

Statement

by

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HE. Dr. Sorajak Kasemsuvan
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To the 12th OSCE Ministerial Council
on “Terrorism, Tolerance and Trafficking”
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Mr. Chairman-in-Office of the OSCE,
Secretary General Jan Kubis,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

At the outset, on behalf of the Government of Thailand, I wish to take this opportunity to express our sincere thanks and appreciation to the Government of Bulgaria for the excellent arrangements and warm hospitality extended to me and my delegation.

Thailand would like to welcome Mongolia as the new Partner for Cooperation and looks forward to working with Mongolia in fostering our partnership with the OSCE. And as this will be the last Ministerial Council meeting for Secretary General Jan Kubis, I would like to express our appreciation for his total dedication to the OSCE throughout his five year term and wish him well in his future endeavour.

Mr. Chairman,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Terrorism is one of the most serious security challenges facing us today. Despite intensive global campaign to fight terrorism, this crime against humanity continues unabated. We need to further strengthen our collective efforts in combating terrorism, in whatever form it takes and wherever it is. While actively pursuing close collaboration with all our allies, Thailand believes that terrorism can be effectively addressed through multilateral cooperation. But in so doing, we need to strike at the root causes of terrorism. These include poverty, social and economic deprivation, human right abuses and cultural and religious discrimination and misconception. Terrorism should not and must not be identified with a specific religion or faith. Any society is as much at risk to the danger of terrorism regardless of nationality, culture, or faith. Even religion itself can be and has been a victim of terrorism. We

therefore must not fall into the hands of terrorists who try to equate our counter-terrorism campaign to a religious war.

Terrorism is like a disease. It attacks those who are weak, those who lack immunity and those who lack preparedness. So to be strong, to be immune, and to be well prepared, we must turn deprivation into opportunity, diversity into strength, disputes and differences into understanding and cooperation.

That is why Thailand is working with all our partners to turn deprivation and poverty in Asia into opportunities and growth, to turn Asian diversity into Asian strength, and to turn Asia into a continent of understanding and cooperation. We believe that this can be achieved through our initiative on setting up the Asia Cooperation Dialogue or ACD that now comprises 26 Asian countries with more to join in the near future. This two and a half year old Asian-wide cooperation together with others such as CICA, or the Conference on Interaction and Confidence-Building in Asia, and the ASEAN Security Community are where the future of security in Asia lies.

**Mr. Chairman,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Another challenge the world security is facing is the trafficking of illicit narcotic drugs and human beings. These crimes are serious menace to the human dimension of security that needs both national and international cooperative efforts to combat. Thailand has launched and put all its efforts to the fight against illicit drugs for the last 4 years. We have successfully won that battle but we must and will continue our fight to win the war to make Thailand a country totally and completely free from any form of narcotic and illicit drugs.

Drug trafficking and human trafficking however are organized crimes that are closely intertwined and threaten human lives and human security. Last August, Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra of Thailand launched a comprehensive and intensive campaign against all forms of human trafficking and placed it high on our national agenda. The Prime Minister has ordered that all levels of officials must do everything they can to tackle this problem because to us, human trafficking is not, in legal terminology, “mala prohibita” but it is “mala sei”. Trafficking in human beings is not wrong because it is a crime and illegal, but it is wrong because it is an evil in itself.

Just like in the case of drug trafficking, the fight against the heinous crime of human trafficking requires domestic as much as international efforts.

Thailand has been and will continue to be an active player in international fora dealing with human trafficking. We have made considerable contribution in the Bali Process against human trafficking in the Asia Pacific. We have worked closely with our ASEAN colleagues to address this problem in a comprehensive manner. At the tenth ASEAN summit in Vientiane just 10 days ago, ASEAN leaders adopted the Declaration Against Trafficking in Persons, particularly Women and Children, which aims to enhance intra-ASEAN cooperation against human trafficking. Some of the cooperative measures include the setting up of a regional network to prevent and counter human trafficking, increase cooperation among immigration and law enforcement authorities, and assistance to victims of human trafficking.

With our commitment to promote international cooperation in this area, we have proposed to organize with the OSCE a seminar on human trafficking before the middle of next year. We hope the seminar would create further momentum to current efforts to tackle this problem, promote sharing of best practices and encourage cooperation between OSCE and the Partners for Cooperation.

**Mr. Chairman,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

The role of the Partners for Cooperation can be valuable to the OSCE only when outreach activities are continuously organized and promoted. Thailand wishes to express our appreciation to Bulgaria as the Chairman-in-Office and all the support the Bulgarian Chair has given to the work of the Asian Contact Group. We look forward to participating in the OSCE-Korea Conference to be held in April next year on "New Security Threats and New Security Paradigm". We believe that the Conference would produce new useful ideas for further cooperation. On our part, apart from the proposed seminar on human trafficking, we will hold the next OSCE-Thailand Conference in 2006 which would build on the new ideas and initiatives and lead to increased cooperation between the OSCE and Asian Partners. We shall look forward to developing new initiatives that could enable us to cope with the multi-dimensional aspects of modern world security. And we shall look forward to working closely with Slovenia, the incoming Chair, and Bulgaria, Chairman of the Asian Contact Group next year, and hope that 2005, the year we celebrate the 30th anniversary of the OSCE, will be a landmark year for both the OSCE and the Partners for cooperation.

Thank you.
