

(Draft)

Country Statement of Thailand
delivered by H.E. Ms. Eksiri Pintaruchi,
Director-General of the Department of International Organizations,
Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Thailand
at the 78th session of the Economic and Social Commission
for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP)
at ESCAP Hall, UNCC, Bangkok, on 24 May 2022

**Mr. Chair,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Participants,**

1. At the outset, please allow me to join the Prime Minister of Thailand in congratulating **ESCAP on its 75th anniversary**, and to express Thailand's unwavering commitment to work with ESCAP Member States and the Secretariat in securing the region's common agenda.
2. The latest estimate that the **Asia-Pacific region would achieve the SDGs in 2065** is most disheartening. **Our priority must be to put the SDGs back on track** for the region as a whole. Indeed, we must "reclaim our future."
3. Yesterday, several leaders and UN dignitaries reflected on the state of the region and the world, including on the **triple challenges of COVID-19, the environment and natural disasters** as highlighted in the theme study. Allow me to build on those views and share our thoughts as follows:
4. First, during the past few years that we have fought against COVID-19, **Universal Health Coverage (UHC)** has played a critical role, particularly in ensuring access to and affordability of essential health services. UHC has also proven to contribute to poverty eradication and the strengthening of national health resilience in this trying time. According to the WHO, the world needs to **accelerate the vaccination of the unvaccinated** of around 1 billion people if we want to put an end to the COVID-19 pandemic. On our part, Thailand has a policy to inoculate all people in the country regardless of nationalities or immigration status. At the regional and global levels, we plan to donate 3 million doses of COVID-19 vaccines this year to countries facing shortages. So far, 1.3 million doses of which have already been donated, including syringes and needles, to our neighbouring countries.

5. The international community needs to take a more innovative approach and bolder actions to strengthen the global health architecture. This week the Health Ministers around the world gather at the 75th World Health Assembly in Geneva to discuss various global health issues including the best way forward in formulating a **new pandemic instrument**. Thailand strongly believes that this new accord will help us **close the existing gaps and provide overarching legal framework that will further strengthen the global health system** for better prevention, preparedness and response to the future health emergencies.
6. Second, we **must redefine our relationship with nature**. The future of our people and planet depends on **transforming our economic growth** to one that is environment- and climate- responsive. But in doing so, we must help and support those countries who are less prepared and equipped for such crucial leaps. **Developed countries must fulfill their promise of providing support to developing countries on finance, technology and capacity building**, especially for climate actions.
7. In moving forward, Thailand offers our **BCG Economy Model as one of the pathways to achieve more inclusive, green and sustainable post-pandemic recovery**. We look forward to contributing to the next Commission session under the theme that focuses on accelerating climate action.
8. Third, we **must not allow disasters to reverse our hard-earned development gains**. The Asia-Pacific region is the most disaster-prone region in the world. And as natural disasters become more frequent and intense due to the effects of climate change, its socio-economic impacts inevitably become more widespread and severe, especially for those most vulnerable.
9. ESCAP has been doing good work on disaster risk reduction in the region. As the faces of disasters have become more varied, we hope that **ESCAP will continue to play a vital role in supporting Member States to be better prepared for future disasters and widescale crises**. In this regard, ESCAP should prioritise the formulation of **essential policy tools or guidance for countries in the region to implement the health aspects of the Sendai Framework, as well as capitalize on the Bangkok Principles**. We have a solid ground to build on to ensure that our region become more resilient to all forms of disasters.

Distinguished Participants,

10. The **draft Bangkok Declaration** which we are about to adopt not only highlights Member States' **common aspirations for the future**, but also reflects the **spirit of solidarity and cooperation** which will lead us to a more balanced, sustainable and prosperous world for all generations.

11. For the past 75 years, **Thailand has been a responsible, reliable and constructive member of the UN**. We are committed to the principles enshrined in the UN Charter which is based on the sovereign equality of all its members. In these fragile times in global geopolitics, **our collective peace and prosperity hinges on multilateralism and a rules-based order**.
12. Thailand reaffirms our commitment and readiness to work with Member States, the UN and all parties to ensure that we **realise the collective goals of the Bangkok Declaration** on the occasion of this auspicious 75th anniversary of ESCAP.

I thank you.
