

**Statement by
His Excellency General Paiboon Koomchaya
Minister of Justice of the Kingdom of Thailand
for the High Level Segment at the Thirteenth United Nations Congress on
Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice
Sunday 12 April 2015 (afternoon)
Qatar National Convention Center, Doha, Qatar**

**Madam President, Your Royal Highness,
Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,**

It is my great honour to address the Congress today. At the outset, I would like to express my sincere appreciation to the Government of Qatar for graciously hosting this important meeting here in Doha.

Madam President, Your Royal Highness,

Transnational organized crime is a major threat to development. Thailand firmly believes in integrating crime prevention and criminal justice issues into the wider agenda of the UN. We need to enhance the UN system-wide coordination and the more integrated post-2015 development agenda. The rule of law as a vital factor for sustainable development must be fully included in the post-2015 development agenda.

The justice system is an essential part of the rule of law. To promote the rule of law, we must enhance access to justice for all. Thailand is developing a new law called “the Justice Fund Act”. Based on the UN Principles and Guidelines on Access to Legal Aid in Criminal Justice Systems, the Act will not only provide financial assistance to those in criminal proceeding, but also expand community justice base throughout the country.

Also, at the heart of the justice system is the treatment of offenders. Imprisonment is intended not only to punish offenders, but also to rehabilitate them for social reintegration and to reduce recidivism. At the last Congress in Salvador, the UN Bangkok Rules for Women Prisoners triggered a “global rethink” that led to the review of the Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners. I urge the Crime Commission to recommend for the adoption of the revised SMRs by the General Assembly within this year.

Thailand also attaches importance to the protection of vulnerable groups. Our efforts on the new UN Model Strategies and Practical Measures on the Elimination of Violence against Children stand as the evidence of that. The same also applies to the issue of gender-related killing of women and girls.

Madam President, Your Royal Highness,

Corruption is another key area that undermines development.

The Thai Government places the fight against corruption as one of its top national agenda. Corruption weakens the rule of law, and puts pressures on maintaining national peace and order.

We must build conducive environment to prevent corruption. We need to invest in necessary measures, including education as early prevention, raising public awareness and strengthening public-private partnership.

Drugs pose a major threat to development. Drug trafficking and drug-related crimes are trans-boundary in nature. A more robust international cooperation is required to address these challenges. In the Southeast Asian region, the ASEAN Narcotics Cooperation Centre (ASEAN-NARCO) was set up

in Bangkok last year to enhance cooperation and information sharing on narcotics matters, particularly control of precursor chemicals.

Madam President, Your Royal Highness,

Human trafficking is another problem of great concern. Strong determination by the Government to end this horrible crime is much needed. The Thai Government declared a policy of zero tolerance to human trafficking last September. Since then, the situation has improved significantly in terms of prosecution and conviction rates. To echo our commitment, our Prime Minister just recently announced anti-trafficking as national agenda and handed down policies to all responsible agencies. In addition to law enforcement, protection and care should be given to victims of trafficking, including legal aid and facilitation of their access to justice procedures.

For new and emerging forms of crime, Thailand sees environmental crime and cybercrime as its priority areas. On environmental crime, Thailand has amended relevant laws to address wildlife and ivory trafficking. On cybercrime, we look for capacity-building particularly on on-line sexual exploitation of children.

Madam President, Your Royal Highness,

Finally, let me reiterate that as the UN is formulating the new global development agenda, the Crime Congress should send a strong message that the rule of law, crime prevention and criminal justice must be fully integrated into such an agenda. I hope that the Doha Declaration will provide us with a roadmap for our future course.

Thank you very much, Madam President, Your Royal Highness.
