



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

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**Statement**

**by**

**H.E. Dr. Kantathi Suphamongkhon**

**Minister of Foreign Affairs of Thailand**

**at the General Debate**

**of the 60<sup>th</sup> Session of the UN General Assembly**

**New York, 18 September 2005**

**Please check against delivery**

Mr. President,

On behalf of the delegation of Thailand, I would like to congratulate you on your election as President of the 60<sup>th</sup> Session of the General Assembly. The General Assembly's task this year is as crucial as the one President Jean Ping, your predecessor, has just completed. My delegation truly appreciates the strong leadership of President Ping during one of the most challenging periods for the United Nations. My delegation's appreciation also goes to the Secretary-General for his tireless efforts and active role.

Mr. President,

Permit me at the outset to express my heartfelt condolences to the American people for the devastation caused by Hurricane Katrina. Having ourselves suffered from the Asian tsunami last December, our hearts are truly with the American people.

In the aftermath of the tsunami, we were deeply touched by the outpouring of support coming to us from around the world. Our friends were determined to do everything possible to help us get through our darkest days. The Thai people shared this spirit and we also offered a lending hand to our neighbours suffering from the same calamity. We are seeing the same spirit of shared responsibility coming to the United States from all over the world in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. We need to move forward with this same spirit, this same sense of shared responsibility, as we tackle the old and new challenges of our modern world of globalisation.

There is certainly much to do. In many countries, extreme poverty, hunger, famine, deadly infectious diseases and environmental degradation continue to do damage. They are silent killers. We cannot and must not ignore them.

Each day, 50,000 people continue to perish from poverty and hunger. 30,000 children would not survive to celebrate their fifth birthday. Yet, money being spent on arms and weapons continues to outpace money being spent on sustaining lives. This is unacceptable.

Mr. President,

Sixty years ago, the desire to achieve unity in diversity with shared responsibility led to the creation of the United Nations. Now at sixty, the United Nations is living in a world very different from the one back in 1945. Today, challenges to human security and economic development can be just as dangerous to the international community as the traditional challenges in the form of military conflicts. The United Nations must be able to act effectively to serve the peoples of the world.

The Outcome Document which has been adopted by the High-level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly reflects the shared commitment of world leaders to

development, peace and security as well as human rights and human dignity. It sets the stage for the attainment of peace and prosperity throughout the world.

As difficult as it was to reach a consensus on the Outcome Document, I trust that it will be even more difficult to translate this consensus into concrete action. The road ahead will not be an easy one to travel on. We need to keep focused on our common aspirations as we encounter the difficulties that lie ahead.

Thailand wants to work with the United Nations and with all Member States to ensure that the vision of our leaders and the aspirations of our peoples lead to concrete results. We will actively participate in addressing issues such as the revitalisation of the General Assembly, the strengthening of the Economic and Social Council, the reform of the Security Council and the establishment of the Human Rights Council.

We see merit in the idea of collective responsibility to protect people from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity. To achieve lasting peace and prosperity, Thailand strongly supports the establishment of the Peacebuilding Commission as a mechanism to ensure that post-conflict recovery and development will be sustained. We also want to see extensive management reform to make the Secretariat more efficient, more effective, and also more accountable.

Mr. President,

We must redouble our efforts to break the vicious cycle of poverty, diseases, and conflicts. The challenge of our time is to make peace, prosperity, dignity and freedom common to all. As Chair of the Human Security Network, we are pleased that a human-centred approach to security has been embraced as an integral part of the new collective security consensus.

Mr. President,

The eradication of poverty must not be only a dream. We must make it happen. The United Nations must mobilise all relevant agencies and marshal resources to help developing countries develop in a sustainable way. Developing countries must be able to identify and leverage their inner strengths, their comparative advantages. Capacity building and technical assistance should be readily available. With the right policy and strategy, accompanied by the existence of appropriate infrastructure, developing countries can leapfrog up the development ladder in our modern world by making full use of globalisation.

In this connection, we in Thailand have adopted a people-centred development policy which stands side by side with democracy and good governance. At the international level, we are actively pursuing trade and investment liberalisation. This is our Dual-Track Policy.

National efforts must be backed by a supportive global environment. This means making international trade free and fair so that it can be an effective engine for sustainable development.

When we talk about free trade, we must be mindful that not everyone is equally fit to compete in the same free competition. Two days ago, from this same podium, my Prime Minister emphasised that a patient who has just been released from the intensive care unit of a hospital cannot run a race under the same rules and conditions as a fit athlete. This is so true.

Thailand welcomes the reaffirmation of the Monterrey Consensus and other proposals on innovative financing for development. Financial assistance given to developing countries must go towards empowering the recipient countries. We must avoid creating more dependency traps. We must work together on the basis of partnership for sustainable development.

Partnership is also vital in the area of energy. The rapid rise in global oil price hurts development badly and has a potential to roll back many hard-won gains of developing countries. The higher the oil price, the longer it will take for many developing countries to realise the Millennium Development Goals. The United Nations should help mobilise world-wide cooperation to ensure energy security as well as to develop alternative sources of clean energy.

Mr. President,

The United Nations must also do more to promote synergy among Member States through the facilitation of partnership building, such as North-South, South-South and trilateral cooperations. We want to see a new and enhanced strategic partnership for development between the United Nations and its Member States.

In Southeast Asia, this is the spirit that is transforming the region. On our part, Thailand has been reaching out to forge partnerships for development worldwide. Through regional cooperation for development initiatives like the Ayeyawady-Chao Phraya-Mekong Economic Cooperation Strategy (ACMECS), the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) and the Asia Cooperation Dialogue (ACD), Thailand is constructing layers of building blocks that support the development work of the United Nations.

We have shown through our actions that assistance for development is not just a one-way road from North to South. Countries in the South can significantly help one another to prosper together through South-South Cooperation. Here, we in Thailand have been working closely with other developing countries, sharing our experiences and best practices, especially in areas where Thailand has expertise, such as agricultural development and public health.

Mr. President,

Marginalisation breeds resentment and anger, both of which are fertile grounds for extremism to flourish. Development helps prevent this. Putting a human face on globalization is as vital as it is urgent. Together, we can create a conducive environment for turning back the tide of violent extremism and discrediting the appeal of terrorism.

Religious and cultural identities must also be recognised and respected. This is unity in diversity. This is the path of moderation and understanding. This is also a peaceful way to fight violence and terrorism. Here, we must condemn terrorism "in all its forms and manifestations, committed by whoever, wherever and for whatever purposes."

Mr. President,

We have so much on our agenda. The road ahead will not be an easy one. We must work together to ensure that we can build strength from diversity with a strong sense of shared responsibility.

Let us make the United Nations truly serve the people, no matter who they are and no matter where they are. Let us ensure that, "we, the peoples of the United Nations" can truly live our lives in larger freedom as it was envisioned by our Founding Fathers sixty years ago.

Thank you, Mr. President.

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