

Summary Report of the Thai National Legislative Assembly Delegation
Attending the Parliamentary Meeting on the occasion
of the United Nations Climate Change Conference
(Conference of Parties : COP23)
Sunday 12 November 2017
University of Bonn, Bonn, Federal Republic of Germany



Deutscher Bundestag

Overview

Hon. Gen. Soopawoot Utama, Member of the Thai National Legislative Assembly (NLA), as a parliamentary delegate of Thailand, attended the Parliamentary Meeting on the occasion of the United Nations Climate Change Conference (Conference of Parties : COP23), co – organized by the Inter – Parliamentary Union (IPU), the German Bundestag, and the Parliament of Fiji, on Sunday, 12 November 2017 from 09.00 – 18.00 hrs. at the University of Bonn, Bonn, Federal Republic of Germany.

The meeting was held with the aim of helping parliamentarians obtain information on the main issues of COP23, interact with experts and negotiators involved in the UNFCCC decision–making process and discuss ways of ensuring implementation of the Paris Agreement. Participants also gained better knowledge of the recommendations included in the IPU’s Parliamentary Action Plan on Climate Change.

The meeting brought together legislators from 52 countries as well as experts to discuss how parliaments could take actions in response to climate change. Participants from member parliaments had an opportunity to discuss, review key issues pertaining the climate change, as well as share information and experience on how parliaments can work to take the Paris Agreement forward. The Meeting was presided by the newly – elected President of the IPU, Hon. Ms. Gabriela Cuevas Barron, who was warmly greeted by Hon. Gen. Soopawoot Utama during the meeting interval. This meeting was also her first discharge since the presidential election in October 2017.

A key message had been delivered by Hon. Gen. Soopawoot Utama as he was the first to share with his fellow MPs the progress the Thai Government has made in recent years in reducing the greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) and how the NLA contributed to supporting the Government’s great efforts. He reiterated that Thailand is focusing on applying its environmental bills, policies, strategies, and mechanisms in many parts of the country to ensure that national commitments and targets in reducing the GHG can truly be achieved.

The last session of the one – day meeting also witnessed an adoption of a draft outcome document, which reflects joint commitment and determination among parliaments to assist their own governments in responding to climate change issues and to further parliamentary engagement. The document refers to the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and proposes, in particular, recommendations for each UNFCCC party, with assistance from its parliament, to examine and review its NDCs so as to fulfill at least some objectives of the Paris Agreement.



*A photo session of key figures in organization of the meeting includes, from left to right,
 (1) Mr. Martin Chungong, Secretary General of the IPU (2) Ms. Patricia Espinosa, Executive Secretary of the UNFCCC
 (3) Ms. Claudia Roth, Vice President of the German Bundestag (4) Ms. Gabriela Cuevas Barron, President of the IPU
 (5) Mr. Frank Bainimarama, Prime Minister of Fiji and (6) Ms. Jiko Luveni, Speaker of the Parliament of Fiji*

Thai NLA Delegation

The Thai NLA Delegation Attending the Parliamentary Meeting during the 23rd session of the Parties to the United Nations Climate Change Conference is as follows :

- 1) Hon. Gen. Soopawoot UTAMA - Member of the NLA
 - Delegate
- 2) Mr. Chulatas SAIKRACHANG - Foreign Affairs Officer (Professional Level)
 Inter – Parliamentary Union Division
 Bureau of Inter – Parliamentary Organizations
 Secretariat of the House of Representatives
 - Secretary to the Delegation



The meeting in progress

Summary Report

Hon. Gen. Soopawoot Utama witnessed the opening session of the meeting in which each key figure from the IPU and the host parliaments' countries respectively took the stage to deliver an address including (1) Mr. Frank Bainimarama, Prime Minister of Fiji and President of the COP23 Meeting (2) Ms. Patricia Espinosa, Executive Secretary of the UNFCCC (3) Ms. Jiko Luveni, Speaker of the Parliament of Fiji (4) Ms. Claudia Roth, Vice President of the German Bundestag and (5) Ms. Gabriela Cuevas Barron, President of the IPU.

At the end of the opening session, Hon. Gen. Soopawoot Utama had made the personal acquaintance of Ms. Gabriela Cuevas Barron, the 29th President of the IPU, who was recently elected during the 137th IPU Assembly on 18 October 2017 in Saint Petersburg, Russian Federation.



Hon. Gen. Soopawoot Utama during a brief discussion with Ms. Gabriela Cuevas Barron, President of the IPU

1. Interactive Panel Discussion with Contribution from the Thai NLA Delegation

After a brief session of presentation from panelists, Lord Prescott, Member of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE), as a Moderator for an interactive panel discussion session on “Low – carbon economy : What role for legislators?” welcomed each participant to take the floor. Being the first in the list of speakers, Hon. Gen. Soopawoot Utama took the floor and drew participants' attention to Thailand's progress in undertaking economy – wide reductions in emissions as per the national climate roadmaps, consisting of

concrete measures to ensure the reduction of the GHG. In 2015, by reducing 11 percent of GHG, Thailand had achieved notable progress towards its target in 2020. Still, there are some challenges which require further strengthening of mitigation effort and investing more in resilient infrastructure to enhance adaptation capacities of vulnerable sectors including, water resource management, disaster risk reduction and prevention, agriculture and food security.



Hon. Gen. Soopawoot Utama took the floor by sharing experiences and progresses of Thailand in contribution to the reduction of GHG

Moreover, during his speech, Hon. Gen. Soopawoot Utama shared with his colleagues on the NLA's roles which render, in many ways, key support for climate change implementation in many fronts. In addition to its approval of Thailand's ratification to the Paris Agreement, the NLA has also endorsed the reform proposal to enhance climate change implementation in Thailand that calls for mainstreaming climate change mandates, as well as establishing effective economic and legal instruments to drive development towards low GHG and climate – resilient pathways. The NLA has also conducted a feasibility study on harmonization of some climate – related provisions in domestic laws. Apart from that, climate – related bills, including the bills on marine and coastal resources, fisheries, ivory, forest plantation and conservation, have already been approved by the NLA. Currently, four more climate – related bills on wildlife preservation and protection, national park, community forest and preservation of natural environment submitted to the NLA are

scheduled for consideration. These draft bills aim to guide and bring the people on board to conserving the environment and ensure that the Government will have sufficient legal instrument for conservation.

2. Adoption of Draft Outcome Document

The co – Rapporteurs, Ms. Bärbel Höhn, former Member of the German Bundestag, and Ms. Mere Vuniwaqa, Member of the Parliament of Fiji, initiated this session by giving a brief presentation of the draft outcome document. Then, the session was declared closed when the meeting adopted the draft outcome document with consensus though having widely debated by delegates from many African Parliaments who made a proposal to include the word “Rabat Declaration” in the outcome document. They argued and pointed out that the “Rabat Declaration”, adopted during the African parliamentary consultation meeting on climate and sustainable development in Rabat, Kingdom of Morocco, in October 2017, acted as a mark of African Parliaments’ stance to request for financial aid of mitigation schemes in Africa. However, Ms. Gabriela Cuevas Barron, President of the IPU, reaffirmed that the outcome document is comprehensive enough to cover all the possible ways of supporting the climate change mitigation and adaptation efforts and each parliament can proceed with such recommendations.

In brief, the outcome document underscores parliamentarians’ commitment to tackling climate change and bring national policies in line with the goals of Paris Agreement as well as to strengthen their national capacity to adapt to climate change’s impacts with particular emphasis on the vulnerability of Small Island Developing States (SIDs).
