



**PERMANENT MISSION OF THAILAND
TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

351 EAST 52ND STREET · NEW YORK, NY10022
TEL (212) 754-2230 • FAX (212) 688-3029

Statement

By Mr. Nontawat Chandrtri

Minister Counsellor

Permanent Mission of the Kingdom of Thailand to the United Nations

at the 11th Formal Meeting of the Fifth Committee

Agenda Item 134 Proposed Programme Budget for the biennium 2016-2017:

Construction and Property Management

at the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP)

New York, 3 November 2015



Building Bridges for Partnership

THAILAND

ASEAN Candidate for the UN Security Council 2017 – 2018

Mr. Chairman,

Since this is my first time to take the floor in the Fifth Committee of the Seventieth Session of the General Assembly, please allow me to extend my warm congratulations to you on your assumption of the Chairmanship of this Committee. Also, my delegation would like to congratulate all other members of the Bureau upon their election. We are confident that with your experience and under your leadership, the work of the Committee will be conducted in an inclusive and transparent manner leading to a successful conclusion with constructive spirit in a timely manner.

The Kingdom of Thailand aligns itself with the statement delivered by the distinguished representative of the Republic of South Africa on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

We commend the Secretary-General for his comprehensive report on the proposal for the seismic mitigation retrofit and life-cycle replacements project at the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific premises in Bangkok. We also thank the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions for its hard work especially for the useful comments and practical recommendations.

Mr. Chairman,

Since 1949, Bangkok played host to the headquarters of the Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East (ECAFE). In 1970, we were formally designated as headquarters of ECAFE whose name was, in 1974, changed to the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and Pacific (ESCAP). As one of the United Nations five Regional Commissions, ESCAP is the largest body serving 53 Member States and 9 Associate Members in the Asia-Pacific region with over 600 staff.

For more than six decades, the Kingdom of Thailand has accommodated and facilitated the Commission in line with our commitment to play an active role in the work of the United Nations. We recognize that ESCAP has helped member states to overcome some of the region's greatest challenges by providing results oriented projects, technical assistance and capacity building in the economic and

social development issues. ESCAP brings countries together to address issues through regional cooperation.

As we place people at the centre of development, safety at work has also been part of Thailand's priority. In 1997, the Kingdom of Thailand introduced the Building Control Act providing standards of resistance against seismic risks. Revised in 2007, the 1970s-designed secretariat and service buildings as well as the 1990s-designed conference centre of ESCAP do not comply with the current standard for seismic resistance. The preliminary studies and inspections carried out in 2011 and 2012 found vulnerable points in the structures of the buildings. There is potential failure of the ESCAP buildings' structural components under seismic loads. Alterations and improvements as well as major maintenance to provide seismic resistance are therefore inevitable.

The Kingdom of Thailand believes that the proposal for the seismic mitigation retrofit and life-cycle replacement project at the ESCAP premises, with due consideration of the most cost-effective approach, will not only ensure the long-term health and safety of staff, delegates and visitors but also bring benefits in other areas, such as building performance, energy conservation as well as space usage efficiencies. The Kingdom of Thailand urges the Fifth Committee as well as the General Assembly to support the complete implementation of the Project.

Since the Regional Commissions are the main United Nations economic and social development centres, the Kingdom of Thailand believes that it is necessary to provide UN Regional Commissions with safety and suitable work places. We, therefore strongly support other projects under strategic capital reviews undertaken by the United Nations such as the construction of new office facilities at the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) in Addis Ababa.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.