



**PERMANENT MISSION OF THAILAND  
TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

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**Statement**

**by**

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**before the 48<sup>th</sup> Session of the Commission on Population and Development**

**on agenda item 4: national experience in population matters: realizing the  
future we want: integrating population issues into sustainable development,  
including in the post- 2015 development agenda**

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**Building Bridges for Partnership  
THAILAND 2017-2018  
ASEAN Candidate for the UN Security Council**

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**Mr. Chairman,  
Excellencies,  
Distinguished Delegates,  
Ladies and Gentlemen.**

1. At the outset, let me congratulate you on your election as Chair of the 48<sup>th</sup> Session of the Commission on Population and Development. It is a great honour for me to deliver Thailand's country statement at the 48<sup>th</sup> Commission on Population and Development. The theme this year on integrating population issues into sustainable development is very important for Thailand in guiding the future of the post-2015 development agenda.
2. Thailand has achieved its '**demographic dividend**' with a larger share of working population and fewer dependents, one of the factors contributing to rapid economic growth in the past decades. With good coverage of family planning services in place throughout the country for more than three decades together with extensive rural development policies introduced during that time, Thai families have become smaller with only one to two children per family, young people have access to education, and **enjoy decent jobs**.
3. Yet, the **population trends in Thailand are progressing in ways that require new policy initiatives**. Thailand's population growth has slowed down considerably, and has been predicted to decline further with rapid ageing. The **changing population structure** has emerged as an issue of critical importance with long-term implications raising important planning issues with regard to adjusting to those population changes.

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4. Recognizing that **people must be at the center of sustainable development** and taking into account the **importance of inclusiveness** as well as our **firm commitment to the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) and inter-linking it to the post-2015 development agenda**, Thailand is developing a **twenty-year National Population Development Plan** to tackle emerging population concerns. The plan provided for a framework of three pillar strategies – **promotion of quality childbirths, enhancing productive workforces, and supporting active ageing**. The key content of the new population policy is adoption of the right-based approach development throughout a life-cycle to ensure that individuals in all age groups are self-reliant within secured environment and quality of life.
5. Since 2002, Thailand has been implementing the **Universal Health Coverage (UHC) Initiative**, which **covers almost all relevant sexual and reproductive health services** envisioned in the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD). Significant progress in sexual and reproductive health was achieved well before the 1994 ICPD and the 2002 UHC initiative. The **contraceptive prevalence rate for all methods** has increased from 14% in 1970, prior to the 1971 launch of the

National Family Planning Programme, to 79% in 2012. The **total fertility rate** has fallen from 5.9 children per woman in the 1970s to 1.6 in 2011.

6. Owing to sustained political commitments and effective programme implementation, **HIV was reversed from a generalized to a concentrated epidemic** between 1993 and 2006. HIV prevalence in pregnant women declined from a peak of 2.3% in 1995 to 0.5% in 2012. The investment in preventing **mother to child transmission (PMTCT)** reduced vertical transmission to 3.2% in 2011. People living with HIV have received free antiretroviral (ART) with costs covered by UHC.

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7. Despite such achievements, certain challenges persist and others have emerged. The **adolescent birth rate and unmet need for contraception among young women** have sharply increased. Further, a sharp decline in use of longer acting contraceptives, such as implants and IUDs as well as injection, has occurred during a decade of the Universal Health Coverage, due to decentralized management of the family planning programme.
8. In attempts to avoid a continued **decline in fertility** and in supporting the new National Population Development Policy, Thailand is developing the **2<sup>nd</sup> National Reproductive Health Policy** focusing on two main issues – first, to halve teenage pregnancy rate by 2025, and second, to support quality childbirths for all.
9. To improve utilization of sexual and reproductive health services by young people, the Royal Thai Government supports ready access for youth to sexual and reproductive health services not yet covered by UHC. The **1<sup>st</sup> The National Condom Policy** was introduced this year to promote the condom use for dual protection against unwanted pregnancies and HIV infection. Moreover, **comprehensive sexuality education**, including for out-of-school youth, is under review to reverse the trend of unintended pregnancies among girls, violence against women.
10. To address long-term population challenges, the Royal Thai Government is prioritizing investments in and participation of youth and adolescents as a critical component of a transformative and sustainable future agenda as **Thailand is ageing fast and reduction of working age population is underway**. More investments on adolescents suggest accelerating the effort to achieve the unfinished MDGs, in particular MDG 5b from the adolescent development perspective. In addition, a policy on **life-long learning society with investment in human capital development to promote sufficiency economy, welfare and self-reliance** is being pursued.
11. These emerging population challenges require **effective inter-sectoral actions** addressing key social determinants for autonomy and empowerment, especially of women and young

people with full engagement of men and boys, as well as families and communities, as agents of change in promoting gender equality. Thailand supports development of appropriate policies to promote the **responsibility of men and boys in promoting sexual and reproductive health and rights of all individuals.**

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12. At the regional level, the **ASEAN post-2015 visions**, which lays down ASEAN development goals, are in line with the post-2015 development agenda, placing people at the centre of development and at the same time pursuing human resource development.
13. It is timely to discuss the theme of the 48<sup>th</sup> Session of the Commission on Population and Development this week. In this regard, Thailand recognizes the importance of integrating population dynamics into planning frameworks, including investments and capacity development for knowledge and data systems involving all development sectors. We are ready to work closely with the United Nations, UNFPA and other partners and stakeholders to integrate population and development in the post-2015 development agenda, on the national, regional and global levels.

Thank you.

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