

**Second Session of the Committee on Statistics  
0900 hrs., Wednesday, 15 December 2010  
Inaugural Address**

by

**H.E. Mr. Chuti Krairiksh**  
Minister of Information and Communication Technology  
The Royal Thai Government

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Mr. Nagesh Kumar, Acting Deputy Executive Secretary and Officer-in-Charge of ESCAP  
Mr. Paul Cheung, Director, United Nations Statistics Division, Department of Economic and Social Affairs,  
Ms. Haisan Fu, Chief, Statistics Division, ESCAP  
Distinguished Delegates,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Very good morning to you all.

On behalf of the Royal Thai Government, first of all, may I extend my warm welcome to all of you to Bangkok, our diverse city. I would like to express my sincere thanks to the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, or ESCAP, for inviting me to be here with you this morning. I would also like to convey my sincere congratulations to ESCAP for organizing the second session of the Committee on Statistics where all leading statisticians are gathered to discuss, exchange best practices and develop solutions for statistical development and cooperation in our region.

This year has been a very significant year in statistics with two outstanding events. the first-ever celebration of World Statistics Day took place on the 20th of October 2010. the second event featured 62 countries around the world which conducted their Population Census in 2010.

I am proud to convey to you that the Thai National Statistical Office actively participated in both these events. For the celebration of World Statistics Day, Thailand's National Statistical Office organized a half day National Conference in Bangkok. Around 500 journalists, statisticians and academia attended the Conference entitled "Statistics: It's All About You". The Prime Minister of Thailand conveyed a message for this celebration. An exhibition at the Conference covered diverse topics, including Health Information Systems (by the Ministry of Public Health); How to Conduct a Poll (by a private university in Bangkok) ; and Statistical Academic Matters. This event also saw the Recruitment of New Membership for Thai Statistical Association. subsequently, an article entitled "Why? World Statistics Day" was broadcast on 16th of October 2010 and published in a national newspaper on the 20 October 2010.

Also on the 20th October 2010, at this United Nations Conference Center, the National Statistical Office and the ESCAP secretariat jointly organized an exhibition on "Celebrating the Many Achievements of Official Statistics" to present the outputs of national statistical offices in the Asia-Pacific region, including the Thai National Statistical Office.

Thailand is among 62 countries to conduct the National Population and Housing Census in 2010. Coincidentally, Thailand is also celebrating the 100 years' anniversary of its National Population Census in 2010. With the current Population and Housing Census, the National Statistical Office initiated 4 channels for data collection. Respondents could select any of the

channels to provide census information, namely: Face to Face Interview, Information Entry via Internet at the pop-census website, Self-enumeration and telephone interview via call center.

Distinguished Delegates,

Our Prime Minister has continuously supported statistical work, emphasizing the importance of statistical data for the government's evidence-based plans and policies. The Prime Minister repeatedly stresses the importance of data quality as he believes this very much underlines the sound development of the country. Bearing this in mind, he has strongly supported the operations of the present Population and Housing Census by publicly requesting Thai people to cooperate in providing accurate and reliable information to the National Statistical Office.

Having been established for a century, we at the Thai National Statistical Office are still concentrating our efforts on statistical development to every possible extent. Nevertheless, we all know that the socio-economic reality in which statistics are produced has changed rapidly in recent times: resulting in greater challenges for all statisticians.

As the Minister of Information and Communication Technology, I place great emphasis on standardized data management and integration systems, which could facilitate the use of statistical information for evidence-based plans and policies. In addition to this, I have requested the National Statistical Office to regularly organize a forum for users to seek views and comments on access to statistical information to enable them to better serve the needs of our country.

Distinguished Delegates,

I am delighted to learn that the Committee will address these 3 issues: Firstly, tracking key socio-economic and environmental trends in the ESCAP region, especially progress towards the MDGs; secondly, identifying data requirements for economic, social and environmental analysis; and thirdly, capacity-building for NSOs in our region to produce, disseminate and analyze data in accordance with internationally agreed standards and good practices. These issues reflect the needs of NSOs in the ESCAP region. The result of this meeting, in terms of sharing experiences and best practices among member countries in the ESCAP Region and international organizations, will provide guidance for statistical development in gathering, deciphering and harmonizing official statistics at national, sub-regional and regional level to better serve evidence-based plans and policies and sound comparability.

Finally, I would like to thank you all for giving up time from your busy schedules for the second session of the Committee on Statistics. I wish you all a fruitful discussion and a pleasant stay in Bangkok.

Thank you very much.