

Committee: United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

Country: Thailand, officially the Kingdom of Thailand

Contributing to the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP), in order to provide insightful ideas and viewpoints about social, political, economic issues affecting South East Asia is of great importance to the Kingdom of Thailand. Not only is Thailand one of the founding members of UNESCAP in 1947, but also is home to the commission's headquarters in Bangkok. The Kingdom of Thailand strongly believes that UNESCAP is a platform to discuss and encourage economic cooperation amongst the member states, while focusing on globalization, sustainable development, trade and human rights. UNESCAP will provide the means to debate and have multilateral discussion regarding topics such as, Infrastructure Development, the Future of Food and Labour Migration. Thailand values unified development and a well-balanced society, thus understands the importance of effective mechanisms to eliminate poverty and improve prosperity. Through UNESCAP, Thailand has been presented with an opportunity to build relationships with various nations, be part of multilateral cooperation and take on leadership roles within the member states.

**Topic 1: The Role of Infrastructure in the Development of South East Asia**

The Kingdom of Thailand faced significant political instability in 2013-14, in which anti-government protests took place organized by the People's Democratic Reform Committee, to remove former prime minister Thaksin Shinawatra's and eradicate his corrupt and damaging influence on Thailand. This conflict lasted for over six months, and resulted in economic, social and political issues, lowering Thailand's growth and prosperity.

After this troublesome experience, Thailand has wasted no time in reviving the prospects of economic growth, and has made it the government's top priority to boost public and foreign investments in infrastructure. In July 2014, the Infrastructure Development Plan 2015-2022 with a budget of $75 billion USD. This project will target expanding the country's transportation system, intraregional and international trade by working with Hong Kong companies to integrate management techniques and practical applications into this plan. Thailand urges other nation to take on similar projects, and if a low-income nation, then start with a stepping stone and collaborate with likeminded nations.

Thailand is a country with high levels of development and it follows a unique strategy which is geared towards market understanding, open trade and investment flows, and since the late 1950s has had excellent growth performance. Despite its poverty significantly decreasing, the economic inequality, poor education, environmental problems have increased. Reform is necessary in several areas, including political and corporate governance, industry policy, education, infrastructure and health systems.

Being one of the leading members of the ASEAN organization as well, the Kingdom of Thailand will not let its own successes get in the way of helping other South East Asian Countries grow and flourish. In fact, Thailand strives for a "Seamless Asia", with regional interconnectedness, and promoting strong regional demand which can sustain long term growth. We strongly believe that Southeast Asia has three paths to prosperity, in which these nations can address its productivity challenges by finding unique catalysts and sources for growth by capitalizing on global flows, urbanization and technology. Due to their geographical location, ASEAN countries can capture a greater share of global trade flows by working with China, India and Japan. They can also utilize their growing GDP and booming cities to create a pivotal market of the future for companies in a range of industries. Lastly, by implementing advanced technology, Southeast Asian sectors could be revolutionized and modernized. While focusing on these three pillars; Global Flows, Urbanization and Technology,

Thailand being a coastline nation, has a strong global infrastructure ranking, however understands the struggle of landlocked countries, and is willing to assist them in their growth. There are numerous existing regional infrastructure projects, however limited progress is being made, which results in a slow, poor and weak economy. Thailand has made efforts to prevent such delays from happening, by taking action immediately, such as, being one of two Southeast Asia nations signing on the inter-governmental agreements for dry ports.

Thailand suggests that UNESCAP nations implement a subcommittee responsible for project management and overseeing any inter-governmental agreements occurring. This committee will have educated business management and project management professionals who are capable of leading large scale projects ethically and efficiently. When it comes to the financial aspect, Thailand suggests putting in place an investment-trade type system in which high-income leading nations will invest in low-income growing nations (after evaluating the risks and rewards), and in return, the investing nation will receive trade benefits from the other country. Lastly, in order to solve the issue of stricter policies, organizations and well-built legal and regulatory frameworks, Thailand believes that the idea of subcommittees should be further looked into, to specify and target issues in a meticulous manner.

To conclude, The Kingdom of Thailand is willing to play an integral role in terms of supporting other Southeast Asian countries, while being a mediator and liaison between ASEAN nations and other parts of Asia.

