

**Statement by**  
**H.E. Mr. Thani Thongphakdi**  
**Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Thailand**  
**to the United Nations Office and other International Organizations in Geneva**  
**at the 101<sup>st</sup> Session of the IOM Council**  
**29 November 2012**

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Mr. Chairman,  
Mr. Director-General,  
Distinguished Delegates,

Allow me to begin by congratulating you, Mr. Chairman, upon your election to the Chairmanship of the 101<sup>st</sup> session of the IOM Council.

I wish also to thank the Director-General for his presentation. Under his skilful leadership, the IOM continues to be at the forefront in promoting international action on migration issues. More importantly, this process is done in the spirit of dialogue and consultation with member states and other interested parties. In that same spirit, I wish to welcome Myanmar, our close ASEAN friend and neighbour, as well as St. Vincent and the Grenadines as new members.

Mr. Chairman,

Globalization and regional integration have transformed significantly the world in which we live. In Southeast Asia, for example, preparations are well advanced for the realization of the ASEAN Community by 2015 that will see a greater mobility of over 600 million people.

This enhanced connectivity, however, brings with it both opportunities and challenges.

It is therefore incumbent upon us to find **creative and forward-looking** migration arrangements at the national, regional and global levels that will best respond to this changing reality. In our view, such arrangements should maximize the benefits of migration not only for the migrants themselves, but also for the development of their countries of origin and destination.

Equally important, those arrangements must be effective in terms of management and in keeping out criminal networks, while ensuring that those fallen victim to criminal activities are provided adequate assistance and protection.

With this in mind, Thailand values the IOM's leading role in shaping the global agenda on migration. We support preparations for the Second High Level Dialogue on International Migration and Development and will work to ensure that there is concrete follow-up.

Thailand also welcomes the fruitful discussion at the Sixth Global Forum on Migration and Development in Mauritius. We are committed to continuing our constructive role under this Forum, and in the regional consultative processes on migration (RCPs). At the national level, Thailand looks to strengthen our ongoing technical cooperation with the IOM, including on policy and legislation issues.

Mr. Chairman,

Thailand considers the prevention and suppression of transnational organized crime as a matter of national priority. In particular, we are committed to eliminating human trafficking. Our strategy encompasses the pre-requisites of prevention, prosecution, protection, policy and partnership, with special attention given to those in vulnerable groups, especially women and children. The Thai authorities are paying serious attention to ensuring that those engaged in this worst form of human indignity are duly punished.

That notwithstanding, viable solutions to human trafficking and other transnational crime in people movements require collective international efforts. And this is where Thailand encourages the IOM to play a greater role.

Within the Bali Process, the IOM's further involvement could include more promotion and exchange of best practices as well as capacity building activities for frontline officials. In the meantime, we look forward to the workshop on the ratification and implementation of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC) and its two Protocols that will be held in Thailand next month with the IOM's strong support and that of other partners. We also wish to place on record our appreciation for IOM's contribution to the work of the Bali Process Regional Support Office (RSO) recently opened in Bangkok, and look forward to an active work program that will serve the common interest of all members.

Mr. Chairman,

Thailand will continue to support the role of the IOM in assisting migrants in distress as well as those who have been forcibly displaced. We are encouraged that the IOM continues to build on the strengths of its flexible and pragmatic approach as well as its close cooperation with humanitarian partners. This has ensured prompt assistance on the ground for those in need in emergency situations. On this note, Thailand supports the Migration Crisis Operation Framework as a way to further enhance the role of the IOM in responding to migration crisis.

Thailand also appreciates the IOM’s work in facilitating third-country resettlement and return of foreign nationals from our country. The positive and irreversible progress in Myanmar during the past few years provides a new dynamic for the protracted displacement along our border. Thailand will continue to discuss with all stakeholders preparations for possible scenarios, including return scenarios for those who have been displaced. We look forward to enhancing engagement on this and other related issues with the IOM and other partners.

Mr. Chairman,

Thailand will continue to be a strong partner of the IOM in promoting orderly and humane migration management. We look forward to strengthening our longstanding partnership in the years to come.

Thank you.

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