>th</sup> BRICS Summit in Xiamen, Fujian Province, China, on 4-5 September.

Moreover, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has supported and promoted Thai individuals and organizations to gain renown, to receive awards at the international level, and to work in international organizations. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, together with relevant government agencies, campaigned for votes from foreign countries. The above efforts resulted in the endorsement of Thai individuals and organizations to hold important positions on the international stage as follows:

(1) Mr. Kriangsak Kittichaisaree, Ambassador of Thailand to the Russian Federation in Moscow, was elected Judge of the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (ITLOS) for the term 2017-2026. He is the first Thai national to be elected to a judicial organ of the United Nations and also the first member from Southeast Asia and Oceania to be elected Judge of the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea;

(2) Ms. Areewan Haorangsi was elected Secretary General of the Asia-Pacific Telecommunity (APT), which is headquartered in Bangkok, for two consecutive terms: from 2015 to 2018 and from 2018 to 2020;

(3) Mrs. Thanyarat Chokviriyakorn, Director of Policy and Strategic Planning Office, State Audit Office, was appointed as an independent senior auditor of the International Anti-Corruption Academy (IACA) for the term 2018-2020;



(4) Mr. Viroj Sumyai, Vice-President of the International Narcotics Control Board (INCB), was elected President of the International Narcotics Control Board for one-year term;

(5) The State Audit Office of the Kingdom of Thailand (SAO) has been certified as an external auditor of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO) for the term 2018-2019;

(6) Thailand was elected Council Member of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) for the term 2018-2019, holding the position for the 7<sup>th</sup> consecutive term.

## **4.2 Promoting understanding about Thailand and Thai cultural identity in the world**

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Royal Thai Embassies and Consulates-General around the world have played a significant role in the global community to build a strong image and promote understanding about Thailand in such aspects as politics and security, economy, and culture. Thailand's soft power reflected in Thai art and culture, the Thai way of life, and strong Thai communities abroad have been conveyed with the help of technology through various channels and activities. This resulted in foreign countries' accurate perception and positive attitudes towards Thailand, enhancing Thailand's popularity and improving Thailand's ranking in international indexes. For instance, the United States' U.S. News has ranked Thailand No. 1 for the Best Countries to Start a Business for two consecutive years while World Bank's Ease of Doing Business report has ranked Thailand No. 26, up from No. 46 in the previous year and second among ASEAN countries. The activities have also been conducive to creating opportunities for Thailand in related businesses, such as films and television dramas, Thai massage and spa related businesses, etc. Major activities in 2017 included the following:

**4.2.1** This year, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs presented the royal kathina robes to 10 Buddhist monasteries around the world, including India, Malaysia, Cambodia, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Lao PDR, The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has initiated the offering ceremony of the royal kathina robe at Buddhist temples in foreign countries since 1995. Besides carrying on a Buddhist tradition and a valued Thai custom, this activity has helped strengthen the close and cordial relations with friendly countries at the government level as well as people-to-people relations in line with cultural diplomacy objectives. China, Bangladesh, and Vietnam. In addition to the royal kathina ceremony, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Royal Thai Embassies and Consulates-General, and relevant agencies in the name of Team Thailand also participated in other activities, such as food offering and alms giving ceremonies to strengthen Thai communities abroad.

**4.2.2** The Ministry of Foreign Affairs promoted the image of Thailand through world-class media. In collaboration with several leading foreign media agencies, such as Bloomberg, CNN, CNBC, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs promoted Thailand's strengths, covering economic and tourism strong points, our role as a transportation and connectivity hub, and the concept of Thainess, or Thai cultural identity, and at the same time our ability to overcome obstacles, including human trafficking issues and illegal, unreported and uncontrolled (IUU) fishing problems. For instance, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs published articles in French and Spanish to publicize Thailand's efforts in solving the issues.

