



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

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**Statement**

**by**

**H.E. Mr. Virasakdi Futrakul**

**Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Thailand**

**during**

**the High-Level Segment of**

**the Thirty-Fourth Session of the Human Rights Council**

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**Geneva**

**Mr. Vice-President,**

**Excellencies,**

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

1. We gather here to reaffirm our commitment to promote and encourage respect for human rights with a view to effecting positive change on the ground. Much has indeed been achieved since the Human Rights Council was established eleven years ago. Yet, while the Council has agreed on many issues, there continues to be divergent views on many others, especially given the new challenges faced and the evolving environment in which we live. On several occasions, this has led to polarization within the Council.
2. We therefore need to always remind ourselves that human rights are universal. Respect for human rights is not exclusive to the North or to the South.
3. Human rights are inherent to all human beings, regardless of nationality, origin, colour, language, or other status. It is embedded in all religions, societies, and cultures.
4. We must also remember that the promotion and protection of human rights should be based on the principles of cooperation and genuine dialogue. Indeed, this is how we need to address one of today's most serious challenges, that of the migration crisis.
5. Too little progress has thus far been made in tackling the root causes of irregular migration. We struggle in adhering to the fundamental human rights and humanitarian principles as we try to cope with millions of peoples fleeing from their homes and moving across borders. Meanwhile, many countries, big and small, rich and poor, are also struggling with their own internal problems and domestic complexities.
6. In such a situation, it is important that we also remind ourselves that naming and shaming will lead us nowhere. Rather, we need to use the Council constructively as a venue for us to enter into dialogue, to learn and to cooperate with one another.

**So what more can we do?**

7. **First**, we must work on **creating the right mindset**. We must instill values and encourage a positive attitude of embracing human rights among the general public, starting from the younger generation as it is they who will shape the future direction of our societies. What kind of world will they live in, if we as their parents do not show them that, as human beings, we must care and look out for each other.
8. **Second**, we need to **ensure that social media does not divide but unite us**. We must use social media and technology to connect and to educate, particularly on human rights education. At the same time, we have to minimise its risks of being exploited to harass others or to incite hatred and divisiveness in society.
9. **Third**, governments should **engage more with various stakeholders** in society, including the private sector and civil society. We must encourage them to participate in efforts to promote and protect human rights. This will help widen and deepen the multi-sectoral impact on the ground.
10. **Fourth**, we **must promote more dialogue as well as a more inclusive and constructive approach in the Council**. This is crucial if the Council is to agree on outcomes that will not be ignored but implemented in an effective manner to promote and protect human rights.
11. **Fifth**, we should **share experiences and help each other in building capacities to ensure the effective implementation of our human rights obligations**.  
Development of human rights is a gradual and incremental process. It takes patience and commitment. This is exactly why Thailand has tabled a resolution every year on the enhancement of technical cooperation and capacity building in the field of human rights.

**Mr. Vice-President,**

12. On our part, we in Thailand have also been building capacities within our own country. After our second cycle Universal Periodic Review last year, the Thai Cabinet recently endorsed a Plan of Action to implement recommendations accepted and voluntary pledges we made during our review.

13. Inspired and guided by His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej's Sufficiency Economy Philosophy, the Royal Thai Government has been working on promoting people-centered development to empower individuals and communities, promote the right to development, strengthen social protection system, and ensure equal opportunities, including equal access to justice, for all.
14. We also attach high importance to the development of our human capital. We will therefore continue to implement our Universal Health Coverage and Education for All policies. These policies also extend to migrants because we believe that good health and education are fundamental to enhancing the quality of people's lives, enabling them to contribute meaningfully in the societies in which they live.
15. Over the past year, there have also been several other positive developments in Thailand.
16. In October last year, we withdrew our reservation to Article 4 of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD) related to the prohibition of incitement of racial hatred.
17. This past December, the Thai Cabinet approved a resolution on Guidance and Measures to address Legal Status Problems and Problems of Stateless Persons in Thailand, of which 80,000 stateless children could benefit and be eligible to apply for Thai nationality.
18. At the end of last year, the Juvenile and Family Court in our Chiang Rai province set a precedent with its order to grant protection for a 16 year-old Somali boy, who had escaped from an armed group recruiting child soldiers back home. The boy is currently under a one-year rehabilitation plan and can attend school classes without fear of being charged for illegal entry while he is waiting to be resettled to a third country.
19. Last month, the Thai cabinet approved in principle a proposal to amend the Immigration Act and to set up a screening mechanism. Further discussions will be held among the agencies concerned with the aim of putting in place a system that can better look after those in genuine need of protection.

20. To protect children who are most vulnerable, Centres to Prevent Internet Crime against Children have been set up in major provinces to tackle all acts related to child abuses on the internet, following the enactment of the Amendment of the Criminal Code to criminalise child pornography of 2015.
21. We also have a new Constitution that was approved in a referendum last August, which reaffirms, among other things, the principle of equal rights and protection under the law, non-discrimination, prohibition of torture, and freedom of religious belief.

**Mr. Vice-President,**

22. These are just some of the progress we have achieved over the past year.
23. Looking ahead, please rest assured that the Royal Thai Government will continue to do its best to ensure human rights improvements on the ground. We also remain fully committed to supporting the work of the Council to promote and protect human rights around the world.

**I thank you, Mr. Vice-President.**