

Talking Points
Third Plenary Session
SDGs and Climate Action
7 September 2017; 09.00-11.00 hrs.
Pecatu 1 and 2, BNDCC 2
Nusa Dua, Bali, Republic of Indonesia

1. In general

- Thailand is keen to take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts, in line with Goal 13 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
- As a party to the Paris Agreement, Thailand is supportive of an aim to keep global temperatures well below 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels, as well as a further ambition to limit them even more to 1.5 degrees Celsius.
 - The Thai government has a plan to decrease greenhouse gas emissions by 20-25 percent within 2030.
- Mitigation and adaptation efforts to make the country climate-resilient are grounded in His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej's Sufficiency Economy Philosophy (SEP), which values moderation, reasonableness and self-immunity with knowledge and virtue as the two underpinning conditions.
 - When applied in practice, the SEP encompasses a people-centred model of development which welcomes the application of both local wisdom and modern technology to deal with the confronting problems.
 - In accordance with the SEP, while recognising climate change as a confronting problem, Thailand places utmost importance on contextual suitability of its mitigation and adaptation measures. This is in line with the Paris Agreement's principle of 'common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities, in the light of different national circumstances'.

2. On the roles of the Thai National Legislative Assembly

- The Thai parliament has passed several acts which contribute to enhancing the country's climate resilience and low-carbon growth.
 - Among them are (1) the National Reserved Forest Act (No.4) B.E. 2559, (2) the Fisheries Act B.E. 2558, (3) the Act on the Promotion of Marine and Coastal Resources Management B.E. 2558 and (4) the Nuclear Energy for Peace Act B.E. 2559.
 - Also, the Water Resources Bill is now under consideration at the committee's level. Grounded upon the SEP, the Bill is designed to promote resilience, integration and broad-based participation.
- The Thai parliament also engages in international events on the issue of climate change.
 - Under the framework of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), the Thai delegations comprising key persons of the relevant standing committees participated in the Parliamentary Meetings on the Occasion of the UN Climate Change Conference in 2015 and 2016 – i.e. COP21 and COP22 respectively.
- Recently, the Standing Committee on Natural Resources and Environment has appointed a sub-committee to study the problem of climate change and oversee how the government's plan to reduce the emission of greenhouse gases by 20-25 percent within 2030 can be achieved.

3. On how the parliament can contribute to the achievement of Goal 13 of the SDGs

- Since the 17 Sustainable Development Goals are indivisible, we cannot cherry-pick to deal with Goal 13 in isolation. Integration is, therefore, needed to ensure that we can harmonise environmental protection with socio-economic growth.
- As an institution entitled to make laws, approve budgets and scrutinise the government, the parliament is an ideal entity to ensure that the country's mitigation and adaptation efforts to tackle climate change are integrative, not siloed.

- With its function to approve annual budgets, the parliament can play a key role in striking the balance in resource allocation for mitigation and adaptation measures.
- Furthermore, the parliament can shape the right context for sustainable and climate-resilient development by making laws and approving budgets that are supportive of climate-safe technological innovation.
- At an international level, parliaments can exchange experience and best practices in dealing with the climate-related issues, through several inter-parliamentary forums – such as the IPU and the AIPA.

4. On how the parliament can follow up the Paris Agreement to combat climate change

- Article 4 of the Paris Agreement establishes binding commitments by all parties to prepare, communicate and maintain successive Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) that they intend to achieve every 5 years.
- Each national parliament can contribute to the Paris Agreement by examining its government's preparation for the NDC. Particularly, it can voice out whether each successive NDC represents sufficient progression beyond the previous one and reflects the highest possible ambition for the next five years

5. On how the parliament can help to oversee the Green Climate Fund

- Since there has never been a discussion on how national parliaments can take part in overseeing the Green Climate Fund, the process could begin by a discussion between representatives of national parliaments and the executive organ of the Fund, on the extent to which parliaments can make a contribution.
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