Statement by
H.E. Ambassador Sihasak Phuangketkeow
Permanent Representative of Thailand to the United Nations Office
and other International Organizations in Geneva
at the Special Session of the Human Rights Council
on the Situation of Human Rights in Myanmar
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Mr. President,

I take the floor to express Thailand’s views, expressed in all
sincerity, as a friend and neighbour of Myanmar, sharing a land border of
over 2,400 kilometres and hosting more than a million Myanmar citizens in
our territory.

Our two countries and peoples share not only a common border
but our futures are also intertwined. And so it is in that spirit that I wish to
offer my comments to express not only our concerns but also our hopes and
anticipation for the future.

Mr. President,

Thailand is gravely concerned about recent events in Myanmar
and the violence that has taken place. We are concerned, not only as a
friend, but also because events next door inevitably impact upon us as well.
There is nothing more that we wish to see than a peaceful, stable and
prosperous Myanmar playing a constructive role in the region.

The Prime Minister of Thailand, during his statement at the
United Nations General Assembly, has already made known Thailand’s
concerns as a fellow predominantly-Buddhist country, sharing the same
beliefs of non-violence and tolerance. We hold such beliefs to be of utmost
importance.

The ASEAN Chair has also issued a strong and clear statement
on this matter, which does not require further repetition. In reiterating our
very grave concern, my Government believes it is incumbent upon us to
seize the opportunity of the present situation to look ahead together and see
how we can all help assist the situation in Myanmar to move forward in a
constructive and positive direction.
Thailand fully supports the mission of Mr. Ibrahim Gambari, Special Envoy of the United Nations Secretary General and is convinced that he has an instrumental role to play in this matter. We are pleased to see his visit to Myanmar for talks with the leaders of that country. We welcome his meetings with the Myanmar leadership and especially with Madame Aung San Suu Kyi. We hope that his good offices as a neutral interlocutor will help to bring all the parties together to avoid any further deterioration of the situation, which would only be harmful to the people of Myanmar.

From Thailand’s own experience, and from the experience of others as well, we realize that democracy entails many challenges and requires constant nurturing. The quest for democratic rule is not an easy one and cannot be achieved overnight. However, there is no doubt in our minds that the democratic form of government offers the best hope for fulfilling the needs and aspirations of our peoples.

We therefore urge the authorities in Myanmar and all sides concerned to resume the quest for national reconciliation and work towards the path of democratization for the good of the people of Myanmar and the region at large. We reiterate our call for the release of all political detainees, including Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. From this very unfortunate event, Thailand hopes that all sides in Myanmar will now come together for the best interests of the country.

The leadership in Myanmar has set a seven-step roadmap towards democratization. Now is the time to move forward in a tangible way to achieve what has been promised. If this is the case, I am sure that the international community will be forthcoming and would be prepared to engage and assist Myanmar to move forward along the path towards greater peace and prosperity.

Thank you.