

Opening Remarks by
H.E.Mrs. Nongnuth Phetcharatana

at the Opening of the Photo Exhibition
“Ask the experts: lessons learnt by the Self-Empowerment Programme of Migrant
Women (SEPOM), Thailand”

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1. I would like to welcome all participants to the opening of this Photo Exhibition. Your presence reflect our shared interest and responsibility to make our planet a better place to live for all.
2. Combating human trafficking is the Government of Thailand’s priority policy. Thailand spares no effort in preventing and suppressing human trafficking, especially in women and children. We are committed to ensure active involvement of all stakeholders in the society. In this regard, we are pleased to co-host this photo exhibition which intends to share experience on ‘empowerment model’ and promote partnership cooperation in combating human trafficking.
3. Allow me to express my sincere appreciation to the Global Alliance Against Trafficking in Women (GAATW) and the Self-Empowerment Programme of Migrant Women (SEPOM) for their work in supporting trafficked persons, especially female migrants, in the rehabilitation and reintegration aspect and implementing the victim-centred approach.
4. Thailand’s determination to end human trafficking reflects in measures adopted at national, regional and international level, spearheaded by our commitments based on 3 Ps – Prevention, Protection and Prosecution.
5. We issue the National Policy and Action Plan on Prevention and Resolution of Domestic and Cross-border Trafficking in Children and Women (2003 – 2011) which serves as a guidance and policy support for government, civil society and non-government organizations.
6. The Operation Centers on Anti-Trafficking in Persons is set up in 75 provinces throughout the country. The Centers serve as coordinating mechanism among the public sector, the private sector and local communities, to protect and assist victims of trafficking.
7. On preventive measures, we have carried out a number of outreach campaigns to raise public awareness of the severe impact of human trafficking, respect for human rights and gender equality. Numerous workshop and training program have been conducted to improve capacity and skill of social workers and practitioners who are involved in anti-human trafficking.
8. On protection and recovery measures, we mobilized inter-agency effort as well as NGOs, international organizations and our embassies overseas to provide shelters and welfare homes and assistance to both Thai and non-Thai victims of trafficking.

Appropriate necessities, such as physical, education, and healthcare assistance are provided for successful recovery and social integration. Safe return of trafficked persons to their country of origin is ensured, monitoring programme is set up to prevent future re-trafficking.

9. On the 3rd P Prosecution, the Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act 2008 has improved judicial system to become more responsive to secure justice for victims of trafficking in the equal, non-discriminatory manner and with respect to human rights. The law imposed heavier penalties on all involved in human trafficking.

10. At regional level, we have signed MOUs with neighbouring countries on cooperation in preventing human trafficking, prosecuting trafficking cases and protecting victims.

11. We have also taken part in regional cooperative networks such as the Coordinated Mekong Initiative against Trafficking (COMMIT) of Southeast Asia, ASEAN, ACMECS. We strongly support the Bali Process to combat human trafficking.

12. But only government's actions cannot put an end to this problem. We must ensure close cooperation from all concerned sector in implementing such measures, which can be the fourth P - Partnership.

13. In this regard, we thank for the active role of civil society, in particular the works done by GAATW and SEPOM, in mobilizing its resources and capacity to support the government agencies in fighting against human trafficking. Their role in protecting, assisting as well as empowering trafficked victims is truly appreciated. We would be happy to hear from Ms. Bandana Pattanaik, International Coordinator, Global Alliance Against Traffick in Women (GAATW), who has been actively engaged in GAATW work in Thailand.

14. We enjoy cooperation with other international organizations. In the framework of Human Right Councils, Thailand co-sponsored a resolution proposed by Germany and the Philippines entitled "Trafficking in person, especially women and children : regional and subregional cooperation in promoting a human rights-based approach to combating trafficking in person".

15. I am pleased that Ambassador Rüdiger Lüderking, Permanent Representative of Germany, and Ambassador Lourdes Yparraguirre, Permanent Representative of the Philippines are here with us today. They will share with us experiences in pushing forward a victim-centred approach to combat trafficking in person.

16. I thank you all for being here and wish you would enjoy the evening.
