

(check against delivery)

**Madame/Mr. President,
Distinguished Delegates,
My dear colleagues,**

1. Thailand continues to deal with the increasingly complex challenges that transcend national borders, including building a peaceful and harmonious multicultural society.

We are facing a meaningful challenge whether our democracies are robust enough to accommodate the issues of diversity and tolerance in the twenty-first century.

2. We Thai people have always embraced diversity and tolerance. Cultural pluralism and intercultural dialogue have naturally been the grain of the Thai society. As a predominant Buddhist and secular country, the longstanding traditions of acceptance, moderation and compromise of the Thai culture has also played an essential role in fostering an environment where people of various religions and ethnicities have peacefully lived together in harmony and mutual respect for centuries.

3. Since 1932, the Thai constitutional monarchy has continued to be the center of reverence and serves as unifying forces for the nation that brings together people of different faiths and cultures and constitutionally upheld as the patron of all faiths. For decades, the holistic wisdom of the “Sufficiency Economy Philosophy” has guided the Kingdom’s progress toward sustainability, inclusive societies and social equity.

4. Thailand has zero-tolerance policy against racism or any practice of gender-based discrimination. The protection against many forms of discrimination based on racial, ethnic, and religious reasons provided by international instruments had been enshrined in a number of our domestic laws. The Constitution has served as a foundation for the twenty-year National Strategy, which promotes development based on social and cultural diversity.

5. With 62 ethnic groups in the country, the Constitution also guarantees cultural rights of Thai people with diverse cultural identities to preserve their ways of life and express their cultures freely.

6. The National Assembly of Thailand has taken an active part in advancing inclusiveness and promoting the culture of tolerance in many respects. Since 2019, the ethnic groups and the LGBTQ-Plus community have been included and accepted in the Thai parliament and have officially been incorporated into the title and mandate of a parliamentary standing committee as key platform to nurture diversity and equality in parliamentary democracy.

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My dear colleagues,**

7. As parliamentarians, we have a responsibility, to ourselves and to the international community, to join forces in building bridges of understanding and solidarity among different communities and move forward together to build a better and safer world where human differences are cherished, and diverse societies thrive as former UN Secretary General Kofi Annan once said in 2013: *“learn from each other and make our different traditions and cultures a source of harmony and strength, not discord and weakness.”*

8. Lastly, may I express, on behalf of the parliamentary delegation of Thailand, our sincere appreciation to our host, the parliament of Bahrain and the Bahraini authorities concerned as well as the professional support from the IPU Secretariat. We congratulate you for the successful organization of this international conference that achieves all the objectives. We humbly wish His Majesty the King of Bahrain, His Royal Highness the Prime Minister, His Excellency the Speaker of Bahraini Council of Representatives, and the lovely people of Bahrain good health and every success in future endeavours.

Thank you very much for your kind attention.
