

**Statement by the Delegation of Thailand**

H.E. Mr. Thani Thongphakdi  
Ambassador and Permanent Representative  
during Agenda Item 10: General Debate  
at the 107<sup>th</sup> Session of the IOM Council  
on Wednesday 7 December 2016 from 10.30 hrs. to 13.00 hrs.  
in Room XVII of the Palais des Nations in Geneva

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Mr. Chairman,

At the outset, allow me to join others in congratulating you upon assuming the chairmanship of the Council. I wish to assure you of our full support and cooperation to advance to work of the IOM.

Thailand also wishes to congratulate the IOM on becoming a **“related organization” of the United Nations.** This status is a clear recognition of the IOM’s leading role and significant achievements in the field of migration over the past 65 years. Thailand is confident that the new enhanced relationship with the UN will help strengthen the organization’s work to address global migration in a more effective and comprehensive manner.

Mr. Chairman,

Migration is one of the defining issues of this century. Today, we have witnessed unprecedented flows of irregular migration in many different parts of the world, posing **multifaceted challenges** to countries and high risks to human lives.

To make a real difference in addressing the current migration crisis, Thailand fully supports the principle of **equitable international burden-sharing** and stresses the urgent need for a collective response to **support first-asylum countries**, as highlighted in the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants.

We stand ready to cooperate with other Member States, relevant UN agencies as well as international and regional organizations in the development of a **Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration**. We encourage the IOM to take an active role in

the development and the eventual adoption of the Global Compact in 2018 and to continue to share **technical and policy expertise** with all stakeholders, including the private sector and civil society.

Mr. Chairman,

Thailand has a **long-standing humanitarian tradition**. We have provided care to vulnerable groups, including regular and irregular migrants. Our focus is, in addition to **humanitarian assistance**, on the need to solve problems at its **root causes**, especially by providing **development assistance** to both host countries and countries of origin, to ensure sustainability.

Last year, we witnessed many incidents of irregular migration and human trafficking in the Indian Ocean. We responded quickly and contributed 100,000 US dollars to the IOM to implement the **“Regional Information Campaign on Irregular Migration in the Indian Ocean”** in the most affected countries in the region to send a strong message to criminal networks and create awareness among would-be irregular migrants.

On another front, Thailand currently hosts over **103,000 displaced persons from Myanmar** in the nine temporary shelters along our borders. We appreciate the facilitating role of the IOM and other relevant partners in helping us improve the livelihoods of this vulnerable population.

In October this year, Thailand and Myanmar successfully organized the **return of the first pilot group of 71 displaced persons** back to Myanmar. This repatriation was carried out under the **principles of safety, voluntariness, dignity and sustainability**, under the true spirit of humanitarianism.

Thailand hopes that this pilot project will be an **important catalyst for the eventual return** of the remaining displaced persons. We will work closely with Myanmar to ensure that those who have returned are well taken care of, and are given the rights and access to services on par with the regular citizens of Myanmar.

Emerging infectious diseases and health threats affect the productivity and overall positive contribution of migration. As Thailand will assume the **2017 chairmanship of the Foreign Policy and Global Health (FPGH) group**, we plan to host the **FPGH Retreat on “Addressing the Health of Vulnerable Populations for an Inclusive Society”** early next year to discuss the issue of **health of the vulnerable groups, including migrants**. We are committed to providing better access to health services to all migrants, as we believe that this is key to integrating them in our society.

Mr. Chairman,

In closing, we wish to reaffirm our commitment to cooperate with the IOM, other Member States, and Observers in developing a **Global Compact for Safe, Orderly, and Regular Migration**. We look forward to working with all stakeholders to provide humanitarian assistance and to find a durable solution to the challenges that all migrants, regardless of their nationality and status, face in the world today.

I Thank you.

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