

**Speech by His Excellency Mr. Meechai Ruchupan
President of the National Legislative Assembly of
Thailand**

**The Political Transformation in Thailand
At the 15th Asia-Pacific Parliamentary Forum (APPF)
In Moscow, Russian Federation
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15.00 hours**

**Mr. President,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen**

On behalf of the Thai Delegation, I would like to congratulate Your Excellency for having been elected the President of the APPF. I would like also to thank the Council of Federation of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation for the kind hospitality extended to us. Having been to many APPF annual conferences in the last ten years, it is a great pleasure and an honor for me to be amongst friends in the APPF once again.

As myself, who is a strong believer in the democratic values and a democratic system of government, I have a firm conviction that only good and strong democracy, certainly not the weak one, can pave the way to economic prosperity and political stability. To this effect, Thailand is totally committed to do her utmost, during this political transition, to strengthen our democracy, which will

serve as a strong foundation for further political, economic and social developments.

Given the national commitment to speedily restore parliamentary democracy back to Thailand in one year, the Thai Government, the Thai National Legislative Assembly and the Constitution Drafting Assembly will do their utmost to fulfill the tasks. Thailand strongly hopes that the profound understanding and great confidence in us as well as the close co-operation cordially existing between Thailand and each and every country in Asia-Pacific will bring about encouraging support from the international community in the speedy reform of our democratic system.

The world today is weakened by misunderstanding and fear. We tend to judge one another based on our perceptions while often times are not accurate. Out of fear, we go to war to make peace. Instead of waging more wars, we should instead cultivate peace. We should learn to respect each other, starting from within one's own family, community and workplace and extending to other regions, irrespective of different races, religions or beliefs. Starting from ourselves, we should expand our circle of friendship and peace through parliamentary diplomacy and do all that is possible in spreading the message of peace within our Asia-Pacific Region and all over the world.

In this regard, I commend various initiatives to bridge peoples across cultures and civilizations. I welcome and support the Alliance of Civilizations and the Interfaith Dialogue and co-operation for peace. I encourage that such

initiatives be strengthened and further advanced in order to promote peace and lessen the chance for armed conflicts.

Mr. President,

Thailand has attached great importance to and has unreserved confidence in APPF, comprising some 27 countries in Asia and Pacific, to play a significant role, apart from APPU, in utilizing parliamentary measures and wisdom for national developments and solutions to regional problems both present and in the future. Furthermore, it is essential for APPF to enhance its work with international communities, other inter-parliamentary organizations and international organizations as well as governments in Asia-Pacific.

Sustainable development and happiness of the people based on sufficiency economy are the economic platform for Thailand in the transitional period. Thailand remains committed to free trade and pursues its active engagements in global and regional trade. Thailand is in support of the calls for the resumption of the Doha Round of the World Trade Organization and is now in the process of accelerating its fulfillment of other international and regional agreements as well as bilateral economic and trade commitments. So as to drive the grassroots economy, the market economy, and overall economy of Thailand that contributes to economic expansion in all levels in an adequate and a sustainable manner. The government will also provide people with the necessary social welfare and social safety nets.

Thailand continues its international and regional obligations and adopts a pro-active role in bilateral and multilateral relations to enhance the role of Thailand in the international community and regional co-operation. ASEAN and APEC are the main pillars of Thailand's foreign policy in the Asia-Pacific. Thailand stands firm by its obligations to establish an ASEAN Community and to strengthen the ASEAN Regional Forum. It will do all it can to spur prosperity in the Asia-Pacific under the various frameworks of APEC.

Thank you.
