

# **The Role of Royal Thai Government on the implementation of the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGPs)**

Nareeluc Pairchaiyapoom<sup>1</sup>

## **Abstract**

The United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGPs) were endorsed in 2011 to set out the duty of the state, the responsibility of the business sector and their respective roles to “protect, respect and remedy” individuals whose human rights have been infringed.

The Royal Thai Government has expressed its political will and commitment to drive forward and prepare a National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights (NAP) on many occasions, for example (1) during the special keynote address on the UNGPs and the signing of the Declaration on Cooperation to Drive Forward the UNGPs to ensure that tangible outcomes are achieved (2) the reaffirmation of the Royal Thai Government’s policy to drive forward the UNGPs during the “King’s Philosophy towards Sustainable Development” programme on several occasions (3) the Preparation Meeting for the Announcement of the National Agenda “Human Rights as a Driving Force of Thailand 4.0 towards Sustainable Development” (4) the release of a statement to commemorate the International Human Rights Day on 10<sup>th</sup> December 2017, whereby the Royal Thai Government displayed its commitment to drive forward the business and human rights issues by naming state-owned enterprises as the pilot group.

The Royal Thai Government mandated the Ministry of Justice to be the central agency that is responsible for driving forward the UNGPs. To date, the Ministry of Justice has engaged in the following activities:

National Level: Establishment of the NAP National Committee, to disseminate knowledge to different sectors, and Regional consultations to obtain information on the status of business and human rights issues.

ASEAN Level: Exchange of knowledge and experiences with fellow ASEAN countries and Building capacity for personnel in the ASEAN to enhance their understanding of the UNGPs and the role of states with respect to the business and human rights issues.

International Level: The sharing of Thailand’s experience and achievements with respect to business and human rights at the 6th UN Global Forum on Business and Human Rights, held at the United Nations in Geneva, whereby the participants complimented the Royal Thai Government’s commitment on the business and human rights issues.

<sup>1</sup> Director of International Human Rights Division, Rights and Liberties Protection Department, Ministry of Justice, Thailand

Importantly, the Royal Thai Government invited the United Nations Working Group on Business and Human Rights for an official visit to Thailand during 26<sup>th</sup> March – 4<sup>th</sup> April 2018. During their visit, the Working Group exchanged views and engaged in discussions with state agencies, state-owned enterprises, and businesses - both in the central region and in other regions of the country. The Working Group also issued a preliminary report on their visit to Thailand where they welcomed the sincere commitments of the Royal Thai Government and agencies in various sectors, recognized Thailand as a leader of the ASEAN in the field of business and human rights, and provided recommendations to facilitate future developments.

The Ministry of Justice, by the Rights and Liberties Protection Department, will consider these recommendations during the preparation of the NAP. Once ready, the Ministry will disseminate knowledge about the NAP and produce [practice guides as references for different sectors.] Periodic reviews of the NAP will also be conducted in order to ensure that it remains reflective of the current situation.

This article presents the commitment of the Royal Thai Government to comply with the UNGPs and show best practice of Thailand in implementing the UNGPs in a concrete manner, at national, regional and international levels, particularly the development, progress, and process of the first National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights in ASEAN, with the aim of creating a guarantee that protects people from having their rights infringed, ensures that businesses respect human rights, improves the overall economic status of the country, and steers the human rights situation in Thailand towards a better future in accordance with international standards.

Keywords: Business and Human Rights, Royal Thai Government, Protect, Respect, Remedy, NAP, UNGPs

### **The United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGPs)**

The United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGPs) is an international instrument, developed by Professor John Ruggie, as the first global standard for protecting, preventing, and addressing the risk of adverse impacts in human rights related to business conducts, as well as business activities. It is also an international framework for enhancing standards and practice regarding business and human rights. The UNGPs have received great support from states, private sectors, and

civil society organizations; therefore, the UNGPs was unanimously endorsed by the United Nations Human Rights Council, on 16 June 2011, making the UNGPs the first corporate human rights responsibility initiative to be endorsed by the United Nations.

