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PERMANENT MISSION OF THAILAND  
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The Permanent Mission of Thailand to the United Nations and other International Organizations in Geneva presents its compliments to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and has the honour to refer to the Office's Note Ref. OHCHR/TESPRD/HRESI dated 5 September 2017 requesting information regarding the country's best practices and measures to ensure access to birth registration, particularly for children in situation of risk and marginalized, for the preparation of the High Commissioner's Report pursuant to the Human Rights Council resolution 34/15.

In this connection, the Permanent Mission of Thailand has further the honour to forward herewith the response as prepared by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Thailand according to the information received from the Ministry of Interior and other relevant agencies. The same information in electronic format has also been sent to [registry@ohchr.org](mailto:registry@ohchr.org) and [iguerras-delgado@ohchr.org](mailto:iguerras-delgado@ohchr.org).

The Permanent Mission of Thailand to the United Nations and other International Organizations in Geneva avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights the assurances of its high consideration.

Geneva, 10 October B.E. 2560 (2017)



Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights,  
GENEVA.

## **Thailand's measures to promote birth registration and reduce vulnerability to statelessness**

- Legal identity serves as basic assurance of rights, protection, and access to public services. It also minimizes risk of being abused and exploited. Birth registration for all is a universally recognized method of promoting legal identity.

- Thailand has been successful in its efforts to promote birth registration for all. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) praised Thailand for its 99% birth registration rate in 2016. This puts Thailand in front of other countries in ASEAN and Asia.

- Success is partly a result of (1) the implementation of the Registration of Residential Inhabitant Act B.E. 2534 (1991) and its Amendment B.E. 2551 (2008), which provide birth registration and birth certificate to all children born in Thailand, and (2) projects to identify legal status of unregistered stateless people by voluntary DNA testing and to solve registration problems for those living in highlands, including children of displaced persons born in temporary shelters. The results thus far has been remarkable in term of the provision of legal identity to more than 460,000 people from various vulnerable groups, including no less than 46,000 people living in highlands, since 2013.

- Issuing birth certificates is, among others, one of the pledges that the Prime Minister of Thailand announced at the President Obama's Refugee Summit during the 71st Session of the United Nations General Assembly on 20 September 2016 in New York. Thailand thus continues to meet and fulfill our responsibility in this regard.

- The Ministry of Interior and its agencies have rigorously carried out birth registration, in particular for displaced people from Myanmar who are currently residing in the 9 temporary shelters in Thailand. This is highly beneficial to the displaced people as it is one of the essential documents to prove their legal identity in order to facilitate their eventual voluntary return to Myanmar. Since 2010, 13,051 children have had their birth registered in temporary shelters with the relevant authorities.

- Birth registration opens doors to other fundamental rights, including residential right and right to apply for nationality. The Royal Thai Government is regularly improving its administrative procedures on granting nationality to stateless people, as well as preventing statelessness.

- On 7 December 2016, the Cabinet approved 2 resolutions to further address the issue of statelessness and promote the rights of stateless persons in Thailand.

- The first resolution specifies the status and conditions to stay in Thailand for persons who are born in Thailand but do not possess Thai nationality. It grants foreign children born in Thailand the right to legally stay in Thailand, following the rights of their parents, and preventing them from being criminalised as illegal immigrants. This policy can potentially grant access to Thai nationality for up to 80,000 children, especially those living in the highlands and hinterlands in Thailand.

- The second resolution enables foreign children born in Thailand to apply for Thai nationality, given the conditions of either their parents are from ethnic minority groups who were registered with the Ministry of Interior and have lived in Thailand for not less than 15 years, or their parents are from other groups but the children themselves have received a bachelor's degree or equivalent in Thailand. Children who are currently studying can also apply for Thai nationality to the Minister of Interior. Abandoned children can also apply if they have lived in Thailand not less

than 10 years, certified by relevant agencies under the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security.

- Thailand also recognises that local Government officials are crucial in the successful implementation of measures relating to the granting of Thai nationality and birth registration, and thus representing an important factor in reducing and ending statelessness. Therefore, we have been focusing our attention on capacity building for our local officers with a view to ensuring that they effectively and efficiently carry out their duties. One of the key measures is the drafting and publishing of the Handbook of Civil Registration and Nationality in 2005, in close collaboration with the UNHCR, of which 10,000 copies were distributed to relevant local Government officials in all provinces of Thailand. The Ministry of Interior is presently consulting with the UNHCR to update and improve this Handbook and will be distributed for further use in the field once finalized.

- These efforts, among others, reflect our firm commitments to implement the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD), and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR). The Royal Thai Government will continue to consider improving our efforts and where appropriate, further amend relevant national legislations, as well as providing greater access to individual documentation services, including late birth registration, to build on our progress in reducing vulnerability to statelessness.

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Department of International Organizations  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Thailand  
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