



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

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**STATEMENT**

by

**His Excellency Mr. Vitavas Srivihok  
Ambassador and Permanent Representative  
of the Kingdom of Thailand to the United Nations**

**At the Formal Meeting of the Fifth Committee of the 74<sup>th</sup> Session  
of the United Nations General Assembly**

**Agenda Item 135 Proposed programme budget for 2020:  
Construction and property management**

**Seismic mitigation retrofit and life-cycle replacements project at the  
Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP)  
premises in Bangkok**

**29 October 2019, New York**

*Please check against delivery*

**Mr. Chair,**

1. Since this is the first time I take the floor in the Fifth Committee of the 74th session of the General Assembly, I would like to extend my sincere congratulations to you and other members of the Bureau on your election. We trust that your able leadership will guide the work of the Committee to a successful conclusion during this main session.
2. At the outset, Thailand aligns itself with the statement delivered by the **State of Palestine** on behalf of **the Group of 77 and China** and by **Singapore** on behalf of **ASEAN**. Allow me to thank also **Mr. Chandramouli Ramanathan**, Assistant Secretary-General, Controller, and **Mr. Cihan Terzi**, Chair of the ACABQ, for introducing their respective reports.

**Mr. Chair,**

3. ESCAP is an **important regional arm of the UN**, comprising of 53 member states and 9 associate member states. Thailand is proud to serve as its host for now 7 decades. The Commission plays a crucial role in serving as a regional platform for inter-governmental cooperation, knowledge-sharing and dialogues in areas important to advancing sustainable and inclusive development. These include the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and its SDGs. ESCAP has worked tirelessly to deliver on these mandates and Thailand will continue to give our full support to its work.
4. Thailand supports ESCAP's on-going effort to addressing **health and safety issues** through the implementation of **seismic mitigation retrofit and life-cycle replacements project** at its premises in Bangkok. **It is therefore important we ensure a successful completion of the project.** Thailand has been working closely with ESCAP in this regard as we believe close cooperation between the Organization and the host country is key to success.
5. The Government of Thailand, through our Ministry of Foreign Affairs, has been supporting the project through our **in-kind contributions**, in particular, facilitating various meetings between ESCAP and local authorities and stakeholders, including the Council of Engineers of Thailand, Bangkok Metropolitan Administration as well as Thai private companies. The team has benefited greatly from a broad range of their local expertise, best practices, and the knowledge on establishing procedures required. We therefore welcome the Advisory Committee's recognition of our support and will continue our **close cooperation with ESCAP** during the construction phase starting from next year.

**Mr. Chair,**

6. Thailand welcomes **the progress of this project** as outlined in the Secretary-General's report. We look forward to the completion **of the on-site swing space** and are pleased to learn during our recent visit to the construction site in July that the work will be completed in time for the first phase of the main construction works in 2020.

7. We further welcome the work carried out by ESCAP in order to **comply with all seismic building codes and industry norms**, ensuring that we meet the very purpose of the project to address safety issues. In addition, we would like to commend ESCAP for taking into account various measures on **energy efficiency and sustainability, accessibility and space efficiency**. Space efficiency as a result of **open-plan workspace solution** will allow the complex to accommodate more UN entities in the near future. This effort is in line with Thailand's policy to attract additional UN presence in the country and promote Bangkok as the hub of international organisations, reaffirming our position as "Geneva of Asia".

**Mr. Chair,**

8. We emphasize the **project governance, effective oversight, accountability, and transparency** as keys for successful delivery of the project. We also appreciate recommendations from Office of the Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) on this matter.
9. In conclusion, Thailand wishes to express our full support and commitment to engage constructively in the deliberations on this important item in order to reach a positive outcome in a timely manner.
10. I thank you.

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