

**Statement by the Delegation of Thailand
15th Session of the Working Group on the UPR – Tonga
21 January 2013**

Mr. President,

Thailand welcomes the delegation of Tonga to the UPR session today and thanks them for the updates and presentation made.

Thailand congratulates Tonga for the progress achieved in the promotion and protection of human rights, which resulted in a number of significant political reforms and the first democratic elections held in the country after more than a century. We firmly believe that the process of democratization is fundamental to guaranteeing the full enjoyment of human rights.

Thailand is encouraged by Tonga's efforts to consider establishing a National Human Rights Institution and become Party to several international human rights treaties, in particular the extensive consultations held to consider the ratification of the CEDAW. We urge Tonga to become Party to the CEDAW and other international human rights instruments in the near future.

Mr. President,

Thailand commends the commitment of the Government of Tonga to empowering women as well as to eliminate violence against women and domestic violence. We recommend Tonga to further develop concrete measures or steps to expand the representation of women in Government and Parliament as well as other decision making positions, as appropriate.

We also recommend Tonga to consider incorporating the UN Rules for the Treatment of Women Prisoners and Non-Custodial Measures for Women Offenders, otherwise known as the "Bangkok Rules", as part of its work on the treatment of prisoners, in particular the new Prisons Act 2010.

Moreover, we wish to take this opportunity to invite all countries who are in a position to do so to respond positively to Tonga's request for the sharing of good practices, assistance and technical cooperation in support of its efforts to further enhance the human rights situation in the country. On our part, Thailand stands ready to cooperate with Tonga in this regard.

Thank you, Mr. President.

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