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Statement by
H.E. Gen Prayut Chan-o-cha (Ret.)
Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Thailand
At the Global Leaders' Meeting on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment:
A Commitment to Action
27 September 2015, 09.00-13.00 hrs.
Conference Room 4, United Nations Headquarters, New York

Mr. Chairman/ Madame Chair,
Excellencies Heads of State and Heads of Government,
Distinguished Delegates,

On behalf of the Royal Thai Government, I would like to commend the Government of the People's Republic of China and the United Nations, especially UN Women, for co-hosting this Meeting.

This year is an important one because it marks the 20th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. It is also the year in which Leaders have adopted the sustainable development goals, which include the important goal of gender equality.

Distinguished Delegates,

Thailand had the honour of chairing the 59th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women this past March, where we reviewed the progress made in implementing the Beijing Declaration. While progress has been made in giving women and girls equal opportunities and equal access as their male counterparts, yet challenges remain in the quest to fully realise gender equality so as to enable women to live with dignity and participate fully in their societies as well as in their countries' development.

On Thailand's part, our efforts to promote women's issues and women's development were put in motion beginning in 1972 and have continued ever since to enable women to reach their full potential as productive members of society side by side with men.

The Thai Government has implemented an 'Education for All' policy, enabling all youth, girls and boys, to have equal access to education and allowing Thailand to achieve the Millennium Development Goal of eliminating gender disparity at all levels of education.

Moreover, Thailand has continuously improved and developed legislation to promote women's rights and gender equality; to protect women from domestic violence and from sexual violations and harassment in the workplace; as well as to combat and suppress human trafficking while also taking care of and rehabilitating victims of human trafficking, who are mostly women and children.

Recently, Thailand promulgated the 2015 Gender Equality Act, which became effective on 9 September 2015, to protect everyone from gender-based discrimination.

Distinguished Delegates,

Thailand is resolved to move forward on gender equality in the following areas:

First, by developing a curriculum on gender roles to cultivate positive attitudes and an acceptance of gender equality in children from an early age.

Second, by collecting sex disaggregated data, for analytical purposes and for formulating gender-sensitive policies as well as for monitoring progress made in the realisation of gender equality.

Third, by providing training to relevant public agencies in order to promote gender-responsive budgeting.

Thailand's next national economic and social development plan will also focus on people-centred, inclusive development, and also on reducing social inequality. This will provide further opportunities for women to participate even more equally in our national economic and social development.

Distinguished Delegates,

Promoting gender equality is not a matter that lies only in the hands of women. Men and boys must also do their part to foster positive attitudes on gender roles. This will help to end all forms of discrimination against women as well as eliminate violence against women and girls.

I believe that promoting gender equality begins with each and every one of us. It begins in our homes, our schools, and our communities. Each and every one of us can and must play a part in making our societies better.

Thank you.

