

Statement
By
H.E. Mrs. Patcharee Arayakul
Permanent Secretary,
Ministry of Social Development and Human Security
of the Kingdom of Thailand
at the 59th Session of the Commission for Social Development
under the Priority Theme: “Socially just transition towards sustainable development: the
role of digital technologies on social development and well-being of all”

Madam Chair,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

1. Thailand aligns itself with the statement delivered by Guinea on behalf of G77 and China.
2. It is my great honour to deliver my statement on behalf of the Royal Thai Government at the 59th session of the Commission for Social Development under the priority theme: “Socially just transition towards sustainable development: the role of digital technologies on social development and well-being of all.”
3. In my view, the theme is considered timely and relevant to all of us as the COVID-19 pandemic has continued to cause an adverse impact on socio-economic development in every country. The world is facing with the risk of reversing the hard-earned development gains, especially among vulnerable groups, and hampering the progress made towards the SDGs. While we have witnessed the applications of digital technologies in various areas in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, it is undeniable that digital divide and inequality have also become prominent and widened worldwide.
4. I believe that this Session of the Commission provides a good opportunity for us to deliberate on how to address prevailing challenges, advance social development, and harness digital technologies for the realization of the 2030 Agenda.

Madam Chair,

5. Thailand attaches great importance to the COVID-19 response based on a comprehensive whole-of-society and whole-of-government approach through the introduction of an Ad-hoc Master Plan under the National Strategy. As a single command mechanism, the “Centre for COVID-19 Situation Administration” (CCSA) provides scientific- and fact-based situation report to the public. Its daily briefings by a non-partisan doctor are broadcasted live on Facebook and translated into the languages of neighbouring countries to generate public awareness and trust and ensure the access to information of those at the margins.

6. Combined with our long-term investment in public health system through the Universal Health Coverage scheme, more than one million village health volunteers and nearly 300,000 social development and human security volunteers have greatly contributed to Thailand's success in bringing the COVID-19 under effective control.

Madam Chair,

7. Thailand fully realizes the need for digital transformation, and commits to advance national development towards security, prosperity, and sustainability. We have incorporated digital transformation into the Twelfth National Economic and Social Development Plan (2017 - 2021) and will continue to transform our country to a value-based and innovation-driven economy under "Thailand 4.0" policy.
8. At regional level, under Thailand's Chairmanship in 2019, ASEAN also adopted the ASEAN Digital Integration Framework Action Plan 2019 - 2025 and the Policy Guideline on Digitalization of ASEAN Micro Enterprises, to further facilitate the transformation to a digital economy in a more integrated and inclusive manner.
9. In an effort to leave no one behind, Thailand has utilised digital technologies to promote sound policies on social development as well as to expand welfare platforms and services with a view to protecting vulnerable groups.
 - On poverty alleviation, we have developed a data analytics tool, namely Thai People Map and Analytics Platform or TPMAP, that can compare data from different government agencies, enabling policy makers to derive precision poverty alleviation programmes suitable for individuals in each province, district or sub-district.
 - We have also introduced the Service Tracking System to allow clients of the 24-hour Social Assistance Center Hotline to check the status of their cases and make inquiries on existing social welfare and protection programmes.
 - We are introducing the Child Protection Information System or CPIS that provides children and youth with an easy access to protection services via its mobile application and enables the authorities to provide timely assistance and protection by utilizing its synchronized and integrated database.
 - We have promoted the use of technologies and digital skills among women's entrepreneurs in SMEs to prepare for the economic transition in the "New Normal" era.
 - The Ministry of Social Development and Human Security, in partnership with leading institutes, has been developing robots which can be used for telemedicine purpose so that bed ridden elderly or caretakers can communicate with a physician through video conference system.

Madam Chair,

10. In closing, as an ECOSOC Member, Thailand reaffirms its commitment to further engaging with Member States, the United Nation Development System as well as other stakeholders to promote the inclusive use of digital technologies to close digital divide and support our shared determination towards achieving 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
11. As the world is recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic, Thailand remains convinced that long-term investment in social welfare and protection system is crucial to guard against unwanted situations and provide a strong foundation for inclusive and equitable economic growth and sustainable development in which no one is left behind.

Thank you.

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