

Welcoming Remarks

by Mr. Danucha Pitchayanan,

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on Feb 25, 2019 (8.50 – 9.00 AM)

“Measuring population ageing: Bridging research and policy”

Mandarin Hotel, Bangkok, Thailand

Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

A very good morning and warm welcome extended to all of you, especially those who have travelled quite a distance to be here, to attend this auspicious occasion of the opening of the Expert Group Meeting on **“Measuring Population Ageing: Bridging Research and Policy.”**

The organizing of this meeting, through the close collaborative efforts of the following agencies, including:

- The United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA),
- The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP),
- The International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis (IIASA), and
- The College of Population Studies and Chula ARI, Chulalongkorn University,

is one great example of such strong commitment to addressing the inevitable demographic trend of population aging that is prevailing at both national and global

scales, and seeking appropriate countermeasure designed to adequately deal with such challenge.

As some of you may have been aware that Thailand has recently announced the National Strategy (2018-2037), which is the country's first national long-term strategy developed pursuant to the Constitution. **The National Strategy provides essential policy framework required to ensure that the country achieves its vision of becoming “a developed country with security, prosperity and sustainability in accordance with the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy”, with the ultimate goal being all Thai people's happiness and well-being and NO ONE IS LEFT BEHIND.**

Unquestionably, the issue of population aging has been included into the National Strategy as we need to address the problem in a more integrated and systematic manner, with cooperation from all development partners. The impacts of population aging will inescapably be manifested in both economic and social aspects if no proper preventative measures are in place.

As a result, as stated in the National Strategy, the utmost efforts will be exerted in order to ensure life cycle development of which Thai people of all ages can adequately be developed in a multidimensional manner to become good, skillful, and quality citizens, by equipping them with suitable knowledge and skills required by the fast changing world in the 21st Century. Also, life-long learning will be extensively promoted. Therefore, productivity will uninterruptedly be raised. Furthermore, innovation and technology will also be profoundly invested as it can effectively improve productivity further, leading to higher income per capita. Data science and technology will also be employed in order to enhance the government sector's efficiency and effectiveness. Big Data and AI technology will be used to provide data and information needed to accurately design evidence-based policies, especially

better targeting welfare and social assistance measures. Infrastructure with universal design will also be implemented nationwide. Also, social empowerment based on intergeneration solidarity will also be promoted in all local communities in order to strengthen independent management of local communities, and create viable and healthy economic and social surroundings aimed for quality citizens of all ages, who can contribute to society and nation more productively.

Ladies and Gentlemen, on behalf of Royal Thai Government, I would like to wish everyone a successful meeting, with extensive experiences and knowledge attained for further productive applications. I am certain that through cooperation of global experts in aging, both at national and international levels, I hope that this meeting can tremendously broaden our perspectives and knowledge on population aging, its related implications as well as appropriate policies in order to bring about intergenerational solidarity between the older and younger generations, one of crucial supporting factors to sustainable development.

Cooperation provided through a network among us will act as an effective tool to overcome any problems we may encounter and achieve a happy world where everyone lives happily and sustainably, with no one is truly left behind.

Thank you very much.