**4.2.3** The Ministry of Foreign Affairs monitored attitudes and positions of foreign countries, especially at the policy level, including reports and reviews on Thailand in the media in order to promote correct understanding such as on the issues of Thailand's political development, human rights, human trafficking, and illegal fishing.

**4.2.4** The Ministry of Foreign Affairs invited the media and thought influencers to visit Thailand to build accurate understanding and allow them to experience the beauty of Thai culture, so that they would further publicize the correct information and image of Thailand in their countries and the world. Major projects in 2017 included: (1) the invitation to the media in Asian countries to visit Thailand during 14–18 February 2017 to enhance cooperation and networking; (2) the invitation to the media from Middle Eastern countries, including Bahrain, Jordan, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, and the United Arab Emirates to visit Thailand during 14–20 March 2017 to promote comprehensive understanding of Thailand, and (3) the invitation to business delegates from the U.S.–ASEAN Business Council (USABC) to reinforce confidence in business operation and investment in Thailand, especially Thailand's economic development plans under the Thailand 4.0 policy.

**4.2.5** The Ministry of Foreign Affairs organized Thai cultural roadshow events abroad. These included: (1) the support for Thai designers to use Thai fabrics in their design collections to attend the LA Fashion Week 2017; (2) the organization of Thai film festivals to celebrate the 130<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Thailand-Japan diplomatic relations and the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Thailand-Malaysia relations; (3) the collaboration with the Ministry of Culture to bring a dance troupe and Thai musicians from Bunditpatanasilpa Institute to perform in The Hague, Netherlands and Bern, Switzerland on 29 June – 11 July 2017, in Pretoria, South Africa on 18-19 August 2017, and in Santiago, Chile on 15–26 April 2017 to promote an attractive image of Thailand as well as to strengthen people-to-people relations between Thailand and other countries; (4) the organization of Thai Khon (masked dance) performance in celebration of the 7<sup>th</sup> cycle birthday anniversary of Her Majesty Queen Sirikit was organized on 28 August 2017 in Sydney, Australia, by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Royal Thai Embassy in Canberra, and the Royal Thai Consulate-General in Sydney, in collaboration



The traditional Khon mask dance performed in honour of Her Majesty Queen Sirikit in Sydney, Australia, on 28 August 2017.

with the Ministry of Culture, to showcase Thailand's most refined and highest form of traditional performing art to the world stage. This event also commemorated the auspicious occasion of the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Thai-Australian diplomatic relations.

**4.2.6** In 2017, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs promoted the organization of Thai Festivals 4.0 by the Royal Thai Embassies and Consulates-General around the world. Thai Festivals are another important event that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has organized to enhance the popularity of Thailand overseas. Thailand's rich culture and uniqueness in various dimensions have helped promote Thai products, services, and tourism, winning worldwide recognition for Thailand. The Royal Thai Embassies and Consulates-General together with relevant agencies of Team Thailand, including the Thai private sector, and Thai associations and communities abroad, have been organizing Thai Festivals in over 50 cities, such as in Pretoria and Cape Town, South Africa, in London, United Kingdom, in Tokyo and Fukuoka, Japan, and in Melbourne, Australia. The Festivals added the element of Thailand 4.0 policy such as smart farmers and agriculture, innovation and Thai food, as well as goods and products from the royally-initiated projects, the promotion of the sufficiency economy philosophy, the promotion of green economy, along with SMEs, start-up and OTOP products. The activities under Thai Festivals 4.0 included ones that aimed to promote knowledge and business opportunities such as a study visit for participating Thai farmers on technology and innovation in sustainable agriculture and the organization of workshops, seminars and business matching events for the private sectors of Thailand and host countries.



Thai Festivals in Moscow, Russia, on 26-28 August 2017.

**4.2.7** The Ministry of Foreign Affairs also applied technology to promote Thai culture among a wider audience and in accordance with current foreign consumer behavior. This included the development of "Street Food Bangkok" application in Chinese in addition to the English version launched in 2015, along with the "Street Food Phuket" and "Street Food Chiang Mai Chiang Rai" applications launched in 2017 in English and Chinese to provide recommendations on Thai food and local Thai culture.





