

**Statement by the Delegation of Thailand,
Mr. Krerkan Roekchamnong,
Ambassador and Deputy Permanent Representative,
17th Session of the Working Group on the UPR – Saudi Arabia
21 October 2013**

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Mr. President,

Thailand welcomes the delegation of Saudi Arabia to the UPR working Group today and thanks them for the presentation made.

Firstly, Thailand commends the Government of Saudi Arabia for its efforts to promote and protect human rights in the Kingdom as reflected by the enactment of the 2009 Trafficking in Persons Act, the accession to the Optional Protocol of the CRC on sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, the issuance of ordinances to monitor and protect the rights of all migrant workers, and the royal amnesty allowing illegal and overstaying migrant workers to take advantage of seven months' grace period to rectify their status and leave the Kingdom without penalty.

Secondly, Thailand welcomes the significant progress made regarding the situation of women's rights and combating violence against women and children, particularly through legislative repeal. Here, we recommend that Saudi Arabia further consider incorporating, in relevant laws, the principle of equality between women and men and where such principle exists, to campaign for greater understanding and awareness among the general public and officials for the effective implementation of such laws.

Thirdly, we are pleased to note further steps taken since its first UPR review to promote interfaith and intercultural dialogue among all groups by allowing non-Muslims to worship in their residence and within the premises of their diplomatic missions. This development has helped foster greater freedom of religion and freedom of expression and opinion. We also note that Saudi Arabia is considering becoming party to the ICCPR and ICESCR. Here, we recommend the Kingdom to expedite its consideration as we believe becoming party to both covenants will help contribute to the promotion and protection of human rights in the country.

Thank you, Mr. President.

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