



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

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Statement

By

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**Mr. Chairperson,
Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

At the outset, the Thai delegation would like to congratulate Mr. Chairperson on his election as the Chairperson of the Fifty-Second Session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW). Thailand extends our full cooperation to you and the Bureau in undertaking the important mandates of the Commission.

Thailand reaffirms her commitments to the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), and the Millennium Development Goals. Let me assure you that the Thai Government has pursued both legislative and administrative efforts at both national and regional levels to ensure that such commitments are translated into actions.

Please allow me to highlight some of Thailand's initiatives in promoting gender equality and the advancement of women.

Thailand has taken many steps in **mainstreaming gender** from the grassroots to policy making levels. Since October 2002, the Thai Government has set up the Office of Women's Affairs and Family Development (OWAFD) under the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security to act as the national machinery for the advancement of women in Thailand. In addition, the Thai Government has nominated Chief Gender Equality Officers (CGEO) and Gender Focal Points (GFP) in all ministries and departments in Thailand. These CGEOs and GFPs then ensure that the administration in their responsibility will take due account of gender perspectives. A plan has been made to expand the CGEOs and GFPs system to provincial and local administration. Local Women Organizations have also been set up in every province to conduct activities aiming at upgrading women's economic and social status and quality of life.

Thailand is also striving to double **women's political participation** at all levels. Since 2003, several programs on women's political participation have been conducted throughout the country to enhance women's awareness on the importance of politics and governance as well as to encourage their political role. For instance, prior to our recent general election a "Training of Potential Women Leaders in Politics" program was arranged. And as a result of the general election, four Ministerial positions, notably at the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment and the Ministry of Labour, are held by females.

We also believe that gender mainstreaming is a fundamental basis for **gender financing**. And increased financing is one of the crucial factors for achieving gender equality and women's empowerment. We believe that gender mainstreaming and the appreciation of gender responsive budgeting at both national and local levels will lead to gender-sensitive planning, approvals, and monitoring of policies and programs which will bring us to the ultimate goal - the achievement of gender equality.

To this end, various seminars amongst government agencies, NGOs, business and academic sectors have been held to increase understanding of the importance of gender responsive budgeting as well as to seek support from these sectors in identifying innovative financing mechanisms, in addition to the traditional government funding sources. One significant event was the Gender Responsive Workshop in Bangkok in 2006, co-organized by the Thai Government with the kind support of the Friedrich Ebert Foundation, which outlined steps to be taken for gender budgeting. And we are also proud to say that this year, we are integrating gender responsive budget into national and local administrations. A good example of this effort is the allocation of budget for research on gender perspectives and management

on fisheries resources in the Mekong Sub-Region undertaken by the Department of Fisheries under the Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives.

Mr. Chairperson,

Let me now turn to specific areas of endeavours. Thanks to the support of the UN Development Programme (UNDP), Thailand is developing a **sex-disaggregated data system** to be used for planning, research and monitoring at all levels. Some Departments have already implemented this system. One such case is the Department of Industrial Promotion under the Ministry of Industry which has gathered sex-disaggregated data to identify in which business sector that women may need more support in order to ensure that businesswomen and businessmen can compete economically on an equal footing.

With respect to **Thai women's role in a peaceful and harmonious society**, women have been encouraged to participate in the National Human Right Commission and the National Reconciliation Commission. We are also proud of our women's participation in the UN peace operations, notably under the UN Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT) and the UN Mission in Nepal (UNMIN). Women officers play a very important role in providing humanitarian support as well as in defusing tension in situations where there are women and children have been the victims of suffering.

Regarding the role of **women in environmental conservation**, the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment is analyzing the impact of climate change on women. The Ministry has also actively encouraged women to participate in local environment management. Capacity building programmes aiming to teach women to reuse and recycle in their households have been carried out, particularly in converting used cooking oil into fuel, in line with Thailand's Royal-initiative Sufficiency Economy Philosophy which promotes natural resource conservation and refrains from over-consumption.

In terms of **women's economic empowerment**, the Thai Government pays special attention to uplifting women's economic power particularly in rural areas in order that they can be fully self-reliant. Tax measurements favouring women enterprises have been implemented. Other policies aiming to enhance the rural economy and help women set up small businesses include the Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) incentive scheme, micro-credit facilities and farmers' temporary debt suspension scheme.

Last but not least, with regards to **education**, we are proud to declare that Thailand has achieved Goal 3 of the MDGs by eliminating gender disparity in primary and secondary education. Although there is a small gender gap at the primary school level, but it is notable that girls are outnumbering boys in higher education level.

Mr. Chairperson,

We have all traveled a long way since the 1995 Beijing Conference, but our task is far from over. In this regard, Thailand wishes to reiterate the commitment of the Group of 77 and China to the advancement and empowerment of women and our own commitment to continue working closely with all sectors at the local, national, regional and international levels towards the full implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and the advancement of the status of women worldwide.

Thank you very much.
