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Statement
by
H.E. Dr. Virachai Virameteekul
Vice Minister for Foreign Affairs of Thailand
at the 13th OSCE Ministerial Council Meeting
at the Commercial Fairground,
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Mr. Chairman-in-Office of the OSCE,
Mr. Secretary General,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the Government of Thailand, I wish to take this opportunity to express our sincere appreciation to the Government of Slovenia for the excellent arrangement made for this most important meeting.

Thailand welcomes the fact that the year 2005 marks three commemorative events of the OSCE. First of all, it is the 30th anniversary of the signing of the Helsinki Final Act, which clarifies the main principles and commitments of the OSCE. Second, this year marks the 15th anniversary of the Charter of Paris for a New Europe, which provides guidelines toward the work of the OSCE. Moreover, it is also the 10th anniversary of the transformation of the CSCE to the OSCE. Thailand therefore wishes to be a partner for the future endeavours of the OSCE in restoring regional peace and security, not only for Europe, but for the international community at large.

Mr. Chairman,

Since the September 11 tragedy, the world has entered into a new security landscape that is multidimensional and complex as never before. It is evident that terrorism not only poses a threat to state security, but also to economic and human security as well. Overcoming this challenge will require the broadest coalition possible, and the deepest cooperation possible.

Thailand wishes to take note of three challenges to terrorism; perception, prevention and prohibition.

To begin with, we have to perceive this problem objectively and without exaggeration. Although dispute over definition of terrorism is unsettled, there are attempts from terrorists to equate their crimes to a religious war or a clash of civilizations.

Therefore, we must not fall into their traps associating terrorism to a specific religion or culture.

Secondly, terrorism must be addressed at its root cause, which is primarily related to poverty. If there continue to be a lack of education, social and economic deprivation, and human right abuses, many people might be implanted with ignorance, anger and hatred, which eventually become a breeding-ground for terrorism. Therefore, it is the time for each and every nation to collectively tackle the root cause of this problem by promoting sustained development and enhancing the culture of peace so as to be immune from the spread of terrorism.

Thirdly, we must prohibit further acts of terrorism. Therefore, efforts against terrorism must not be directed only against the terrorists themselves, but also against those who finance, support or provide safe haven to them.

Bearing these challenges in mind, Thailand supports all actions against terrorism under the framework of the United Nations Security Council and the General Assembly. We have already become party to five international conventions on anti-terrorism and are committed to ratifying the remaining conventions and protocols in the near future. On the regional front, Thailand plays an active role in ASEAN Regional Forum, or ARF, where confidence building and preventive diplomacy are strengthened in the Asia-Pacific region. Moreover, we have recently joined the Conference on Interaction and Confidence-Building in Asia or CICA. These are our efforts to enhance regional security cooperation.

Mr. Chairman,

Apart from terrorism, the world has witnessed the emergence of new non-traditional security threats such as transnational organized crimes and deadly pandemic. Globalization has led to an ever-increasing movement of people, goods and services, money and information across international borders. Unfortunately, those attractive flows could also bring along transboundary problems such as trafficking of human beings and illicit drugs, and the spread of infectious disease including HIV/AIDS, SARS, and Avian Influenza. How we cope with these emerging new threats and their growing complexities will determine our shared destiny. No nation can fight it alone.

Thailand attaches the highest priority to the human dimension of security. We have adopted the concept of human security as a guiding framework in our national development process in response to the needs, the desires, and the demand of our people.

Thailand has assumed the Presidency of the Human Security Network (HSN) since May this year. We place top priority on people-centred development, combating HIV/AIDS and human trafficking. The Network, whose members and observers are from all continents, aims at creating a world where people are free from fear, free from want, and are able to live in dignity. Such strong commitment is also reflected in our cooperation with the OSCE. In June this year, Thailand organized the Conference on “Sharing of Experiences in Combating Trafficking in Human Beings: Opportunities for Cooperation”. The Conference offered an opportunity for high-level representatives and experts from the OSCE as well as its Partners for Cooperation, and the ARF member countries to meet and explore ways and means in curbing the problems of human trafficking.

It is my conviction that the role of the Partners for Cooperation can be valuable to the OSCE only when outreach activities are continuously organized and promoted. That is

why Thailand is honoured to co-host the OSCE-Thailand Conference on “Challenges to Global Security: From Poverty to Pandemic” in Bangkok early next year. The Conference will provide another forum to examine the root causes of global insecurity, and explore future prospects for regional cooperation.

Let me take this opportunity to invite member states and all Partners for Cooperation to visit Thailand in April next year to attend this joint undertaking between Thailand and the OSCE.

Mr. Chairman,

In conclusion, as member of Asian Contact Group, Thailand, remains committed to working closely with OSCE. To the best of our abilities, we will see to it that Global Security be maintained through the spirit of cooperation and partnership.

Thank you for your attention.
