

Asia-Pacific Intergovernmental Meeting on the Third Review and Appraisal of the Madrid
International Plan of Action on Ageing
Bangkok, 12-14 September 2017

Name of speaker: (Mr.) (Ms.) SIRIWAN ARUNTIPPAITUNE

Country/Organization: THAILAND/ Ministry of Social Development and
Human Security

Please indicate the agenda item on which you wish to speak:

Agenda Item No: Session 3 (Country Statement
at 14.05hrs.)

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Mr. Chairman,

Thailand has been Aged Country since the last decade and is projected to be a Complete Aged and Super Aged Country in 2021 and 2031, respectively. This fact confirms that Thailand has a time limit to cope with the rapid ageing population.

I would like to share what Thailand has been doing to move forward on the progress of our implementation of the Framework of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing (MIPAA).

For the first pillar of **“Older Persons Development”**, over the past decades, Thailand has taken the MIPAA as our policy guidelines for formulating national policy for older persons’ development. The **“Act on Older Persons”** came into force since 2003, and the key messages of this Act is to promote, protect and develop older persons in comprehensive areas, such as in health care services, income security, employment, social services as well as provision of public safety facilities for easy access. Moreover, tax benefits and the Older Persons Fund have enhanced self-reliance for older persons. The Act was also the first legislation to have brought more closely the collaboration and active participation from all involved ministries, including private sectors as well as civil society, to contribute to improving the quality of life of older persons.

Thailand’s **“2nd National Plan on Older Persons 2002-2021”** emphasizes on the comprehensive dimensions of socio-economic security and prepared the Thai people for a life of **“Active Ageing”**. We

have also set up a systematic monitoring and evaluation system for the overall implementation of the national plan at a 5-year cycle.

Over the past two decades, Thailand has been making more efforts on income security for older persons through a social pension scheme called the **“Universal Non-Contributory Pension for Older Persons”**, which covers all older persons by monthly pension payment as their minimum income to live.

Moreover, in recognition of the necessity of old age retirement pension for all Thais who are not covered by any income security from the government, the **“national savings fund”** has been established in 2015. The members’ contribution will be matched by the government. This is to promote the government retirement pension for the working age by their long-term savings.

Recently, with the recognition of the concept of healthy ageing and the life-long knowledge, experiences and expertise of the elderly, the government has approved a tax incentive for employers who employ older employees, to promote **“Productive ageing”**. Older re-employment could promote independent living and increase self-value.

Mr. Chairman,

In response to the second pillar of the MIPAA **“Advancing Health and well-being into Old Age”**, Thailand has actively taken steps to improve comprehensive care and services which is covered by **“Universal National Health Care Scheme”** where Thais of all ages can equally access to free of charge health care services.

Under this scheme, older persons can access comprehensive medical health care services, which combines not only physical, but also mental health promotion, prevention, treatment and rehabilitation. The services include eye care, dental care as well as supporting assistive equipment. All health care services can be easily

accessed at Sub-District hospitals, while the referral system for further treatment has also already been put in place.

In addition, the **“Family Care Team”** by multi-disciplinary units continue to provide **“Home health Care”** for older persons at their homes. Meanwhile, on **long term care**, trained care managers and caregivers work under plans which combine health and social care for older persons. This collaborative model has been applied as a practice learnt from JICA technical support projects.

Mr. Chairman,

For the final pillar of the **“MIPAA”**, **“Ensuring Enabling and Supportive Environment”**, in line with the UN concept of **“Ageing in Place”**, the close collaboration between the Ministries and local Administrative Organizations have been promoting community volunteers to provide regular visits and basic care for older person at their homes in the community.

In recognizing **safety living of older persons**, Thailand has been working collaboratively with academia, leading construction businesses and local Administrative Organizations to provide safe housing and environment for older persons. The initial design has introduced some domestic materials for use in order to save costs by using material easily found in local areas.

Moreover, **in-house modification and house repairing** for safety living have been undertaken with support from multi sectors. Thailand is committed to provide safe and independent living of older persons.

Presently, Thailand is developing the **“Senior Complex”** as an initiative to create living arrangements and supportive facilities from care providers and business sectors.

Finally, Thailand is promoting **Community-based Older Persons Development Centers**, with the government setting up these Centers in all

Districts nationwide with the purpose of being a community center for older persons and other age groups to participate in activities such as occupational development, health care promotion, and life-long learning. All activities aim at improving quality of life, enhancing more connection of older persons in social activities and reducing loneliness and isolation.

Mr. Chairman,

To this end, with strong commitment and a supportive policy from the Thai government to the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, we see that there are still demographic challenges that need more collaboration from the public and private partnership. This will strengthen our goal of having an **“Active Ageing”** society. Thailand is strongly committed to the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing and will continue on the improvement of our implementation for the well-being of older persons.

Thank you.