

**STATEMENT OF MS. PITIKAN SITHIDEJ
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OF THE RIGHTS AND LIBERTIES PROTECTION DEPARTMENT
MINISTRY OF JUSTICE, THAILAND
NATIONAL ACTION PLANS AND ACCESS TO REMEDY
2017 UN FORUM ON BUSINESS AND HUMAN RIGHTS
WEDNESDAY 29th NOVEMBER 2017
GENEVA, SWITZERLAND**

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Mr. Chair,

1. On behalf of the Royal Thai Government, I am delighted to inform that we are on course with our plan to draft Thailand’s *National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights (NAP)*. A number of steps have been taken. Our NAP is expected to be completed and officially launched in August next year. Please allow me to share our experiences and views regarding the development of NAP.

2. Firstly, we need to have everyone on board. We have to ensure multi-stakeholder engagement and, with it, their ownership. As the starting point, a national committee has been established to move forward the business and human rights agenda. A series of dialogues, regional consultations and seminars with different bodies and stakeholders have been conducted to make sure that their voices are heard. The Declaration on Cooperation to Promote the UNGP was also signed – with the Prime Minister’s presence - by relevant ministries, business chambers, the National Human Rights Commission, and the Global Compact Network Thailand in May this year.

3. Secondly, the political will and commitment is also key. In our case, the Prime Minister has reaffirmed during various public events a strong political will

and personal engagement for the promotion of all three pillars of the UNGP. Last week, the Cabinet approved the announcement of human rights as the national agenda to drive forward the innovation-oriented Thailand 4.0 policy in support of sustainable development, putting clearly a priority to business and human rights.

4. Thirdly, we have to promote capacity-building and training for relevant officials in both public and private sectors. This has to start from the early stage of preparation of the NAP. My department, for instance, has organized forums to disseminate knowledge on the UNGP, not only in Bangkok but also at the local and regional levels.

5. Fourthly, we have found international cooperation very constructive and useful. As one of the first countries in Southeast Asia to work on developing a NAP, we encourage the sharing of experiences and good practices in promoting the UNGP in the region and beyond.

Mr. Chair,

6. Of the UNGP, we'd like to emphasize that the third pillar always has to go hand-in-hand with the first two pillars. We believe that our efforts would be only symbolic, could the victims not be adequately compensated.

7. The government has taken numerous steps to ensure victims' access to effective judicial and non-judicial remedies. We have been steadily reforming legislations, particularly the Human Trafficking Criminal Procedure Act of 2016 to enhance victim's access to remedy and to give power to the court to award punitive damages and the amendment of the Civil Procedure Code to include class-action lawsuit provisions in 2015.

8. Another area of Thailand's strength is the timely delivery of justice without discrimination. Thanks to a strict case management policy, trials have been accelerated. In the first half of 2017, 99% of cases at the Court of First Instance and the Court of Appeal were adjudicated within one year.

9. Our success stories can also be found in the establishment of the Justice Fund and the Anti-Trafficking Fund. These funds provide victims not only monetary remedies but also necessary assistance for victims, such as rehabilitation, reparation, and reintegration to the society.

10. It is our task to streamline and modify the existing mechanisms. Indeed, there is a need for business enterprises – and not just States – to “walk the talk” on realizing effective remedies. Several companies in Thailand have taken proactive and voluntary actions by creating a channel to receive complaints and provide remedy out of court.

11. In closing, it is through our collective effort that can push forward the change that we want to see in the world. It is us, all of us together, who can turn the UNGP into something more than a set of principles. It is us who bear the responsibility of turning the UNGP into a reality.

12. Thank you.