Statement

by

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Representative of Thailand to the United Nations at
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Agenda Item 14:
Culture of Peace
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Please check against delivery
Mr. President,

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

Thailand wishes to thank the Secretary-General for his comprehensive report on the promotion of a culture of peace and interreligious and intercultural dialogue, understanding and cooperation for peace. We commend the commitment and active role of UN entities, particularly the UNESCO, in promoting a culture of peace and for their valuable contributions.

Thailand also wishes to express appreciation to H.E. Mr. Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser for his dedication and constructive roles in advocating the cultural diversity.

Mr. President,

We are living in the world of great diversity and increasingly interconnected societies. It is therefore highly essential for all of us to appreciate and cherish this beauty of diversity in order to live in peace and harmony.

However, the world we are living in is crying for peace. Intolerance, discrimination, exclusion, inequality and hatred, to name a few, are significant threats to peace and harmony.

No single country can overcome such threats alone. International community must work together to promote sustainable culture of peace at the national, regional and global levels.

Mr. President,

Thailand’s domestic and foreign policy prioritizes the strengthening of value of moderation in order to promote better understanding and mutual respect among different civilization, cultures, religions, faiths and beliefs. Everyone in the society must be equipped with skills to recognize and stop hate speech, stereotypes and discriminations. We strongly believe that freedom of expression, human rights and the rule of law are solid ground to cultivate peace and harmony in multicultural societies.

Thailand honours our international commitments with regard to dialogue for preventive diplomacy within various frameworks, including ASEAN, Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM), Asia-Middle East Dialogue (AMED) and the Asia Pacific Regional Interfaith Dialogue.
The 5th ASEAN “Bridges – Dialogues Towards a Culture of Peace” event was held in Thailand in September 2014. This event is part of the “Bridges” series, hosted by the International Peace Foundation, involving several major public events that will run continuously in Thailand until March 2015. The event covers a wide range of issues in politics, economics, science, culture and media with the goal to bridge differences and to build a culture of peace and development in a globalized world.

We participate actively in various international dialogue and cooperation frameworks as well as provide full cooperation and support, whenever and wherever needed, to promote global harmony to the best of our ability.

In this regard, Thailand commends the Government of Indonesia for hosting the 6th United Nations Alliance of Civilizations Global Forum under the theme “Unity in Diversity.” Thailand, as the original member of the Group of Friends of the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC), has been proactively supportive of promoting culture of peace and interreligious, interfaith and intercultural dialogue.

Mr. President,

Promoting sustainable Culture of Peace requires a holistic approach. Let me share with this Assembly some of our views in this regard.

Firstly, it is imperative to engage Member States, relevant UN agencies, and all relevant stakeholders. Thailand supports the constructive roles of different actors, be they public or private sector, civil society, media, academia, local leaders, religious figures, women and youth. We particularly underscore the role of women as an agent for peace and conflict resolution. The role of media as a carrier of peace in advocating the culture of peace is also indispensable.

Secondly, Thailand recognizes the necessity of spreading the message of peace, tolerance and promoting mutual respect of differences. We are appalled by the fact that religions that carry the message of peace-making and peace-keeping have been misinterpreted and distorted and become the main driving force for violence and terrorism. We therefore urgently need to promote true understanding of essence of religions, faiths and beliefs and to counter ideologies that underpin violence. Constructive roles of religious leaders, academia and media can greatly contribute to better understanding and bridging differences.
Thirdly, the promotion of culture of peace can be carried out through capacity building and education. Expert historians met in Bangkok in September 2014 to discuss ways to raise awareness about the shared histories of South-East Asia, to improve the quality of history curricula in order to encourage mutual understanding and respect among people in the region and strengthen neighbors’ relations. In addition, the first UNESCO Forum on Global Citizenship Education was also held in Bangkok in December 2013.

Fourthly, we need to place an increased emphasis on Youth, Promoting the notion of Peace as part of the Youth culture will undoubtedly contribute to the realization of our goals. To this end, Thailand has been very active in promoting the Culture of Peace within the Youth not only through the early stages of education but also through various activities organized by governmental agencies, academics, NGOs as well as local communities. We place high hopes in harnessing a vibrant, forward-thinking new generation of minds, where prejudice and incitement of hatred has no room within their culture. The network of the youth groups participated in these activities will eventually form a solid foundation for the society, to achieve sustainable Culture of Peace in the future.

Last, but not least, we are witnessing rapid spread of hate speech and incitement across the globe through cyberspace. It is necessary for us to formulate more effective policies and to explore new tools and mechanism to prevent and combat such malicious acts.

Mr. President,

In conclusion, Thailand supports and cosponsors all resolutions under this agenda item to demonstrate our resolve in this respect. Let me reiterate Thailand’s commitment to working closely with the international community in fostering culture of peace and intercultural understanding.

Let’s counter violence by non-violence. Let’s build peace by peace.

I thank you, Mr. President.