

Remarks by
Mrs. Suphatra Srimaitreephithak,
Director-General of Thailand International Cooperation Agency (TICA),
at the 4th TICA Connect: Five Decades of Thailand and UNFPA Partnership:
Advancing towards Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)
16 August 2018
Vithes Samosorn, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Your Excellency Mr. Virasakdi Futrakul, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Thailand

Mrs. Marcela Suazo, UNFPA Country Director for Thailand,

Ms. Deidre Boyd, UN Resident Coordinator and Representative for UNFPA Thailand Country Office,

Excellencies,

Distinguished Guests and Participants,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

1. It is an honour for me, on behalf of Thailand International Cooperation Agency or TICA, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, to welcome you all of distinguished guests to this special event, the 4th TICA Connect with UNFPA under the theme: **“Five Decades of Thailand and UNFPA Partnership: Advancing towards Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).**

2. Allow me to recall the success of close partnerships between TICA and our development partners in co-organizing the past TICA Connect event namely the 2nd TICA Connect with GIZ of Germany in January 2017 and the 3rd TICA Connect with JICA of Japan in September 2017. This brought us to today’s event, the 4th of its kind. TICA Connect aims to highlight development cooperation and promote development models in areas that Thailand has expertise and best practices with development partners and international organisations.

3. Apart from partnership with countries as development partners, Thailand has also collaborated with other international organisations under the UN auspices, particularly under the United Nations Partnership Framework or UNPAF which is presently under the cycle 2017-2021, aiming to achieve 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development through SDGs.

4. For decades, Thailand has become increasingly recognized as regional hub in Asia and the Pacific for learning and exchanging knowledge and practices and experiences in particular on health related issues. Thailand-based knowledge and expertise has been tailored to the needs and demand that can be applied to other countries in the region. At the same time, as a global facilitator on population issues, UNFPA works contribute to ensure systematic and sustainable implementation of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) agenda in any related emerging population issues.

5. The ICPD places importance to human rights and the well-being of the people explicitly at the centre of all population and sustainable development activities. With the emphasis on health, education and empowerment of women, ICPD endorses an approach to reproductive healthcare that meets family planning needs as part of a broader health package which also includes prenatal and post-natal care, safe delivery,

sexual health and related health issues for youth and adolescents. The challenges and unmet ICPD goals and targets still needs our collaborative effort to sustain the progress on population and development, especially in the context of SDGs.

Distinguished Guests and Participants,

6. TICA and UNFPA have long played a vital role in providing technical assistance to countries in the region in the past decades. We started our collaboration under South-South cooperation framework by providing opportunities and platforms for capacity building, in a form of training courses on maternal health and population and development issues to more than twenty partner countries. The cooperation has been accelerated in the past ten years with the UNPAF and the UNFPA Country Programme at its 11th Cycle (2017-2021). From individual capacity development, training and study visits that benefited only a few and whose impact was hard to asses, we shifted our focus to institutional building, strengthening and global development partnerships to synergise South-South and trilateral cooperation like our projects in Bhutan and Lao PDR on safe motherhood projects.

7. Where all stakeholders from policy makers to practitioners, trainers, trainees were fully involved in all processes. After completing the projects, the key institutions work to improve its service and training programmes for health personnel. Midwife students used the technology and knowledge transferred to improve health services systems. All these efforts would have not been possible if without a strong partnership and commitment from UNFPA.

Distinguished Guests and Participants,

8. The establishment of TICA in 2004 is a clear testimony to Thailand's commitment towards South-South and triangular cooperation. Thailand believes that revitalising global partnership as indicated in SDG 17 is the key to the achievement of all the Goals. The work between Thailand and UNFPA is one example of such partnership which deserves recognition at today's event. We also hope that today's event will create opportunity to explore more ways and means to strengthening the existing partnership to a new height benefiting to our planet, people, peace and prosperity.

9. I would like to express my thanks to distinguished guests and participants for joining us at today's event and many thanks go to UNFPA team and TICA colleagues to make this event possible. I would like to quote a poem by Mr. John Mbiti, a Kenyan poet to reflect our partnership today and beyond, saying that **"I am because we are and, since we are, therefore I am"**

10. I thank you very much.

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