

**Statement by Delegation of Thailand**

**General Wanlop Rugsanaoh,**

**Secretary – General, Office of the National Security Council**

**General Debate, 69<sup>th</sup> UNHCR Executive Committee**

**Monday 1 October 2018, 15.00-18.00 hours (tbc) (5 minutes)**

Madam Chair,  
High Commissioner,  
Distinguished Delegates,

1. On behalf of the Thai Delegation, please allow me to congratulate you and the bureau on the able chairmanship, throughout the Global Compact on Refugees process this year, we are confident that this meeting will be a success.
2. I would also like to thank the High Commissioner and his Office for tireless efforts in pursuing the transformative work of UNHCR to improve the well-being of the 68.5 million refugees worldwide. The work of UNHCR is in alignment with Thailand's belief that the principle of burden and responsibility sharing and the broadening base of support from various stakeholders are the way forward, and more should be done to strengthen these efforts.

Madam Chair,

3. For the GCR to be adopted by the UN General assembly later next month, implementation and follow-up are keys to realizing the goals of providing durable solutions to refugees and displaced persons and also providing assistance to hosting communities. Thailand looks forward to the development of indicators in an inclusive manner because it will help monitor and evaluate progress and also help forge better cooperative responses to large scale displacement.

Madam Chair,

4. During the past year, Thailand has taken several positive steps in migration and displaced persons as well as statelessness issues. I am pleased to highlight some of these developments.

5. Our homegrown screening mechanism and measures to operationalize the government policy on alternative to detention for migrant children are closer to realization. We have concluded the draft regulation to separate illegal economic migrants from those who are in genuine need of protection, which will be submitted to the Cabinet soon. The draft MoU on alternatives to detention for children in immigration detention centers has also been finalized. In cooperation with relevant stakeholders including UNHCR and IOM, smooth and systematic transfer of migrant children from detention centers, adhering to the principle of best interest of the child, will be put in place.
6. Both the draft regulation and the MoU are among the pledges that the Prime Minister of Thailand has committed at the Leader's Summit on Refugees in 2016. The translation of the pledges into concrete outcome is reaffirmation of our commitments to the international community on these important issues.
7. On Myanmar displaced persons along Thai-Myanmar border, Thai and Myanmar government have worked closely together to expedite the systematic and sustainable return of these peoples. At present there are about one hundred and ten thousands displaced persons. So far , both countries have successfully returned 164 Myanmar

displaced persons , more than 300 persons are expected to return voluntarily later this year. We are further enhancing cooperation on the sustainable and dignified return of Myanmar displaced persons. In this connection, we want to thank and count on the UNHCR and IOM to facilitate and ensure that returns are done in a safe, voluntary, dignified and sustainable manner.

8. In line with Thailand's endorsement of the UNHCR's #IBelong Campaign to end statelessness by the year 2024, Thailand has taken steps to achieve that goal, such as amending related legislations and providing nationalization pathways for specific groups of non-Thai citizens. The most recent case of granting citizenships to 30 stateless persons, including the three stateless boys and the coach from the "Wild Boar" football team, illustrates our commitment on this issue.
  
9. Furthermore, we are currently exploring the possibility of joining the 1951 Refugee Convention. Later this year, Office of the National Security Council will organize a workshop for government officials to promote a better understanding of the convention and its place in global context.

Madam Chair,

8. In closing, Thailand reaffirms our continued support for UNHCR and readiness to join hands with other countries and all stakeholders in managing global migration challenges, including through the implementation of the GCR. Many more people are waiting for our help. There is no more time to waste and only together, we can make a difference for the world.

9. I thank you.

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