Street Food application introducing Thai food and local Thai culture.

## 5. Synergy

### 5.1 Advancing integrated foreign affairs with inclusive diplomacy and public diplomacy

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is determined to drive forward a dynamic foreign policy in an integrated manner by adopting inclusive diplomacy which has the people's interest at its core. This has been done through site visits and the gathering of information, opinions and demands of various sectors to strengthen Thai foreign policy to be more effective and consistent with the needs of the people.

**5.1.1** The organization of **outreach projects** is a mechanism to promote interaction between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and government agencies, the private sector, and people in different localities. The purpose is to take comments and suggestions into consideration for the formulation of foreign policy that takes into account the interests of all groups of people (Local Link-Global Reach). Main activities of an outreach project include a discussion with provincial governors and government agency representatives, a briefing on the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' missions and foreign affairs in various dimensions, such as the promotion of Sufficiency Economy Philosophy in the international community, diplomatic protocol, public consular services, as well as a lecture to prepare people prior to their overseas trips, interviews with the Radio Thailand and local media, and meetings with community enterprises and sufficiency economy villages. In 2017, the outreach projects included: (1) Bua Kaew Outreach Project in Bueng Kan and Sakon Nakhon on 23–26 January 2017, in Nakhon Sawan and Uthai Thani on 19–20 April, and in Kalasin and Roi Et on 27–30 June 2017; (2) United Nations Outreach Project in Chiang Rai on 22–23 February 2017; and (3) ASEAN Outreach Project in Chiang Mai on 1 July 2017.

**5.1.2** **Public forums** have been arranged by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as platforms for discussion and exchange of opinions that will subsequently be used to enhance the implementation of foreign policy in a clear and united direction. Major events in 2017 included: (1) the drafting of the 5S Foreign Affairs Masterplan (2018–2037) whereby the Ministry of Foreign Affairs organized roundtable discussions with academics and experts on 8 February and 20 April 2017 and the 1<sup>st</sup> Meeting of the Network of Offices of Policy and Planning on 17 March 2017 to exchange opinions; (2) discussions with representatives of non-governmental organizations or civil society organizations on human rights such as the Rights and Liberties Protection Department of the Ministry of Justice, the Office of Judge Advocate of the Ministry of



Bua Kaew Outreach Project at Bueng Kan Province  
on 24 January 2017.

Defense, the Department of Women's Affairs and Family Development of the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security, the Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International, the International Commission of Jurists, and the Cross Cultural Foundation, and (3) the National ASEAN Committee Meeting was held on 24 March 2017 chaired by the Minister of Foreign Affairs with the participation of 30 representatives from the public and private sectors to integrate their work in mobilizing and strengthening the ASEAN community with the people at its centre by leaving no one behind.

**5.1.3** Foreign affairs knowledge dissemination activities have been organized to educate the public on issues that are relevant and beneficial to Thai people in all aspects. In 2017, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs organized the following activities: (1) the dissemination of information on the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and on the application of Sufficiency Economy Philosophy to achieve the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. Activities covered an English speech contest for students at the levels of secondary and tertiary education on the topic of Sufficiency Economy Philosophy for Sustainable Development Goals (SEP for SDGs)"; (2) the circulation of information on human rights and international law by organizing a special lecture entitled "70 Years of the ICJ: How it remains relevant in a Changing World" on 8 February 2017, a panel discussion on the topic of "human rights obligations and implementation in Thailand" on 1 May 2017, and a lecture entitled "Rule of Law of the Sea: Old and New Challenges and Opportunities" on 18 May 2017; (3) an awareness raising activities on the role of Thailand in ASEAN, economic opportunities, and common identities in the ASEAN Community through an academic dialogue entitled "ASEAN@50: For Now and Posterity" on 5 April 2017 at Mae Fah Luang University; (4) the organization of a conference entitled "Asia Regional Cooperation: New Challenges, New Approach" on 11 July 2017 to increase awareness on economic integration in Asia, ASEAN-China Free Trade Area, and Asia infrastructure connectivity among leaders of public sector, private sector, academics and mass media by collaborating with the Federation of Thai Industries and Charoen Pokphand Group; (5) the organization of a dialogue forum on the preparation before going abroad for students and the general public at 6 educational institutions in Chiang Mai, Chiang Rai, and Phayao on 27 August – 2 September 2017, to boost immunity and to prevent Thai nationals from falling victim to illegal traffickers and distress. This was done through

