

Statement
by H.E. Mrs. Nongnuth Phetcharatana
Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Thailand
to the United Nations in Vienna
Head of the Delegation of Thailand
to the 17th OSCE Ministerial Council
2 December 2009
Hellenikon Complex, Athens, Greece.

Mr. Chairman,
Excellencies,
Distinguished participants,

Allow me at the outset to express my sincere gratitude to the Government of the Hellenic Republic, and especially to H.E. Mr. George Papandreou, Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Greece and as Chairman in Office of the Organisation of Security Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), for the kind hospitality and warm welcome extended to me and my delegation. I wish to take this opportunity also to express my gratitude to all the relevant bodies of the OSCE for the efficient and smooth organization of this Ministerial Council.

Since security issues are now cross-dimensional, cross-border and cross-regional, comprehensive security has become indivisible, and regional organizations like the OSCE are working to ensure collective security both within and outside their respective regions. It is a farsightedness of the Greek Chairmanship to initiate the Corfu Process. Its vision to encompass Euro-security and Euro-Asian security, as well as its free-flow and broad-based consultation in nature, I believe, will bring about productive security dialogue within the OSCE.

Mr. Chairman,

Since Thailand joined the OSCE as an Asian Partner for Cooperation on 9 May 2000, we have strived to make ourselves relevant to the OSCE by actively and consistently engaging in the OSCE's activities.

In this process, Thailand has participated actively in the OSCE by hosting 3 meetings within the OSCE framework in 2002, 2005 and 2006, on topics ranging from the human dimension of security to human trafficking, poverty and pandemics.

I believe that Thailand's interests can be advanced in a three-fold strategy focusing on our mutual principles, our determination to turn vision for regional linkage between the OSCE and the ARF into action, and our initiative to share best practices between Thailand and the OSCE.

Developments in ASEAN

Mr. Chairman,

The OSCE can be confident that many principles regarding regional security in which Europe cherishes are seen by Thailand as mutually reinforcing, particularly endeavours to improve security through dialogue, the building of trust and confidence, and diplomacy. These principles are reflected in developments in ASEAN and the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), especially during Thailand's chairmanship.

On 23-25 October 2009, Thailand successfully hosted the 15th ASEAN Summit and Related Summits in Cha-am and Hua Hin. We are proud to have achieved much during the task of our Chairmanship of both ASEAN and the ARF.

We are on our way to becoming an ASEAN Community in 2015, a comprehensive community comprising economic, socio-cultural, and political-security pillars.

Comprehensive security requires economic stability, and this is a fact that has not been lost on ASEAN. Among other measures, ASEAN has now established an enlarged USD 120 billion swap arrangement under the Chiang Mai Initiative Multilateralisation to restore confidence and ASEAN's ability to address the impact of the global economic crisis.

In the social pillar, ASEAN aims to promote connectivity in the hearts and minds of ASEAN peoples and has continued to engage the civil society sector to support Community Building.

In the political and security field, the ASEAN Community will ensure that among other important pledges, human rights are respected, food and energy security is ensured, and disaster relief is efficiently managed.

With an establishment of the ASEAN Human Rights Body, ASEAN is becoming a driving force for the promotion and protection of human rights. Key principles guiding this body are credibility, realism, and evolution. This body is also tailor made to fit our organization and comfort level of Member Countries and we are doing all we can to make certain that the ASEAN human rights body is truly meaningful. Most important is that the body is meant to evolve and guarantees that ASEAN will strive to promote human rights at every stage of ASEAN's evolution.

In disaster relief, ASEAN has now formalized guidelines to deploy military and defense assets for Disaster Relief and Humanitarian Response as well as enhanced cooperation with the civil society on disaster relief to ensure greater efficiency and participation. The ASEAN

Agreement on Disaster Management and Security Response will enter into force by the end of 2009.

The issue of food security has been dealt with under the East Asia Rice Reserve under the purview of the ASEAN+3 Rice Reserve, which will ensure the stability of food prices as well as guaranteed supplies in the incident of global food shortages.

The ASEAN Regional Forum, or ARF, has come a long way from its birth in Bangkok on 25 July 1994. At the 15th ARF Anniversary on 23 July 2009 in Phuket, Thailand, the ARF Vision Statement was endorsed and outlines the ARF's commitments including, among other issues, enhanced cooperation, a commitment to CBMs and PD, and military transparency.

Cooperation between OSCE and ARF

Mr. Chairman,

Since 2006, Thailand has encouraged enhanced linkages between the OSCE and the ARF.

The ARF Vision Statement encourages ARF's linkages to other international security cooperation frameworks and organizations. Thailand expects further developments in this area as experts convene at the ARF Expert and Eminent Person Meeting in Bali on 14-15 December 2009, whereby linkages between the ARF and other regional organizations will be further discussed. In the meantime, several concrete steps can be taken to help enhance contacts and linkages between the ARF and the OSCE.

First, we can intensify OSCE participation in the ongoing ARF activities.

At the next inter-sessional period, we envisage more intense consultations within the ARF in exploring possible PD measures, initially on non-traditional security issues. Co-Chairs of ARF activities could be encouraged to invite OSCE and other regional organizations to participate as resource persons.

The ARF Chair with the ARF Unit of the ASEAN Secretariat could be invited to participate in OSCE activities to further exchange their experiences on CBM and PD. In this regard, we are taking the opportunity of the ASEAN Secretary-General's participation in UNIDO's GC in Vienna to arrange a meeting between the ASEAN and the OSCE secretary-generals.

Second, we can encourage closer networking between the ARF Unit and the OSCE Secretariat and from this relationship develop the appropriate training and exchange programmes.

Third, we can benefit from the practical experience and operational procedures of other organizations in dealing with non-traditional security threats such as disasters and pandemics as well as risk-monitoring and risk reduction centres.

Enhancing Engagement between Thailand and the OSCE

Mr. Chairman,

At last year's Ministerial Conference in Helsinki, Thailand stated how non-traditional security threats cannot be taken lightly. We also spoke of Thailand's successful eradication of poppy cultivation and crop substitution in the northern region of Thailand – the so-called Golden triangle area. We also noted how Thailand's Mae Fah Luang Foundation is known for bringing sustainable alternative livelihood development to Afghanistan and Aceh, and continues to be at the forefront in such efforts to share Thailand's experiences on eliminating narcotic crop cultivation through sustainable poverty alleviation with the support of key partners.

We would like you to see with your own eyes how Thailand tackled the complexities derived from cultivation, trade and trafficking of illicit drugs. At the 2009 OSCE-Japan Conference in Tokyo, Thailand proposed a combined workshop and field trip on Combating Illicit Crop Cultivation and Enhancing Border Security and Management in northern Thailand.

Thailand and Kazakhstan is pleased to announce that we are scheduled to organize this event on 24-28 January 2010 in Chiang Mai and Chiang Rai and hope that OSCE members and Partners will actively participate in this forum.

Mr. Chairman,

Thailand's partnership with the OSCE has matured, and Thailand is constantly looking for ways to advance cooperation within this framework. We encourage the OSCE to make use of Thailand's unique position as the only ASEAN member in the OSCE and we would welcome suggestions from OSCE members on how to further enhance linkages between the OSCE and the ARF for our mutual benefit.

Thank you.
