

**Remarks by  
H.E. Mr. Abhisit Vejjajiva  
Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Thailand  
At The Asia-Pacific Regional Launch of  
The United Nations Secretary-General's  
“UNiTE to End Violence Against Women” Campaign  
25 November 2010, 14.00-15.30  
United Nations Conference Centre, Bangkok**

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**Your Royal Highness Princess Bajrakitiyabha,  
Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

1. It is my great honour and privilege to represent the Royal Thai Government today to mark the Asia-Pacific Regional Launch of the United Nations Secretary-General's “UNiTE to End Violence Against Women” Campaign, especially as the Launch coincides with the annual observance of the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women.
2. This is a very special occasion. The gracious presence of Her Royal Highness Princess Bajrakitiyabha, the UNIFEM Goodwill Ambassador for Ending Violence Against Women Campaign and Programme in Thailand, reflects the level of commitment of the Thai people. Her Royal Highness inspires Thai people from all walks of life to follow suit and commit to this noble cause.
3. Thai women make up half of the country's population and contribute much to the society. Women in Thailand have ably and admirably assumed many roles -- as professionals and as valuable members of the family. With this recognition, Thailand has adhered to the promotion of gender equality and empowerment of women, which is most notably reflected in the present Constitution of the Kingdom of Thailand, particularly in Section 30, which empowers Thai women to thrive and prosper, and to stand alongside men as “equals” in our society.
4. Thailand not only promotes gender equality from within, but we also uphold our obligations as a long-standing and active member of the United Nations. We ratified the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women in 1985 as well as its Optional Protocol in 2000. Thailand is also committed to attaining the Millennium Development Goals by 2015 – which includes Promoting Gender Equality and Empowering Women – because we recognize that without gender equality no country can ever achieve successful development.

5. Indeed, neither gender equality nor development can be fully realized if violence against women and girls is allowed to take place, unabated and unresolved. To that end, the government recognizes that violence against women is an undeniable violation of human rights. The government has duly adopted a multi-disciplinary approach to address violence against women, which comprises measures in prevention, protection and responses. Partnerships to end violence against women have been formed with various ministries, as well as with non-governmental and civil society organizations. Partnerships have also been established with local administration organizations at the community level.

6. Thailand has seen much progress in our work towards ending violence against women. For instance, the One Stop Crisis Centre initiative set up in 1999 under the coordination of the Ministry of Public Health has been recognized by the World Health Organization Regional Office for Southeast Asia. These centres, now located at all provincial hospitals and almost all district hospitals, are working to provide multi-disciplinary support to female victims of various forms of abuse – particularly domestic violence. I am pleased to note that this year the Centre has helped more than 25,000 women and girls, or about 71 people a day. Nevertheless, we should be reminded of the harsh fact that there are still a large number of unfortunate women and girls in Thailand who continue to fall victims to gender-based violence. Therefore, much more needs to be done.

7. In March this year, 10 government agencies signed a Memorandum of Understanding to foster the implementation of the 2007 Act on the Protection of Victims of Domestic Violence, under the coordination of the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security. In this regard, mechanisms have been devised to facilitate effective implementation of the Act, including enhancement of capacity, strengthening referral systems, services and coordination mechanisms, and engaging in broad-based campaigns for prevention.

8. At the regional level, Thailand is also promoting gender equality, and takes the issue of violence against women very seriously. In this spirit, Thailand, together with ASEAN members, supported the adoption in 2004 of the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women in ASEAN. Thailand also welcomes the inauguration of the ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children earlier this year, which was established to help address human rights issues. We have strived to support the work of this Commission in order to promote the well-being, development, empowerment and participation of women and children in ASEAN as we move toward the ASEAN Economic Community in the year 2015.

**Your Royal Highness,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

9. Violence against women does not occur in any one particular country. Across the globe, millions of women are still poorly treated, deprived of advancement, and have to suffer violence that comes in many different forms and manifestations. Apart from offering moral and rhetorical support, we all have to take concrete action to end impunity and to make fundamental changes to the existing unequal power structure.

10. We recognize that working in “partnership” is the only effective approach to eliminate violence against women. Accordingly, Thailand welcomes the United Nations Secretary-General’s campaign on “UNiTE to End Violence Against Women”. We have been in partnership with the UN in Thailand on a number of initiatives to support the implementation of the Act on Protection of Victims of Domestic Violence. And once again, we are pleased to work in partnership with the United Nations on the outcomes set forth by the UNiTE Campaign to end violence against women.

11. Thailand is committed to ending violence against women. We will explore avenues to update the national action plan and bring all stakeholders to work in partnership to end violence against women as a national agenda, with a clear monitoring and reporting framework as well as clear and coordinated roles and responsibilities. We take note that target year for achievement of results of the UNiTE Campaign is 2015, a common year for the achievements of the Millennium Development Goals. As much as Thailand is committed to achieving all the MDG Plus targets, we will equally work towards achieving outcomes set forth in the UNiTE Campaign in the same context as the MDGs, not only for the good of our country, but to also share and contribute our experiences to the international community.

12. In closing, I would like to sum up by saying that women are one of the

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