and (6) the organization of a special lecture on Asia-Europe relations and the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) at Chiang Mai University and Mahasarakham University on 7 and 13 March 2017 to commemorate the ASEM Day 2017.

**5.1.4** The building of **ASEAN libraries** in 3 schools, namely Piriyalai School in Phrae, Serm Ngam Wittayakhom School in Lampang, and Ban Huay Tom Chaiyawongsa Uppatham School in Lamphun on 20–22 December 2017. The purpose was to make the libraries ASEAN education and learning activity centres for youths, teachers and communities in the neighbourhoods. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs' libraries have been built and handed over to more than 30 schools since 2014. In ASEAN libraries, there are learning materials, especially books, ASEAN Community exhibitions, instructional media, screens and computers with search engines for information on the ASEAN community.

**5.1.5** The **Young Ambassadors of Virtue Foundation** under the Royal Patronage of Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn is an inclusive diplomacy mechanism. It aims at instilling a social conscience, promoting volunteerism, and expanding the horizons of Thai youths to become the major force in driving the country's development, especially the promotion of Sufficiency Economy Philosophy in daily lives of the nation's youth. In addition, this project also provides an opportunity for Thai youths to learn about Thai foreign affairs and key matters of international affairs, including Thailand's roles in the ASEAN Community and the use of English in daily life. Major projects in 2017 included: (1) English language training programs for teachers in the Young Ambassadors of Virtue Foundation Network from 26 schools of 26 provinces on 18-21 April 2017; (2) the Sprouts of Virtue Advocacy Campaign among the Young Ambassadors of Virtue organized on 24 July – 29 September 2017 in 15 schools of 15 provinces; (3) an excursion to Kansai, Japan, arranged for the Young Ambassadors of Virtue on 29 September – 6 October 2017 to commemorate the 130<sup>th</sup> anniversary of cordial relations and friendship of Thai-Japanese youth, which included arts and cultural activities and academic activities with Japanese youth. In conclusion, in 2017, there were 36,444 school administrators, teachers, and students from 260 schools in 61 provinces nationwide participating in the projects.

## **5.2 Delivering excellence in foreign affairs services for the people's benefits**

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is the main government organization responsible for overseeing and protecting the interests of Thai nationals abroad. Foreign affairs services have been improved and enhanced continuously by applying advanced technology to ensure that the people will receive fast, effective, and convenient public services in accordance with the government's policy to reduce gaps in the access to public services. As a result, people were satisfied with up-to-date, prompt, and resourceful consular information and services. Regarding this matter, the Department of Consular Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs was awarded the Government Easy Contact Center: GECC 2017 for the public service standards that are "fast, convenient, and easy to access."



**5.2.1** The Royal Thai Embassies and Consulates-General around the world have been working to **protect and oversee the interests of Thai nationals abroad**. This is carried out through the “Overseas Damrongtham Centres” with a 24-hour Hotline number available to address complaints and requests of all cases, particularly cases of Thai nationals in distress. In 2017, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Royal Thai Embassies and Consulates-General provided assistance to a total of 13,264 Thai nationals. Major rescue and assistance missions included assistance provided to a Thai fishing crew arrested for illegal fishing in Indonesian waters in May, the rescue and safe return to Thailand of 35 Thai fishermen in Somali waters in November, an assistance to a Thai woman who fell severely ill while traveling in the Republic of Korea in March, and the rescue and evacuation of Thai nationals during the volcanic eruption in Bali, Indonesia. To support such work, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs also coordinated with line agencies to develop a plan and preparation for the rescue and evacuation of Thai nationals during disasters and crisis situations in a timely manner.

