



**PERMANENT MISSION OF THAILAND
TO THE UNITED NATIONS
351 EAST 52nd STREET · NEW YORK, NY 10022
TEL (212) 754-2230 • FAX (212) 688-3029**

Statement

by

**H.E. Mr. Vitavas Srivihok
Ambassador and Permanent Representative
of the Kingdom of Thailand**

**at the fifty-second session of the
Commission on Population and Development**

Agenda Item 3: General debate

New York, 2 April 2019

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Mr. Chair,
Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates,

1. My delegation wishes to align itself with the statement made by the distinguished representative of the State of Palestine, on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.
2. We would also like to congratulate you, Mr. Chair, and the other members of the Bureau on your elections, and to express appreciation for your able guidance and the effort shown by this Bureau, in guiding us through this year's adoption of a political declaration, the first of its kind under the CPD framework, as we celebrate the twenty-fifth anniversary of the ICPD.
3. This session therefore provides us with a unique opportunity to reaffirm our commitments towards the effective implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
4. The ICPD Programme of Action was an advance and comprehensive document ahead of its time. One thing we have learned, and as experiences have taught us, are that, first, in order for the people to truly benefit from any positive change, they themselves must be the change.
5. To that end, the people must first be empowered from within. They first need to have access to food and nutrition. They must also be educated. They must first be able to maintain their good health, both physically and mentally. They must first attain the level of a standard of living sufficient for them to become a positive change in their own community. At the same time, it is every government's duty to create an enabling and conducive environment for their people to develop and to thrive, remove any barriers to such development and empowerment, and leave no one behind.
6. In order to achieve the goals that we have set, governments need reliable and evidence-based information and data to understand and know their own population. Every piece of the interlinked global agenda must all be taken into account in a comprehensive manner when designing development policies. Existing gaps are many times the result of disregard of these intrinsic links when it is translated into action.

Mr. Chair,

7. My delegation wishes to underline one key point that was highlighted time and again in the SG's report, that is, the issue of health. Half of the world's population today, a large portion of which is women and girls, still do not have access to the basic health services that they need. Moreover, millions get pushed into poverty because of out-of-pocket payment on medical expenses. We cannot let this continue. Health is a human right. No one should ever be denied or prevented from access to treatment or other basic necessary health services when they are in need, in particular those with specific needs as well as those who are often neglected, be they women, girls, adolescents, youth, older

persons, persons with disabilities, or migrants. And the list goes on. Because health is a human right. Health is a long-term investment in the human capital. Health is people's empowerment.

Mr. Chair,

8. Amongst the many challenges that still remain, we will continue to improve. We will spare no effort to sustain what we have already achieved, and continue to do better for our people, in particular to ensure quality education and equitable access to affordable medicines and basic health services for all at all ages. We will also make every effort to make the best use of ICT and increase availability of other innovative modern technologies.
9. Thailand remains strongly committed and stands ready to work with all Member States at the United Nations towards our shared objectives and common goals, in this Commission, in ECOSOC, and elsewhere. At the regional level, as current Chair of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), please rest assured of Thailand's commitment to further strengthen our joint efforts in advancing the population and development agenda and in truly achieving the SDGs that leaves no one behind.

I thank you.
