

**Statement by Delegation of Thailand**

**Mr. Sing Visespochanakit, Acting Deputy Secretary – General,  
Office of the National Security Council**

General Debate, 68<sup>th</sup> UNHCR Executive Committee  
Tuesday 3 October 2017, 10.00-13.00 hours (5 minutes)

**Madame Chair,  
High Commissioner,  
Distinguished Delegates,**

1. On behalf of the Thai Delegation, at the outset, allow me to reiterate our full support to the Chair and to the High Commissioner and his team for their best efforts.

Madame Chair,

2. My delegation supports the High Commissioner's efforts in ensuring that the work of the UNHCR is transformative, field oriented, and answers the needs of people on the ground. We applaud the dynamic partnership with various organizations and stakeholders, including, in particular, the World Bank Group and the International Chamber of Commerce. We also commend the countries who have undertaken the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework, leading the way towards better protection of refugees and displaced persons worldwide.
3. On Thailand's part, we have successfully facilitated the return to Myanmar of the pilot group of 71 Myanmar displaced persons in October 2016. We thank the Myanmar Government for her cooperation and the UNHCR and IOM for their support in facilitating the return. Preparation for the voluntary return of the next batch of 247 Myanmar displaced persons has already begun. Further returns will continue under the principles of safety, voluntariness, dignity and sustainability. At present, there are still over 100,000 Myanmar displaced remaining in Thailand.
4. Another significant development is the fact that in July this year the Royal Thai Government has set up the committee to explore a possibility to join the 1951 Refugee Convention. Whether we will

eventually join the Convention or not, the process itself has reenergized discussions on issues and challenges facing by refugees and asylum seekers. That, in itself, is a truly rewarding exercise.

Madame Chair,

5. Thailand has strived to find the right balance between security and humanitarian principles. We have tried our best in the areas of access to health care, education and alternatives to detention. Situation has been improving. Discussions have also been ongoing and measures will soon be introduced to ensure that no child is detained. The issue of setting up a refugee screening mechanism has also been taken up by agencies concerned following the January 2017 Cabinet decision.
6. Furthermore, Thailand is also fully committed to ending statelessness by 2024, particularly after the Cabinet approval in December last year to grant children and students or stateless persons born in Thailand the right to apply for Thai nationality. In this regard, Thailand is a strong supporter of the UNHCR's #IBELONG campaign.
7. Lastly, Thailand looks forward to the High Commissioner's Dialogue on Protection Challenges later this December, where we can together find the ways to contribute for the next steps for the global compact on refugees. We support cooperation between the UNHCR and the IOM in the processes leading to the adoption of the Global Compact on Migration and the Global Compact on Refugees, especially in addressing the mixed migration challenges.
8. In closing, Thailand is determined to work with the international community, with a reaffirmed sense of shared purposes and commitments, to find sustainable solutions for those 65 million forced to leave their homes and their loved ones.
9. I thank you.

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