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Statement

by

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Attaché,

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before the Sixth Committee

of the 76th Session of the United Nations General Assembly

Agenda item 87

Protection of persons in the event of disasters

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Madam Chair,

1. At the outset, the Kingdom of Thailand wishes to express our appreciation to the Special Rapporteur and the former ILC Chair, Mr. Eduardo Valencia-Ospina, for his substantive contribution, insightful analysis and tireless dedication, including the eight comprehensive reports on the topic of the protection of persons in the event of disasters.

Madam Chair,

2. Thailand participates in the debate on this agenda item with much attention. We witnessed and actively participated in the development of international cooperation mechanisms and non-legally-binding instruments in this field, from Yokohama Strategy to the Sendai Framework and other initiatives. We believe that establishing a global legally-binding instrument would be a next step in creating a legal framework that lays down principles and effectively protects those in need.

3. In line with this, Thailand notes with satisfaction the ILC to elaborate a convention on the basis of the Draft Articles adopted in 2016, which covers of state sovereignty and protection of human rights, while taking into account the roles and contributions of all actors and partners in disaster response.

Madam Chair,

4. On the consideration of this agenda item, Thailand wishes to share the following points:

5. First, with regard to the definition of disaster, Thailand can go along with the current formulation in the Draft Article 3 a, which defines the term in accordance with the Tampere Convention as well as the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and

Emergency Response. Due to various forms of disasters, such a definition would also allow discretion in practice to consider what incidents constitute the notion of the functioning of society.

6. In addition, we cannot deny that the COVID crisis has caused us global disruption and unprecedented damages; therefore, we would welcome continued discussion on the Draft Articles on

11. Lastly, in term of seeking external assistance from an array of potential assisting actors as mentioned in the Draft Articles 11 to 15, Thailand would like to recommend further discussions or possible mechanisms to help facilitate cooperation and coordination among these various entities. The ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on Disaster Management (AHA Centre) represents a good example on this issue.

Madame Chair,

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12. As disasters know no border and affect us all to a varying degree, the world must strengthen a sustainable partnership for disaster relief especially through the development of international law to enhance adequate, effective and predictable collective responses and ensure humanitarian aid to those in need in time of crises. To this end, we must also look beyond a particular crisis and adopt a forward-looking approach in formulating a legally binding instrument in this area. Thailand therefore reaffirms our support to the recommendation for the General Assembly to elaborate a convention on the basis of the Draft Articles and look forward to actively participating in further discussions on this issue.

I thank you.

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