

Statement by the Delegation of Thailand

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(5 minutes)

Mr. Chairman,
His Excellency Mr. António Vitorino, IOM Director General,
Excellencies, Distinguished delegates,

1. At the outset, Thailand thanks IOM for the tireless work and dedication in dealing with migration issues globally. We are confident that IOM will continue to fulfill its founding principle of “humane and orderly migration for benefit of all”.
2. As country of origin, transit and destination and host of thousands of displaced persons from neighboring countries for nearly four decades, Thailand learned that migration is a complex issue and involves various dimensions. Along the way, IOM has been our valuable partner in coping with migration challenges, which I reaffirm our partnership will continue in the years ahead. Thailand, particularly my Ministry of Interior, appreciates the Resettlement and Voluntary Return Program where IOM provides logistical support and the medical check-up for the Myanmar displaced persons before departure.

Mr. Chairman,

3. Thailand welcomes the recent visit of the Director-General to Thailand earlier this month, during which various issues were discussed including the MOU between the Ministry of Public Health and IOM Thailand. The MOU has just been signed one week after the visit. It focuses on ensuring access to health care and services for migrant workers in Thailand under our Universal Health Coverage policy

that provides different schemes of health care and services tailored for migrants.

4. Thailand's efforts in addressing migration challenges also cover the following four areas. First is about education. We continue to effectively implement the cabinet resolution in 2005 where migrant children residing in Thailand can enroll in Thai schools. We are trying to narrow the gap that would hinder them from enrollment such as covering their tuition fees and related expenses or combating discrimination.
5. Secondly, Our no-child-detention policy has been materialized into the "*MOU on the Determination of Measures and Approaches Alternative to Detention of Children in Immigration Detention Centres*" signed by relevant Thai agencies early this year. Now migrant children and mothers are out of detention centers systematically based on the best interests of the child, and an Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) attached to the MoU has also been officially put in place for coherent MOU implementation.
6. Third, we continue to tackle the risk of migrants, women in particular, being exploited and trafficked. Victims of trafficking are entitled to stay in shelters run by either the government or NGO and are provided with opportunity to earn income. The Anti-Human Trafficking Act has also been recently amended to improve the effectiveness of measures to prevent and suppress forced labour in line with international standards.
7. Fourth, Thailand has put in place MOUs on labour cooperation with neighbouring countries which help expand legal pathways for migration. As of September 2019, there are almost a million migrant workers in Thailand under such MoU arrangements.

Mr. Chairman,

8. On the regional and international fronts, we have actively participated in regional consultative process such as Bali Process to address regional challenges, particularly irregular migration and trafficking in persons. Moreover, we value important works undertaken by the Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD) as we share the same view that migrants contribute largely to the socio-economic development of the countries involved. In this regard, we thank IOM for providing support to the Regional Support Office (RSO) of the Bali Process located in Thailand and to the GFMD's Support Unit in Geneva.
9. As ASEAN Chair, Thailand is pleased with the adoption last month of the **ASEAN Declaration on the Rights of Children in the Context of Migration**. Recognizing the vulnerability of children in the context of migration, the Declaration reaffirms our region's efforts to protect those affected by migration, particularly children who have specific needs, and ensure the protection of their rights and access to services.
10. On the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM), Thailand is working on putting words into action. All ongoing efforts already mentioned are indeed in line with the objectives of GCM. A National Working Group has been established and already met twice this year to make sure that our whole-of-government approach to implement GCM is effectively pursued.
11. We have been closely following the development of the UN Network on Migration led by IOM. We welcome the Asia-Pacific regional network to be set up in Bangkok and are now considering having a GCM national implementation plan in cooperation with the Network.
12. Furthermore, Thailand is going through internal process to officially announce our financial contribution to the Start-Up Fund for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration. We encourage other Member States

and relevant stakeholders to consider supporting the Fund to ensure robust and effective GCM implementation for better global migration governance.

Mr. Chairman,

13. In closing, since migration is cross-cutting, IOM's role has become more vital in addressing migration challenges effectively and collectively. Likewise, strong commitment from all Member States and stakeholders to support such leading role of IOM is also vital in achieving the goal of having a better migration governance that benefits all countries and the migrants themselves.

I thank you.

(844 words / 169 words per minute)