

ADDRESS BY
H.E. Prof. Pornpetch WICHITCHOLCHAI
PRESIDENT OF THE NATIONAL LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
OF THAILAND
ON THE OCCASION OF
THE FOURTH WORLD CONFERENCE
OF SPEAKERS OF PARLIAMENT
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Mr. President,
Distinguished Delegates,

It is my great pleasure and honor to address this Fourth World Conference of Speakers of Parliament which is being held at the United Nations Headquarters, the world-renowned Parliament of Mankind. I recognize very well that the ultimate objective of this conference is to find means to encourage an integration of democracy into the process for peace and development which ensures a better world for everyone.

Mr. President,

Parliamentary democracy is quite a recent development in the 800 years history of the Kingdom of Thailand. It was 83 years ago, actually only in 1932, that His Majesty, King Rama VII granted the first Constitution. Since then, democracy in Thailand is still work in progress.

Mr. President,

Thailand has pledged to pursue strong foundations for sustainable development. We believe that democracy and development have a natural link. In Thailand, we are using His Majesty, King Bhumibol's guiding principles of sufficiency economy for our national economic and development plans. Sufficiency economy means that one is not motivated by acquisitiveness but by the desire to live with contentment within one's, the community's and the nation's means. Sufficiency economy will contribute, at the individual level, to one's wellbeing and, at the local and national level, to sustainable development. It is our aim, to enact laws facilitating and enhancing the capabilities of Thai people to live such lives.

Mr. President,

Democracy and development must naturally come through peaceful means. We conduct dialogue and consultation processes all over the country. Parliamentarians invite complaints, ideas and comments by stakeholders. They try to resolve grievances and undertake to enact laws to address problems. They visit localities and try to build consensus with stakeholders. We are building national confidence by using "government by discussion". Parliament can foster peace by being the model for and promoting dialogues as the method of conflict resolution at every level.

Mr. President,

We have learnt that democracy must be designed to each nation's particular circumstances; likewise development must take account of local culture. Most importantly, peaceful mean is the only method to achieve these aims in the long term. Through such a gathering as we have here today, let us learn from each other and pool our collective experience.

Thank you very much.
