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STATEMENT

BY

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DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER OF THAILAND

AT

THE OPENING CEREMONY OF THE HIGH-LEVEL SEGMENT

OF THE ELEVENTH UNITED NATIONS CONGRESS

ON CRIME PREVENTION AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE

AT QUEEN SIRIKIT NATIONAL CONVENTION CENTER,

BANGKOK, THAILAND

ON 23 APRIL **2005**

Mr. President,

First of all, on behalf of the Royal Thai Government, I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate you and members of the Bureau for their election to steer upon the proceedings of the Eleventh United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice.

Also I would like to express my sincere thanks to the Member States of the United Nations for their confidence accorded to Thailand as the host country for this Assembly.

The Government of Thailand and its people welcome all delegates, spouses and their accompanying persons participating in this Congress and wish them a pleasant stay in Thailand and enjoy our rich culture.

In addition, I also extend the Thai Government appreciation to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime for its suggestion and cooperation for the preparation of the Congress, and also "the Friends of the Chair" which participated in the drafting process of Bangkok Declaration in Vienna.

Mr. President,

Generally speaking, globalization and increasing international interdependence have a great deal of impacts on all countries to an unprecedented degree. The Royal Thai Government is fully recognized looming threats or all sorts of crime and transnational crime, coinciding with the economic development. Hence, every country in the present day globalized world has to enhance cooperation. Moreover, their needs should be guided by its own philosophy, taking into account globally emerging standards and norms to combat serious crime, which should be suitable for the society and culture.

As a developing country, in our view, crime prevention should be given priority while criminal justice shall always be put on equal footing with crime prevention. In order to prevent crime, the root cause of problem, which is poverty, has to be eradicated. His Majesty the King of Thailand has successfully translate concept into action by introducing the idea of "Sufficiency Economy", including crop substitution, one of which is well known in Afghanistan where the Doi-tung Foundation has helped rehabilitate that country in 2002.

Mr. President,

At this point, let me briefly recount the Government's effort in tackling, transnational organized crime, particularly drug problems, as well as corruption. We have put on national agenda the urgency of and vital need for the suppression of drug related organized crime. Thailand has declared war on narcotic drugs, poverty and corruption, which are impediments to genuine development and well being of the people.

In the cause of drug law enforcement and precursor control, Thailand always put an emphasis on drug prevention together with drug treatment and rehabilitation of drug addicts in a systematic and holistic manner. In this regard, the Royal Project on Alternative Development is recognized as an effective means to sustain prevention and rehabilitation at the same time.

We have once turned the battlefield into market place. Why can we not turn the drug production area into resource area? This of course required a lot of regional and sub regional cooperation including that from the international community.

Concerning measures to combat corruption, good governance and a trustworthy security stock market is the only aim we are trying to achieve. In this respect, we need to enhance the effectiveness of our criminal law enforcement and criminal justice administration. Anti-corruption mechanism has already been strengthened while public administration has to be reformed. However, it should be pointed out that even though sophisticated tools and equipment have been utilized for

this purpose, more needs to be done. In that sense, networking of international cooperation should be established, or strengthened as the case maybe. Technical assistance, in particular capacity building, should be provided to developing countries which are in need of know-how and resources, be they human or financial.

To combat terrorism, Mr. President, Thailand has ratified 5 out of 12 United Nations Conventions relating to terrorism. The remaining 7 are in the pipeline. We have also worked closely with fellow countries under the auspices of the ASEAN, APEC and definitely the UNODC in Vienna in enhancing international peace and security. We have reinforced measures to prevent terrorist acts by strictly checking suspicious individuals and financial transactions, as well as enhancing our intelligence cooperation and network. After the passage of UN Resolution 1373, amendments to the Penal Code were made to stipulate that an act of terrorism is a serious crime that warrants severe punishment. In addition, terrorist act is included in the Anti-Money Laundering Act of 1999 as a predicate offence.

Mr. President,

The achievement of the mentioned criminal policies and strategies heavily demands proper and effective administration of justice. The sanctity of criminal justice is strongly supported by the Royal Thai Government. Several measures have been initiated to protect the rights and liberties of a person under principle of due process. The judicial system has been improved to ensure that judges are independent in the trial and adjudication of cases in accordance with the Constitution. An important foundation for the system is a recent change in organizational structure and process of our criminal justice agencies, such as the Rights and Liberties Protection Department to ascertain that our criminal is applied fairly, the Department of Special Investigation to enhance effectiveness of investigation into complex cases and the police reform to encourage public participation and inspect the exercise of State power in all levels. In addition, all concerned agencies in the Thai criminal justice system actively put the focus on implementing the pro-active concepts of "community justice" along with "restorative justice", in order to strengthen civil society in

preventing crime as well as taking care of the victims for the sake of peace in society as a whole.

Mr. President,

I am certain that all countries, including Thailand, have a stronghold in proceeding to fair justice system and transparent administration, implemented under the rule of law and international standards and norms. However, home-front security and international crime cannot be taken for granted. The Meeting today is regarded as a milestone allowing us talks of vital issues, especially those that need international cooperation as the representative of the host country, I would like the honorable delegates in this High-level Segment to fully utilize this venue for the East to meet the West, and for the North to closely discuss with the South. I, therefore, wish that the collaboration strengthened by this conference would help to reduce the common difficulties that we are encountering.

It is indeed an honor for Thailand to commemorate with all UN Members the fiftieth anniversary of UN exercises in the form of such congresses. We would like to take this opportunity to once again reiterate how much importance we have attached to the four pillars of this current Congress, namely sufficiency economy which can be transcended into sustainable development; drug eradication; restorative justice; and human trafficking in persons. Nonetheless, participation of civil society will not be forgotten.

Thank you, Mr. President.

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