**5.2.2** The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has continuously **improved the quality and efficiency of consular services** in accordance with the **inclusive diplomacy** policy to ensure that people can have access to public services that are fair, effective, and inclusive. Such services include online registration service for passport application via [www.passport.in.th](http://www.passport.in.th), a web tracking system to check the status of documents and letters, and an express passport service to issue passports within the day of request and within the next official day. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has also adopted modern information technology to make consular services more convenient and inclusive. This includes the ThaiConsular Application and additional contact channels, such as LINE, WeChat, and Facebook, through which staff will respond and provide information. The civil registration information system of the Ministry of Interior and other services of various agencies have also been integrated to provide even more convenient services to clients. Moreover, taking into consideration people living in remote areas far from passport offices in Bangkok and other Provinces, mobile passport units have been dispatched in several Provinces. In 2017, mobile passport services were arranged in (1) Ratchaburi on 19–21 July 2017, (2) Kanchanaburi on 16–18 August 2017, (3) Krabi on 25–29 August 2017, (4) Trang on 4–8 December 2017, and (5) Chumphon on 11–15 December 2017. In conclusion, throughout 2017, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs issued over 1.6 million passports and over 380,000 documents for legalization and authentication.

### **5.2.3 Promoting strength and harmony of Thai communities abroad**

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has worked to enhance the capacity and strength of Thai communities abroad through projects and activities organized by the Royal Thai Embassies and Consulates-General around the world. This includes the provision of legal advice on foreign transactional laws, mobile health clinics for overseas Thai communities, visits and dialogues with Thai community representatives, support for activities organized by Thai associations, clubs, and monasteries, the organization of gathering events for Thai nationals, and the support for activities to promote Thai culture such as language, music, and

traditional customs for Thai nationals and youths living abroad to increase their awareness of Thai identity and for Thai communities to support and safeguard Thai national interests. Major events in 2017 included: (1) the invitation to Thai communities and Thai nationals abroad to participate in ceremonies to pay respect and condolences to His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej, including the “ad-hoc volunteers for the royal cremation ceremony” with His Majesty the King’s royal permission, the Buddhist merit-making ceremonies to mark the 50<sup>th</sup> and 100<sup>th</sup> days since the passing of His Majesty the late King, and the offering ceremony of sandalwood flowers on 26 October 2017 to pay their final tribute before the Royal Cremation of His Majesty the late King; (2) the participation of Thai communities in commemorative events such as the National Day, King Bhumibol Adulyadej’s Birthday Anniversary and the National Father’s Day on 5 December; (3) the participation of Thai communities in the ceremony in honour of His Majesty King Maha Vajiralongkorn Bodindradebayavarangkun to celebrate His Majesty’s 65<sup>th</sup> birthday anniversary on 28 July 2017.

### 5.3 Organizational capacity building

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has attached great importance to the development of knowledge and skills of staff at all levels and career paths. Additionally, considerable emphasis has been placed on the guidelines for the effective implementation of 5S Foreign Affairs Masterplan (2018-2037) in collaboration with line agencies in today’s dynamic world. This includes the development of knowledge and skills in foreign affairs for officials of relevant Thai government agencies. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has also developed and disseminated knowledge to foreign diplomats in countries that have international cooperation with Thailand, as well as to the general public. This has been done through training sessions, discussions and special lectures, study visits, internship at the Royal Development Projects of His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej and the Royal Development Study Centres. Major tasks and accomplishments throughout 2017 consisted of the following:

