

Press Release

On Wednesday, 16 October 2019, Mrs. Pornpith Phetchareon, Deputy Secretary-General of the House of Representatives, and the Thai delegation attended the Meeting of the Association of Secretaries General of Parliaments, the Fall session 2019 at the Sava Center in Belgrade, the Republic Serbia and listened to the Communication on the Legal of the Parliamentary Opposition in the Maghreb Constitutions presented by Dr. Said Mokadem, Secretary-General of the Maghreb Consultative Council. Regarding to the meeting, there was the discussion on the roles of the opposition in the parliament of each country. In this regard, Mrs. Pornpith Phetchareon, Deputy Secretary-General of the House of Representatives, presented the roles of the Parliamentary opposition in Thailand as follows:

1. Role in general

Members of the opposition parties have the equal rights and freedom as other Members of the House of Representatives. On behalf of the party, they may submit a bill to the House of Representatives. Moreover, they can serve as the Chairperson of the standing committee in accordance with the quota of the opposition parties. For this year, 18 out of 35 Standing Committees are chaired by members of the opposition parties and only 17 Chairpersons are from the government parties.

2. Parliamentary diplomacy

Members of the opposition parties may hold the positions as members of the Executive Committee of the Thai National Group of the Parliamentary Union (IPU), the ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly (AIPA) and the Asian-Pacific Parliamentarians' Union (APPU). It is an opportunity for the opposition to perform parliamentary diplomatic duties in international forums. It is also a progress in the Thai National Assembly which gives all parliamentarians the opportunity to apply to be each member of the Parliament could be a members of the Thailand Inter-Parliamentarians Friendship Group, up to 5 groups, voluntarily.

3. Scrutiny of the government administration

The Constitution of the Kingdom of Thailand B.E. 2560 (2017) prescribes the Leader of the Opposition as a member of the Selection Committee in order to select a person suitable for appointment in the Constitutional court and Independent organs, for instance, judges of the Constitutional Court, the Election Commissioners, the Ombudsmen, the National Anti-corruption Commissioners, and the State Audit Commissioners. However, the final consideration will be the power of the Senate.

This implies the indirect duty of the opposition to balance the judicial power and to control the work of independent organs in the country.

4. Collaboration with the Council of Ministers

In the case of a significant issue regarding national security, safety or economy, there should be a joint consultation between the Thai National Assembly and the Council of Ministers. The Leader of the Opposition in the House of Representatives may inform the President of the National Assembly to request a general debate which will be a meeting in camera with no voting.

Translated by English Division
Bureau of Foreign Languages
The Secretariat of the House of Representatives