



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

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Statement

by

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at the 51st Session of Commission on Population and Development

**Priority Theme: “*Sustainable cities, Human Mobility and
International Migration*”
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Mr. Chairperson,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen.

At the outset, let me congratulate you and other members of the 51st Bureau on the election and thank the Secretary-General for his substantive report to the Commission.

My delegation aligns itself with the statement of the Group of 77 and China.

This year's special theme, entitled "Sustainable cities, Human Mobility and International Migration" is timely and highly relevant. It provides the opportunity for the Commission to discuss issues, which can contribute to the on-going negotiation of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration as well as to follow up on the relevant 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

~~Thailand supports the Commission to revitalise and synchronise itself with important on-going~~
intergovernmental processes as well as with the broader agenda of the UN. We also remain committed to achieve the specific goals set out in Programme of Action adopted by the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) in Cairo in 1994.

Mr. Chairperson,

The world, that we live in today, faces new challenges and opportunities related to population growth, changing age structures, rapid urbanization, and migration. The new demographic challenges are compounded by growing environmental pressures, including the movement of internal and international migration. According to the Secretary-General's Report "Making Migration Work for All", migration is an expanding reality. There are 258 million international migrants worldwide – 48% more than in the year 2000.

Thailand believes that international migration can contribute to economic and social development of country of origin and destination and can be beneficial for migrants themselves particularly when it takes place in a safe, orderly, and regular manner.

From the experience of my country with continued economic growth, Thailand has attracted millions of permanent and temporary migrant workers, both documented and undocumented from neighboring countries and beyond. In 2016, approximately 4 million non-Thai citizens lived in Thailand. Their contribution to Thai economy was estimated to be around 2 billion USD per annum or around 6.2% of the country's GDP.

Considering country's demographic trends and challenges ranging from declining population growth and rapid ageing society, the responsive policies and effective measures that would address these demographic changes and harness the potentials of human mobility are needed in order to promote sustained economic growth and social development. Thailand has thus developed and updated its 20-year National Population Development Plan to tackle these emerging population issues paying particular attention to achieving SDGs 5 and 11.

In addition to the MoUs on labour cooperation with neighbouring countries, in 2014, the Government launched a program to register and regularize undocumented migrant workers in Thailand aiming to provide them with better labour protection and wider access to basic social services.

Promoting equitable, affordable access to basic social infrastructure such as health services, public transportation, schooling that works in practice, in our view, will contribute to sustainable cities and bring about positive impacts from human mobility. Building on the solid basis of our Universal Health Coverage scheme, the cabinet has endorsed a Compulsory Migrant Health Insurance scheme since 2001 and has been registering undocumented migrants in many big cities and provinces ever since. Insurance package for migrant workers costs 44 USD and 11 USD per year for adult and their depending child aged less than 7 years old respectively. The benefits include maternal and child health services, and vaccination, which is similar to the Public Health insurance benefit package for a Thai person. In terms of access to education, children of migrants are also eligible for 9-year basic education in Thailand, regardless of their nationality and/or legal status.

This is a part of our continued efforts to manage migration phenomenon that we face, which, at the same time, helps promote social inclusion and sustain host communities and cities while avoiding strain on the national social services.

We are of the view that it is important for any given society to find ways to address the demographic changes in a comprehensive, well-planned and balanced manner. We also believe that this is one of the real test cases nowadays of mainstreaming SDGs into national policies so no one will be left behind.

Mr. Chairperson,

Demographic changes and migration realities within and across many regions around the globe have significant implications for sustainable development. Thailand stands ready to work with partners and multi-stakeholders to invest together in population development. We believe that this investment must aim to improve people's well-being and productivity, both for migrants and people in communities, that host the migrants and at home. Concerted efforts should also be put in capacity building, technical cooperation, and sharing of best practices among countries and various stakeholders on policies, measures, and data collection that will help promote sustainable cities, human mobility, and international migration. All of which will also assist countries and communities in the achievement of the related SDGs.

We hope that the review of ICPD and the discussion in this session will efficiently support the deliberation and help strengthen the implementation of the GCM. We also hope that it will create a good basis for our long-term and comprehensive cooperation in advancing the relevant 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

I thank you.
