

Draft
Statement of Mr. Somn Promaros,
Director-General of the Rights and Liberties Protection Department,
Ministry of Justice of Thailand,
At the ‘Government Action’ session: ‘Are States making progress on the
UNGPs? Challenges, innovations and lessons learned from implementation’,
2018 UN Forum on Business and Human Rights
Monday 26th November 2018 Room XX
Geneva, Switzerland

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Excellencies
Mr. Chair,

1. On behalf of the Royal Thai Government, I am pleased to share and update Thailand’s progress in implementing the United Nations Guiding Principles (UNGPs) and lessons learned as well as some thoughts on the way forward.
2. Last year my delegation stressed the importance of (1) multi-stakeholder engagement and ownership, (2) high-level political will and commitments, (3) capacity-building and training (4) monitoring and evaluation, and (5) international cooperation. I wish to re-state that all of these factors are keys to the successful implementation of the UNGPs.
3. Thailand aims for the National Action Plan (NAP) to come into effect soon, preferably by the end of this year. [*The RLPD will hold the final round of consultation with the private sector next week, which will consider the draft National Action Plan for the last time before submitting it to the Cabinet for approval.*] We are optimistic that the National Action Plan will be mutually acceptable, as it has been put to the test including challenges during the past year.
4. We wanted the drafting process to be inclusive and open as possible. As a result, we involved numerous actors and stakeholders - all relevant agencies, business enterprises and CSOs. A national committee has been set up to draft

the plan. We held many rounds of consultations with various sectors to find common grounds.

5. We decided to have an action-oriented, substantive, and ambitious NAP. Currently, the draft focuses on 4 priority areas: labor; environment, natural resources, community rights and land rights; human rights defenders; cross border investments and multinational enterprises (LEDI).
6. After all, it is the process that counts. It is important to start from a strong foundation and move towards the implementation step, involving all stakeholders on board and aiming towards the same goal. [*I will share more on our NAP developments during the session on ‘Trends and challenges in promoting business respect for human rights in Asia on Wednesday 28 Nov 2018.*]
7. Against the background of the Declaration on Cooperation to Promote the UNGPs signed - with the presence of the Prime Minister - by relevant ministries, business chambers, the National Human Rights Commission and the UN Global Compact Network Thailand in 2017, Thailand continues to move forward the ‘business and human rights’ agenda in a coordinated manner. It is incorporated in the National Human Rights Agenda 2018-2019 and the draft 4th National Human Right Plan 2019-2023.
8. The Prime Minister instructed all state-owned enterprises in Thailand to “lead by example” in implementing the UNGPs. We hope that their success stories will encourage other businesses to follow.
9. Our NAP is also linked with the implementation of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as human rights and SDGs are mutually reinforcing and interlinked.
10. Thailand finds various international cooperation initiatives useful and constructive, for instance, AICHR interregional dialogues to share good practices on business and human rights, the Bali Process Government and

Business Forum. As the incoming chair of ASEAN in 2019, Thailand aspires to promote responsible investment and advance partnership for sustainable development. With OECD, Thailand signed an enhanced cooperation program including on Responsible Business Conduct in May 2018. The visit of the UN Working Group on Business and Human Rights in March 2018 provided constructive inputs to the drafting the NAP. It was a good learning experience.

11. Last but not least, Thailand stresses the roles of youth, as ‘agents of change’. We organized the first-ever ‘Asian Youth Partnership on Business and Human Rights’ project in August this year, which about 60 youths in Asia shared views, experiences and innovative solutions on the subject. We also held a follow-up ‘Youth BHR Innovation Contest’ in November this year. The two winners are with us today.
12. In closing, I would like to invite you to visit our snapshots tomorrow: (1) at 12.00 – 12.15 hrs. by the President of the Thai Tuna Industry who will share experiences in turning the tuna industry to a human rights-based, sustainable business and (2) at 17.00 pm. by two Thai youth winners from the Contest that I mentioned. They will present a human rights due diligence online application and a ‘health check’ project for workers.
13. Thank you.