Statement
by
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Representative of Thailand to the United Nations at
Plenary of the 69th Session of the
United Nations General Assembly
Agenda Item 69: Strengthening of the Coordination of
Humanitarian and Disaster Relief Assistance of the United Nations,
including special economic assistance
New York, 11 December 2014

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Mr. President,

At the outset, Thailand aligns itself with the statement delivered by the distinguished Permanent Representative of Myanmar on behalf of ASEAN.

Thailand would like to express our appreciation to the Secretary-General for his relevant reports and useful recommendations under this agenda item.

Mr. President,

As the Secretary-General rightly stated in his report, humanitarian crises continue to be among the biggest challenges of our time.

Thailand highly places the humanitarian assistance at our heart and in our foreign policy. Thailand is committed to providing humanitarian services and disaster relief at the national, regional and international levels. Concurrently, we attach great importance to the promotion of, respect for and adherence to the humanitarian principles of humanity, impartiality, neutrality and independence.

Our first hand experience during the unprecedented natural hazard of Tsunami in 2004 demonstrated that timely response and effective relief of such large scale disaster requires concerted efforts. The strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian assistance on the ground is therefore very crucial. The close cooperation and consultation between the host government and the United Nations as well as other humanitarian actors is the key element for such effectively coordinated efforts.

We have therefore continued our support and joined consensus in the adoption of all resolutions under this agenda item.

Mr. President,

As mentioned in the Secretary-General’s report that the scale of needs and outlook for humanitarian needs continue an upward trends. Therefore, even relatively small contributions can play a significant role in providing humanitarian assistance.

Let me share with you some of our small contributions in this respect.

Thailand reaffirms our support for the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) and therefore has decided to continue our contribution of 20,000 USD annually to the Fund.

In response to the spread of EBOLA, Thailand has so far contributed over 152,000 USD to the WHO to provide rice to help relieve the food shortage crisis facing the people in Ebola affected areas. Such humanitarian assistance will continue from both the Thai government and private sectors to fight this epidemic.
Regarding the relief effort for Typhoon Yolanda, Thailand has contributed ready-to-use aid packages, 5,000 tons of rice, financial donations up to 1.78 million USD and 131 tons of relief supplies to the government of the Philippines.

In conflict crisis, Thailand has contributed the total of 240,000 USD to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East or UNRWA and the Palestine Red Crescent Society in providing the much needed humanitarian services to the Palestine refugees and the reconstruction of the Gaza.

We strongly believe that adequate funding could be made possible through enhanced partnerships and strengthened financial mechanisms.

We have tried our best to do our part and would like to urge Member States, in a position to do so, to make more voluntary contributions for a more predictable and adequate humanitarian funding to enable the United Nations and humanitarian community to fulfill their noble mandates in providing assistance to those in needs.

Mr. President,

Thailand concurs with the Secretary-General’s comment on the need to work towards the reduction and management of the risk of disasters and crisis, rather than simply responding to the impacts once they emerge. Our active role in humanitarian front is therefore not limited only to the response but also the prevention.

In June 2014, the Department of Disaster Prevention and Mitigation (DDPM), Ministry of Interior of Thailand, with close collaboration with Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR), hosted the 6th Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (AMCDRR) in Bangkok, under the theme “Promoting Investments for Resilient Nations and Communities”. The outcomes of the conference provide key inputs for the Post-2015 framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (Hyogo Framework for Action II), and the 3rd World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (WCDRR) in March 2015 in Japan.

Just recently in November 2014, Thailand hosted the first ever Asian Disaster Risk Reduction Expo (ADRE) with the focus on the preparedness and response to both natural and man-made disasters.

Thailand will continue to strengthen our partnerships with the UN bodies, civil society and humanitarian community in order to reinforce the global, regional and national capacity for better prevention and response to disasters and emergencies and effective provision of humanitarian assistance.
Mr. President,

In conclusion, Thailand commends the leading role of OCHA in humanitarian operational coordination in crisis situation. My delegation also wishes to express our sincere appreciation to the relevant UN agencies as well as other humanitarian actors for their tireless efforts and dedication towards building more effective humanitarian responses and disaster relief process.

Above all, Thailand pays tribute to the dedication and courage of humanitarian personnel who work tirelessly and risk their lives to provide the necessary humanitarian assistance to those in desperate needs worldwide. We also pay respect to those who have lost their lives in the line of duty.

Thailand reiterates our strong commitment to working side by side with the international community to promote and strengthen the humanitarian coordination and disaster relief efforts for the betterment of people in needs.

I thank you, Mr. President.