#### 5.3.1 Strengthening professionalism in the conduct of diplomatic and foreign services

For personnel at all levels to strengthen their diplomatic knowledge and skills vital for professional and internationally recognized practices, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, by the Devawongse Varopakarn Institute of Foreign Affairs, offered training courses for new recruits and newly posted officials, training courses for chiefs and executives, and overseas management courses for Counsellors, Minister Counsellors, Consuls-General, Ministers, and Ambassadors. The Institute also provided the following training course in 2017: (1) Diplomatic Writing and Negotiation Skills Course by Centre for Political and Diplomatic Studies (CPDS), United Kingdom, for officials of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, (2) Advanced Oral Communication Course, by Victoria University of Wellington and Auckland University of Technology, New Zealand, for officials of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and other agencies as well as state enterprise officers (3) protocol training sessions to enable government agencies and independent organizations to perform their missions

appropriately according to protocol; (4) English language training programmes for vocational teachers, and (5) Interpretation technique training session for officials of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and other agencies.

### 5.3.2 Public lectures and seminars

For diplomatic missions in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs organized various forums on key issues of global and regional interests, inviting national and international experts to share their views such as (1) a special lecture entitled “ASEAN@50: For Now and Posterity” by the Honourable Julie Bishop MP, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Australia, (2) a special lecture entitled “Thailand 4.0 From Vision to Action” by Dr. Suwit Mesintree, Minister of the Prime Minister’s Office, (3) a special lecture entitled “Staying relevant with Trump Diplomacy: Where are Japan and Asia headed?” by Professor Akiko Tanaka, an international politics expert from the Institute for Advanced Studies on Asia, Tokyo University and former President of the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), (4) a special lecture entitled “Strategies of Public Diplomacy in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century” by H.E. Mr. Meir Shlomo, Ambassador of the State of Israel to Thailand, to enhance knowledge and understanding of public diplomacy implementation strategies, especially the use of social media to reach people, (5) a seminar entitled “Government Procurement and Supplies Management According to the New Act and Related Systems” to enhance knowledge and understanding of the spirit of the law and detailed procedures to ensure accurate, transparent, effective, efficient, and accountable practice,



The special lecture entitled “ASEAN@50: For Now and Posterity” by the Hon Julie Bishop MP, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Australia, to commemorate the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of ASEAN on 3 August 2017.