**Topic 2: Future of Food**

The Kingdom of Thailand believes in taking all actions necessary to have a sustainable, diversified and competitive agriculture industry across Asia and the Pacific. Thailand has the highest percentage of arable land., 27.5% of any nation in the Greater Mekong Sub region, and about 55% of that land is used for rice production. Thailand has a strong connection to agriculture, as it is one of the world's leading exporters of rice, until recently falling behind India and Vietnam. Approximately, 49% of the nation's labour force is employed in agriculture, which substantially decreased from 70% in 1980. These declines are because agriculture has been experiencing a transition from labour-intensive and transitional methods to a more industrialised and competitive sector, this results in a lowering of the physical human labour needed and other industries such as technology to advance. Overall the relative contribution of agriculture to GDP has declined while exports of goods and services has increased.

Thailand is a heavily export-dependent nation with more than 2/3 of its GDP accounted for by exports. The nation transports over $105 billion USD worth of goods and services annually, including, rice, textiles and footwear, fishery, rubber, computers, electrical appliances and cars. Thailand wants to move further with these exports and aim towards a more market-oriented economy targeting technology and modernized products, but agriculture needs to advance with this growth as well. The nation strongly supports CSA, Climate Smart Agriculture, and in fact, hosted the Regional Asia-Pacific Workshop on CSA in June 2015. Thailand has numerous professors, researchers, agriculture engineers and social scientists investigating, researching and implementing CSA and have willingness to move forward in this field. Not only will CSA further our agricultural economy, but also provide more jobs related to this field and create a new field of agricultural technology. We urge other nations to follow the path Thailand has taken, and attend workshops, seminars and conferences FOA, CAPSA, WFP and GAP-CC host, in collaboration with Thailand, and go forth with that. We are willing to educate farmers from other nations through our CSA Program and grow the Asian Agricultural Economy.

Lastly, climate change is another issue significantly affecting agriculture and plant growth. Thailand produces a very minimal amount of the world's carbon dioxide emissions and hosted the International Panel on Climate Change in April 2007 where specific guidelines were made for the country such as reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 15% than current projected levels. Globally, agriculture plays an interesting environmental role: it is both a victim of, and contributor to climate change.  At the same time that agriculture is forced to adapt to challenges involving new soil conditions, more erratic weather patterns, and changing water availability scenarios, there is pressure to find ways to mitigate agriculture’s extensive contribution to greenhouse warming.  Thailand’s agricultural sector is no exception.

To conclude, Thailand urges all nations to continue to grow their sectors of technology, but also keep in mind that agriculture is integral to a sustainable society and by continuing to grow their agricultural economy by implementing CSA, food will have a great future...

**Topic 3:**  **Labour Migration and Illegal Trafficking in the Asia-Pacific**

Given its robust and growing economy, Thailand is well position to take advantage of the benefits of migration. But, harnessing labour migration's full potential requires long term, strict and elaborate policies that would affect the estimated 3.5 million migrants, from which more than 1 million are unregistered. The segmentation and detail orientation of Thailand's labour market explains the large-scale immigration and a simultaneous emigration of low skilled workers into the nation. Immigration inflows from its low income neighbouring countries, such as Laos, Cambodia and Myanmar, pose a challenge to Thailand. This is because the wage differentials between Thailand and more economically developed nations results in decreasing immigration. Due to regional varieties throughout the nation, internal migration is also encouraged and of common practice.

To add on, Thailand is a source, destination and transit country for men, women, children subjected to forced labour and human trafficking. Despite the nation's economic growth, it struggles in terms of this, and has been placed on the "Tier 2 Watch list" by the latest US State Department Human Trafficking Report. Thailand has taken action regarding this by cooperating with numerous foreign law agencies to arrest and deport any foreign officials engaging in labour trafficking and working with

The delegation of Thailand recommends all member states to understand the severity of human labour trafficking and analyze the positives and negatives of labour migration. Thailand urges all nations to work with foreign agencies to create ethical and appropriate policies that leverage the nation's migration. This can be done by following four main approaches: a) establish a centralized migration management authority; b) drafting comprehensive migration policies that address issues such as nationality verification, migrant-worker registration system, gender disparities, status of long term residents and migrants' children, displaced persons and data management research; c) empowering migrant workers; d) supporting public dialogue on migration.

After creating these policy, implementing them will be a lengthy yet necessary process. By working with law enforcement agencies, NGOs and governments, these policies will be able to be implemented and this is what Thailand is working towards.

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