

Statement of Mr. Suchart Traiprasit
Attorney General of Thailand, Head of Thai Delegation
before the Tenth United Nations Congress on the
Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders
Vienna, Austria, 10-17 April, 2000

Item 4: International Cooperation in combating transnational crime: new challenges in the twenty-first century

Mr. President,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the delegation of Thailand, I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate you upon your election as the President of the Tenth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders. Our congratulations are also extended to other officers of the Congress. I am confident that under your able guidance, experiences and leadership, the deliberations of the Congress will be fruitful and lead the current session to the successful conclusion. This delegation pledges its full support and cooperation towards these ends.

Mr. President,

As everyone here is well aware, the transnational organized crime has increasingly threatened our countries' law and order as well as the fabric of our societies. The phenomenon of globalization we are facing today has even made such crime become more complex both in its dimensions and modes of conducting. Thailand believes that it is a common and shared responsibility of all countries to combat transnational organized crime at our best possible efforts in order to maintain international peace and order. We reaffirm our position to cooperate with other countries as well as the international community towards this end.

Mr. President,

As part of the effort, therefore, it was a privilege and honour for the Government of Thailand to jointly host the Asia-Pacific Ministerial Seminar on "Building Capacities for Fighting Transnational Organized Crime" with the United Nations Office for Drug Control and

Crime Prevention (ODCCP) in Bangkok during 20 - 21 March 2000. This seminar had two main objectives; to promote regional understanding and cooperation in fighting transnational organized crime and to mobilize political support for successful completion of the elaboration of the Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its three protocols. I am proud to report that the seminar was truly fruitful. Issues of interest were raised and discussed in a very constructive manner both at the ministerial level and at the expert level. There was a consensus of 20 participating countries that transnational organized crime is the cause of human suffering, erosion of the social fabric, undermining the political system and the destruction of the economic structure of every country. At the conclusion of the seminar, the Joint Asia-Pacific Ministerial Statement was adopted expressing the political commitment of the participating countries to work together closely and take all possible measures to fight transnational organized crime. They also pledged their firm support for finalizing the elaboration process of the Convention and its Protocols, with the active participation, by the end of the year 2000. The Government of Thailand has the honour to be entrusted with the task of bringing the Report of the seminar and the Joint Statement to the attention of this Congress.

Mr. President,

This regional effort is only the beginning. Thailand firmly believes that all nations must work harder together not only to catch up with the criminals but also to ensure that we are one step ahead of them, otherwise we will be caught in a vicious cycle, fighting new century crimes with last century tools. My delegation, therefore, encourages the effort of other regions to build and strengthen their capacities as well as promote closer international co-operation on this important issue. We are delighted to see the Tenth United Nations Congress convened in order to mark the concerted international effort to address this common concern and seek creative ways to eradicate these crimes. In this connection, I would like to take this opportunity to register Thailand's wish to be the host country for the 11th United Nations Congress, bearing in mind the possible changes to the format of the Congress.

As transnational organized crime is unarguably a global problem, it follows that no single country should be left to fight this type of crime alone. Financial and technical assistance in human resource development should be provided to encourage and allow countries to focus on strengthening their national legislation and other capacities for

international cooperation. Emphasis must be placed upon the training of all criminal justice officials in order to fully utilize innovative legal techniques against transnational organized crime. Such training would not only facilitate national implementation of the anticipated Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, but would strengthen the cooperation between and among countries involved as well. The U.S. sponsored International Law Enforcement Academy (ILEA), established in 1998 in Bangkok, is an example of a kind.

Mr. President,

In conclusion, I would like, once again, to affirm the position of Thailand to uphold the international effort to fight against transnational crime and to face all challenges of the twenty-first century together with our colleagues. We support the effort to put effect to the draft United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and three additional Protocols thereto. Thailand believes that with this Convention and the true spirit of international cooperation that is shown among our nations in fighting against and suppressing transnational organized crime, the eradication of these twenty-first century crimes will no longer be a dream but reality.

Thank you very much.