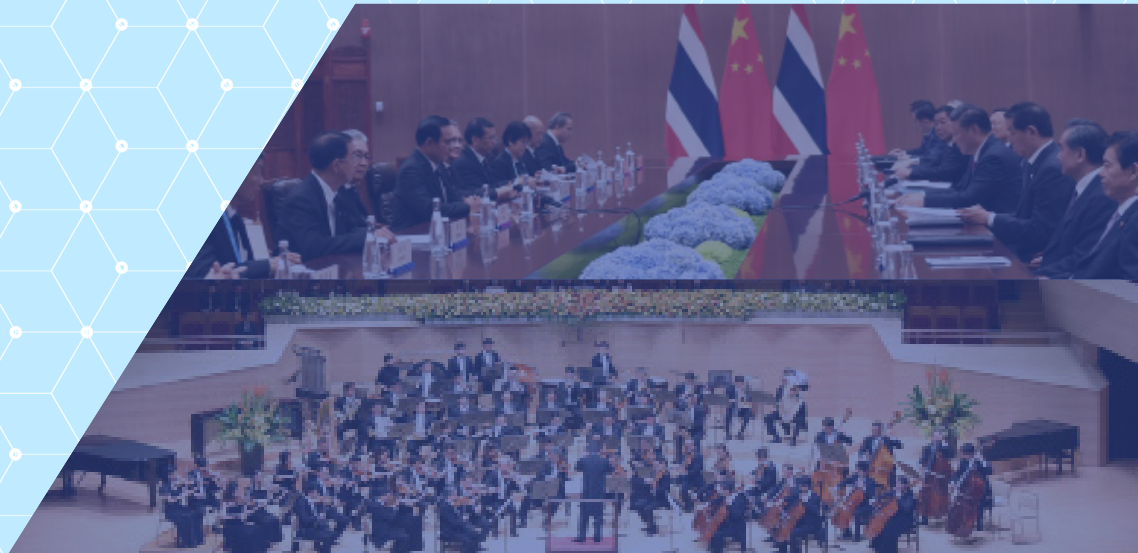
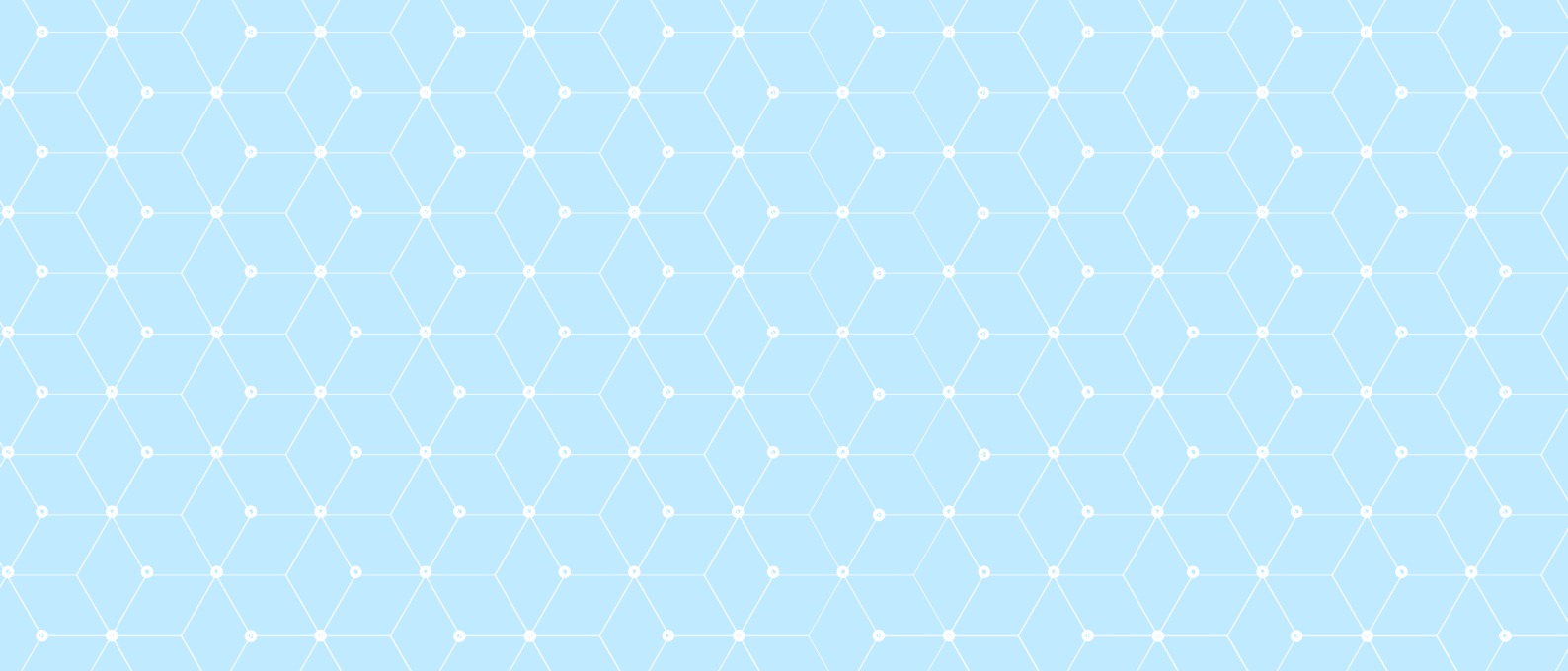


### 5.3.3 Improving operational guidelines

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs collaborated with relevant agencies, both public and private sectors, to set and improve the guidelines for permit application for diplomatic delegations to enter the restricted areas of Thai airports.









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