

Statement by the Delegation of Thailand
H.E. Mr. Don Pramudwinai
Minister of Foreign Affairs of Thailand
at the 2020 High-level Political Forum (HLPF) on Sustainable Development
under the theme “Accelerated action and transformative pathways:
realizing the decade of action and delivery for sustainable development”
between 7-17 July 2020 (Four-minute VDO message)

Excellencies, Dear Colleagues,

1. **The Decade of Action** has indeed met with a tumultuous start -- upended by a virus, invisible to the naked eye, that has wreaked havoc on people's health, jobs, and our economies. This only makes clear just how indispensable the SDGs are. Therefore, our resolve, unity and solidarity must be stronger and more meaningful than ever.
2. COVID-19 has brought a great deal of **uncertainty** to the world. As such, we have to strengthen our preparedness to **respond to the ensuing economic and social turmoil**.
3. Our **most urgent task** is to guarantee our people's livelihood and well-being, as guided by the SDGs. And given COVID-19, we must re-double our efforts to ensure that all people, including the most vulnerable, have access to healthcare services; safe, effective, affordable essential medicines and vaccines; and decent work.
4. To **accelerate action** towards these ends, we need to do more to **localise the SDGs**. The so-called **Sufficiency Economy Philosophy, or SEP**, is **Thailand's locally-driven development approach that places emphasis on people, sustainability and resilience**. Its goal is **development that is balanced**. Therefore, the SEP is an approach that can produce practical solutions at this challenging time. The SEP has been tried and tested in Thailand and beyond, and we stand ready to share this approach with other interested partners.
5. **Mobilising all stakeholders, including volunteers**, is a powerful means of localising the SDGs and accelerating action on the ground. Thailand's commitment to Universal Health Coverage and our response to COVID-19 have been driven by such an approach, as seen through our nationwide network of over one million Village Health Volunteers. In fact, "Volunteerism" is the focus of Thailand's Voluntary National Review (VNR) this year. Empowering **women, girls and youth** as agents of change in shaping the new normal is also critical.

6. Among the **transformative pathways** to turn the COVID-19 crisis into opportunity, Thailand sees the need for action on **four key aspects**, as follows:
7. **First, ensuring inclusive and equitable access to quality education** will be a key enabler for sustainable human development and poverty eradication.
8. **Second, promoting equitable access to Science, Technology and Innovation (STI)** will be crucial in bridging the knowledge and digital divide, to realise utmost benefits from digitalisation, and to bring about global progress on the SDGs.
9. **Third, innovatively retooling complex food systems** to make them more sustainable; healthy and safe; accessible; equitable; and resilient.
10. **Fourth, strengthening social safety nets to ensure their viability.**
11. At this time of global crisis, **international cooperation and partnerships at all levels** are more crucial than ever, in order to create an environment conducive to both post-COVID recovery and implementation of the 2030 Agenda.
12. Thailand has made contributions of **100,000 US Dollars each to the UN and ASEAN's own COVID-19 Response Funds**, and is actively exploring opportunities to go the extra mile.
13. As the United Nations celebrates its 75th year, there is no better time than now to build on its strength and stature as the principal organ for global cooperation and multilateralism.
14. Indeed, the COVID-19 crisis is giving us the unique opportunity to shift toward **a healthier, greener, more resilient, equal, humane, and sustainable world.**
15. Let us therefore take considered and decisive action to ensure such a future for us and succeeding generations.

I thank you.