

Opening Statement
by
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Eighty-one Session of the Committee Against Torture
5 November 2024

Mr. Chairperson,
Distinguished Members of the Committee Against Torture,
Friends and colleagues from international organizations /
national human rights commission / civil society,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the Royal Thai Government,/ I am honoured to head the Thai delegation here today/ for the consideration of Thailand's second report/ on the implementation of the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel,/ Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment.//

Allow me to first introduce myself./ I am Aimon Siangyai,/ Director General of the Rights and Liberties Protection Department,/ Ministry of Justice.//

The Thai delegation today comprises 31 representatives/ from a wide range of Government agencies,/ namely, the Ministry of Justice,/ Office of Attorney General,/ Office of the Court of Justice,/ Royal Thai Police,/ Immigration Bureau,/ National Security Council,/ Ministry of Public Health,/ and Ministry of Interior/ and Ministry of Foreign Affairs.//

**Mr. Chairperson,
Distinguished Committee Members,**

I would like to update you/ on Thailand's recent efforts/ in fulfilling its obligations under the CAT Convention.//

After the 1st report,/ Thailand's commitment to adhere to its human rights obligation under the Convention has been evident/ showing significant progress/ as well as improvements.//

At the outset,/ Interpretative Declarations made on three articles,/ namely, article 1, 4, and 5,/ with respect to definition of torture,/ criminalization of torture,/ attempt to commit torture as well as complicity,/ and jurisdiction over torture/ have been withdrawn.//

Moreover,/ Thailand has already become a party/ to International Convention on the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance/ or the ICPPED/ since 13 June 2024.//

All these progresses/ with respect to international obligations and commitments/ reflects the government's attempt/ to raise standards/ and upgrade implementation at home.//

At domestic level,/ the enactment of the Prevention and Suppression of Torture and Enforced disappearance Act 2022,// effective since 22 February 2023/ represents a groundbreaking development/ of the country's legal framework/ for eradication of torture.// It defines and prohibits the acts of torture,/ enforced disappearance,/ as well as the act of cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment,/ and imposes penalty corresponding to the serious nature of such offences/ aligning national laws with international standards.//

In addition,/ the law also introduces necessary preventive measures/aiming to put an end to torture/ including but not limited to,/ continuous audio-visual recording throughout the arrest and confinement,/ recording of detainee's information/ as prescribed by the law/ such as physical and mental conditions of the detainees/ before detention and upon release.// It also gives the right of accessing to detainee's information/ to legitimate relevant stakeholders/ in order to ensure transparency and accountability.//

I would also like to bring to your attention/ a measure to ensure that no one will be immune from criminal liability/ for committing torture and enforced disappearance.// In addition to direct perpetrators who commit the act of torture,/ the law also imposes varying penalties for imprisonment and fines to superiors,/ accomplices, and supporters involved in those offenses/ in a way commensurable to the degree of involvement.// It also stipulates aggravating punitive clauses/ when the offenses inflicted leads to victims' death/ and when the victims belong to vulnerable groups/ such as children and pregnant woman.//

A key mechanism to ensure its effective enforcement/ is the Committee on Prevention and Suppression of torture and Enforced Disappearance/ which currently establishes 4 sub-committees/ focusing on development of laws and regulations,/ provision of remedy,/ follow up and verify the case of enforced disappearance abroad/ and screening of the case.// In order to ensure the conformity of the practice with the law,/ the Committee's Regulation concerning audiovisual recording for arrest,/ restraining,/ report of restraining/ and the recording of the detainee's information/ together with a Form for Recording of Detainees Information/ in accordance with Section 23 of the law have been adopted.//

Mr. Chairperson,

Distinguished Committee Members,

In terms of policy,/ the National Human Rights Plan serves as a national guiding framework for agencies/ in addressing human rights violations across the country.// Prevention and suppression of torture have been placing on top priority/ and include in the plan on judicial proceedings,/ plan on injured persons/ and victims affected by judicial proceedings,/ as well as plans for accused persons, inmates, and those who completes prison term.// Concerned agencies are also required to report their implementation of the plans/ every year by the end of the fiscal year.//

Mr. Chairperson,

Distinguished Committee Members,

To ensure implementation of the Law,/ and the Convention,/ the Royal Thai Government is actively working/ to promote a deeper understanding on the merits of the Act and the Convention.//

In 2024,/ the Ministry of Justice has organized nationwide trainings for law enforcement officers.// Participants include,/ for instance, police officers, military personnel, Court of Justice,/ and other government officials relevant to the implementation of the law/ such as Department of Corrections,/ Department of Marine and Coastal Resources,/ Office of the National Anti-Corruption Commission,/ Department of Labor,/ Provincial Justice Office.//

Relevant agencies are eager/ and actively familiarizing themselves with this new anti-torture Act.// Many learned from classes/ and gained experiences as well as receive on the job training.// My colleague will update you on that later on.

After a year and eight months/ that the Act was put into force,/ officers have taken steps in learning through trainings/ both on the Act itself/ and the CAT Convention.// There have also been debates/ on gaps and challenges/ that may exist in its application.// Therefore, this exercise of oral presentation to the Committee/ would be a valuable experience/ and a good opportunity for our team to learn from the Committee's expertise too.//

I would also like to mention that/ Thailand attaches great importance on multi-stakeholder engagement.// In preparation for this presentation,/ government agencies also met with civil society organizations/ to discuss and exchange views on various issues related to/ the implementation of the Convention.//

Thailand also continues to be committed/ to constructive engagement with international organizations,/ mandate holders and special procedures under the HRC.//

We had a mock session/ in preparation of this presentation/ with the UN Country Team in Thailand last week.// We would like to express our sincere appreciation to them.//

In 2022,/ relevant Thai agencies also had an online meeting/ with the UN Working Group on Enforced and Involuntary Disappearances (WGEID)/ to update and discuss issues at hand.// This is a part of our efforts to address the remaining challenges/ and continue to learn/ to improve and to make progress.//

In concluding,/ I would like to thank the Committee/ for the opportunity to discuss the implementation of the CAT in Thailand.// My gratitude also goes to all partners/ and stakeholders involved in ensuring that/ the obligations under the Convention are put into actions.//

My delegation looks forward to having constructive exchange/ with the Committee during these two days.//

I am confident that/ our discussion will lead to the outcomes/ that will further strengthen the implementation of the CAT/ and create meaningful positive impacts/ on the lives of people in Thailand.//

Thank you.

(1,140 words)