



PERMANENT MISSION OF THAILAND
TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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Statement

by

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before the 48th Session of the Commission on Population and Development

on agenda item 4: national experience in population matters: realizing the
future we want: integrating population issues into sustainable development,
including in the post- 2015 development agenda

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The United Nations, New York

Mr. Chairman,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen.

1. At the outset, let me congratulate you on your election as Chair of the 48th session of the Commission on Population and Development. It is a great honour for me to deliver Thailand's country statement at the 48th Commission on Population and Development. The theme this year on integrating population issues into sustainable development is very important for Thailand in guiding the future of the post-2015 development agenda.
2. Thailand has achieved its 'demographic dividend' with a larger share of working population and fewer dependents, one of the factors contributing to rapid economic growth in the past decades. With good coverage of family planning services in place throughout the country for more than three decades together with intensive rural development policies introduced during that time, Thai families have become smaller with only one to two children per family, young people have access to education, and employ decent jobs.
3. Yet, the population trends in Thailand are progressing in ways that require new policy initiatives. Thailand's population growth has slowed down considerably, and has been predicted to decline further with rapid ageing. The changing population structure has emerged as an issue of critical importance with long-term implications raising important planning issues with regard to adjusting to those population changes.

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4. Recognizing that people must be at the center of sustainable development and taking into account the importance of inclusiveness as well as our firm commitment to the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) and inter-linking it to the post-2015 development agenda, Thailand is developing a twenty-year National Population Development Plan to tackle emerging population concerns. The plan provides a framework of three pillar strategies – promotion of quality child births, enhancing productive workforces, and supporting active ageing. The key content of the new population policy is adoption of the right-based approach development throughout a life-cycle to ensure that individuals in all age groups are self-reliant within secured environment and quality of life.
5. Since 2002, Thailand has been implementing the Universal Health Coverage (UHC) Initiative, which covers almost all relevant sexual and reproductive health services envisioned in the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD). Significant progress in sexual and reproductive health was achieved well before the 1994 ICPD and the 2002 UHC initiative. The contraceptive prevalence rate for all methods has increased from 14%

National Family Planning Programme, to 79% in 2012. The total fertility rate has fallen from 5.9 children per woman in the 1970s to 1.6 in 2011.

6. Owing to sustained political commitments and effective programme implementation, HIV was reversed from a generalized to a concentrated epidemic between 1993 and 2006. HIV prevalence in pregnant women declined from a peak of 23% in 1995 to 0.5% in 2012. The investment in preventing mother to child transmission (PMTCT) reduced vertical transmission to 3.2% in 2011. People living with HIV have received free antiretroviral (ART) with costs covered by UHC.

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7. Despite such achievements, certain challenges persist and others have emerged. The adolescent birth rate and unmet need for contraception among young women have sharply increased. Further, a sharp decline in use of longer acting contraceptives, such as implants and IUDs as well as injection, has occurred during a decade of the Universal Health Coverage, due to decentralized management of the family planning programme.
8. In attempts to avoid a continued decline in fertility and in supporting the new National Population Development Policy, Thailand is developing the 2nd National Reproductive Health Policy focusing on two main issues – first, to halve teenage pregnancy rate by 2025, and second, to support quality childbirths for all.
9. To improve utilization of sexual and reproductive health services by young people, the

people with full engagement of men and boys, as well as families and communities, as agents of change in promoting gender equality. Thailand supports development of appropriate policies to promote the responsibility of men and boys in promoting sexual and reproductive health and rights of all individuals.

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12. At the regional level, the ASEAN post-2015 vision, which lays down ASEAN development goals, are in line with the post-