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**Statement by the Delegation of Thailand,
Mr. Krerkpan Roekchamnong,
Ambassador and Deputy Permanent Representative,
16th Session of the Working Group on the UPR – Colombia
23 April 2013**

Mr. President,

Thailand welcomes the delegation of Colombia to the UPR working group today and thanks them for the presentation made.

We are pleased to note progress made by the Government of Colombia in safeguarding human rights for its population through the establishment of the National System of Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law, and the ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance (CEPD).

Thailand also commends Colombia's efforts in tackling extreme poverty through the implementation of the National Development Plan 2012-2014 themed "Prosperity for All", to foster social inclusion.

Additionally, we welcome the Colombian Government's commitment to guarantee victims of conflict's rights to truth, justice, reparation and non-repetition via the Victims and Land Restitution Act of 2011. Furthermore, Thailand welcomes the peace talks initiated in September 2012 between the Colombian Government and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC). We hope that the dialogue will lead to a settlement of the armed conflict and human rights violation in the country.

However, we remain concerned by reports of continued expansion of illegal armed groups that have emerged after the demobilization of paramilitary organizations. We see this as a direct threat to the Colombian populations' well-being. We therefore recommend Colombia to adopt appropriate measures to address the issue, paying particular attention on combating impunity, ensuring independence of judges and the judiciary system, and providing reparation for victims of such events.

Lastly, we wish to draw Colombia's attention to the protection of child's rights regardless of origins and ethnicity, particularly with regards to non-discriminatory access to education. We also recommend Colombia to consider ratifying the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on a communications procedure, to ensure children's voice and needs are heard and protected.

Thank you, Mr. President.

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