

Session 1.2 - From Global Agreement to Implementation – National Action Plans for migration-related Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

Statement by Thailand

Roundtable 1: Migration and Development through National Strategies: Enhancing the Effectiveness of Domestic Policies

Mr. Co-chairs,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

- I would like to thank Bangladesh and Norway for co-chairing this Roundtable. We would like to share with the meeting, what Thailand has done to translate SDGs into concrete and actionable policy measures that promote migration-related goals.
- Thailand recognizes that well-managed migration, that balances the interests of all stakeholders, can play a positive role and contribute to social and economic development of both the country of origin and destination. Thailand is working hard to capitalize on the positive contribution while minimizing the negative side effects in the efforts to promote safe, orderly and regular migration.
- At the heart of our approaches towards realizing the SDGs, including migration related goals and targets, Thailand embraces His Majesty the late King Bhumibol Adulyadej’s Sufficiency Economy Philosophy (SEP) which stresses “moderation,” “reasonableness,” and “prudence,” as well as the principles of being holistic, ethical, practical, and humanitarian solutions.
- Thailand is a firm supporter of SDG Target 10.7, on Orderly, Safe, Regular, and Responsible migration. With sustained and dynamic economic growth and naturally positioned as land and sea bridge, Thailand continues to attract millions of migrants providing both opportunities and challenges. Thus in accordance with the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy, Thailand has been reviewing its policies, especially those which concern migrant workers.
- For example, the Thai Cabinet in October 2016 endorsed the National Strategy Migrant Worker Management B.E. 2560-2564 (2017-2021), which amongst its objectives, include the management of the importation, working condition, and the return to the country of origin of migrant labor, the improvement of migrant labor standards to become in line with international standards.
- In addition, Thailand has signed bilateral agreements on the employment of workers with Myanmar, Cambodia, Lao PDR, and Vietnam, which helps to ensure that migrant workers under this scheme

receives facilitation, services, and protection from both the sending and receiving countries.

- Two issues that Thailand views as core interests for migrants are health and education. Firstly, Thailand views health as the most basic human rights and a healthy population is a productive population. Thailand believes that the realization of SDG Target 3.8, Universal Health Coverage for all, must include migrants and their dependents, and accordingly has mainstreamed migrant health into its national policy.
- Through its policy of “Healthy Migrants in Healthy Communities,” Thailand has provided access to health services and health insurance for both documented and undocumented migrants including their dependents. Under the Compulsory Migration Health Insurance (CMHI) scheme, the yearly premium for an adult is an affordable 1,600 THB or 44 USD per year, while the premium for a child is only 365 THB or 11 USD per year.
- Secondly, Thailand also sees education as a tool that facilitates long term positive integration process and desirable social mobility for both migrant workers and their dependents. In this regard, Thailand has set up three Post Arrival and Reintegration Centers in Tak, Nong Khai and Sa Keao provinces for workers last year.
- An important key objective of the center includes providing basic labour rights and anti-trafficking education. For children who accompanied their parents to Thailand, Thailand has an education for all policy that is based on its Education Act B.E. 2542 (1999) and the Cabinet Declaration in 2005 that affirms the rights of all children, including non-Thai children living in Thailand, to receive the same free basic education provided to all Thai children.

Honourable Co-chairs, distinguished ladies and gentlemen,

- Thailand shares the same global views that while work must start from within but engagement, dialogue and partnership with all stakeholders, are also crucial.
- The process towards the Global Compact on Migration (GCM) is an opportunity for every country and stakeholders to contribute towards translating common goals into coordinated and implementable guidelines on policies, measures and programmes. It must also aim to strike the right balance of all the stakeholders’ interests, keeping in sight, the goal of promoting migration and development for all.
- In this regard, Thailand has established a National Working Group and a GCM National Consultation Process to discuss and provide national policy inputs for the GCM. The key issues that Thailand attaches great importance to in the GCM includes (1) How to promote health for migrants in the GCM? (2) How to balance migrants’ interests and States’ overall responsibilities and how to nurture the momentum and support from countries of origin, transit, and destination, and other partners on migration-related endeavours? and (3) How to provide necessary funding to realize the goal of safe and orderly migration?

- We hope that the GCM process will continue to be inclusive and capture the most important points and dimensions, taking into consideration diverse contexts of each country, sub-regions and regions, and inputs from all spheres of our societies.
- In this context, Thailand looks forward as active participants in the upcoming regional consultations the rest of this year, including in Thailand in November 2017. We look forward to all intergovernmental negotiations leading to the finalization of the GCM in 2018, while at same time continue to work closely with all partners to promote and share the positive linkages between migration and development.

Intervention by the Delegation of Thailand
by Mr. Supark Prongthura, Deputy Director-General,
Department of International Organizations,
Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Thailand
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