

Hon. Mrs. Porapan Punyaratabandhu, Member of the Senate from Thailand

Speech on Food Security

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Thank you Mr. Chairman for providing me the opportunity for me to report about Thailand's policy on food security.

The Royal Thai Government places high priority on the issue of food security and the ongoing global food crisis. As a major food exporter, Thailand intends to maintain the level of production and export of rice to the world market. At the same time we are committed to non – intervention policy to ensure free and open international food market. We will continue to send positive signal to calm down the market regarding soaring food prices, as well as to allow market mechanism to function more appropriately.

Mr. Chairman

It's our opinion that the international community should turn the mishap of food and energy crisis into an opportunity by developing and improving agricultural techniques and post harvest technologies that help increase productivity and yields, improving quality of soil and seeds, utilizing and managing unused lands for agricultural purpose, and managing water system for irrigation. While addressing challenges on production, we should further enhance trade and investment in downstream agricultural and food industries including food processing and branding of agricultural products to increase their values.

Mr. Chairman

It's our concerns that in any attempt in the international fora to link food security and energy crops has to be carefully addressed with clear understanding, taking into consideration differences in levels of development and geographical as well as environmental conditions of each region. We also believe that the policy space of developing countries should be duly respected. The policy on agricultural zoning should be promoted to ensure the production of energy crops for bio – energy production without affecting the production of food crops.

On the sub – regional level, Thailand as the member and at present the chairman of ASEAN will foster closer and tangible cooperation within ASEAN to address the challenges of food crisis in Southeast Asia. ASEAN member who are food producing countries could take leading role in promoting food security in the region by energizing cooperation mechanism to cope with the crisis.

Again, I thank you Mr. Chairman for your kind attention.