

**Statement delivered by
His Excellency Grisada Boonrach
Minister of Agriculture and Cooperatives of the Kingdom of Thailand
on the occasion of the
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Honourable Ministers,
Director General of FAO,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen

As you know, migration has been caused by several factors including socio-economic consequence, political instability, environmental degradation, and climate change. Forty years ago, Thailand experienced the migration crisis caused by political conflict and Indo-China war in the region. Thousands of migrants escaped from conflict and civil war in neighboring countries. At that time, Thailand received support from UNHCR and from other international communities to handle the migration problem and help migrants re-settle in other third countries. Nowadays, the major cause of migration in Thailand is linked to socio-economic problems. People from neighboring countries continue migrating into Thailand to seek for job opportunities including agricultural, industrial, and service sectors.

The Government of Thailand provides humanitarian assistance and also implements measures for the control of illegal immigration such as registration and issuance of work permits to labor migrants to prevent illegal migration and human trafficking.

Since 2015, Thailand has built a new future for its fisheries and seafood industry through a national reform program to tackle with the illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing. Thailand would like to express its sincere thanks to FAO, European Union and ILO for technical cooperation on IUU fishing and modern slavery.

According to the national policy on labour welfare, Thailand also grants permanent residence rights to immigrants who have lived in Thailand for more than 30 years and want to work in the country. Their children have the right to receive basic education and health care as Thai citizens. The Government of Thailand has received the collaborative support from UN Agencies and NGOs in implementing these measures.

Following the footsteps of the late King Rama 9 and His Majesty King Rama 10 King Maha Vajiralongkorn's initiatives, the Royal Government of Thailand and Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives under my supervision have successfully implemented various projects to improve food security, sustainable agriculture, rural development, and poverty reduction.

In addition, Thailand has worked in close collaboration with the Global Soil Partnership and FAO on sustainable soil and water management, to conserve and use biodiversity to promote food security. We emphasize that it is important to consider shifting soil agenda into a formal permanent body in FAO. From the implementation of the above-mentioned policies, we have learned many lessons. Therefore, we are pleased to welcome all of you here to visit Thailand in order to exchange our knowledge and initiate further collaboration.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Rural development and Agriculture will bring several opportunities and employment to farmers, especially rural youth and women. This is one of the possible solutions for the migration problem.

I hope that the newly elected Director-General will build better policies on sustainable agriculture and rural development and create constructive collaboration with Member Countries and other stakeholders.

Thank you for your attention and “Sawasdee Krub”.