The UNGPs consists of 31 principles encompassed by the three pillars, namely, “Protect, Respect, and Remedy”, which shapes how states and businesses should implement the UNGPs. The UNGPs are grounded in recognition of:

1. States' existing obligations to respect, protect and fulfil human rights and fundamental freedoms. This pillar, **a state's duty to PROTECT**, reaffirms states' existing international human rights obligations especially state obligations to protect against human rights abuses through policymaking, regulation, investigation, and legal enforcement.(UNGPs 1-10)

2. Second pillar, a business's **duty to RESPECT**, aims to require the role of business enterprises, as specialized organs of society performing specialized functions, to comply with all applicable laws and to respect human rights. Business must act with due diligence to avoid infringing on the rights of others and to address any negative impacts. In conducting due diligence, the UNGPs encourage business sectors to conduct a human rights impact assessment through which they assess their actual and potential human rights impacts. (UNGPs 11-24)

3. The third pillar, **a state and business's duty to REMEDY**, emphasizes the need for rights and obligations to be matched to appropriate and effective remedies when breached. The third pillar highlights an access to remedy for victims of business-related abuses which determines the state's responsibility to provide access to remedy through judicial, administrative, and legislative means, and the corporate's responsibility to prevent and remediate any infringement of rights that they contribute to. Having effective grievance mechanisms in place is crucial in upholding the state's duty to protect and the corporate responsibility to respect. The UNGPs dictate that non-judicial mechanisms, whether state-based or independent, should be legitimate, accessible, predictable, rights-compatible,

equitable, and transparent. Similarly, Company-level mechanisms are encouraged to operate through dialogue and engagement, rather than with the company acting as the adjudicator of its own actions.

Although the UNGPs is not a legally binding instrument, but based on a voluntary basis, it has enjoyed widespread uptake and support from both the public and private sectors. The UNGPs apply to all states and to all business enterprises, both transnational and others, regardless of their size, sector, location, ownership and structure. The Guiding Principles' normative contribution lies not in the creation of new international law obligations but in elaborating the implications of existing standards and practices for states and businesses; integrating them within a single, logically coherent and comprehensive template; and identifying where the current regime falls short and how it could be improved.

### **National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights (NAP)**

Generally speaking, human rights problems that occur from business conduct are varied, such as the violation of labour rights, community rights, land rights, right to health, environment and natural resources, freedom of expression, freedom of peaceful assembly, and access to justice, etc. Thus, the effective implementation of the UNGPs can help ensure promotion and protection of human rights in accordance with international human rights instruments.

In order to guarantee the concrete and effective implementation of the UNGPs, the United Nations Working Group on the issue of human rights and transnational corporations and other business enterprises, or the so called 'Working Group on Business

and Human Rights' (WG on BHR) strongly encourages all States to develop, enact, and update a national action plan on business and human rights as part of the State responsibility to disseminate and implement the UNGPs.

According to the UN Guidance on National Action Plans on Business and Human Rights, each state has to analyze the country's situation on business and human rights, identify achievements and gaps, as well as challenges, and design the country's plan of action based on each country's context. The National Action Plan should connect with other key national policies and strategies, as well as international instruments and principles, such as the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), Sustainable Business, Social Enterprise, and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Importantly, the National Action Plan has to be reviewed regularly to ensure it is up to date and responds to actual needs.

### **Thailand and the Development of National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights (NAP)**

The Royal Thai Government expresses a strong commitment, at every level, to ensure the implementation of the UNGPs via the initiative to develop the National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights, in order to help address human rights violations, as well as problems arising from the adverse impact of business conduct. In 2016, Thailand gave a voluntary pledge at the 25<sup>th</sup> Session of UPR review to promote human rights principles and practices in the business sector. In addition, Thailand also accepted the recommendation made by Sweden to develop, adopt and implement the National Action Plan on Business and

Human Rights in line with the UNGPs. Consequently, the Cabinet assigned the Ministry of Justice (MOJ) Rights and Liberties Protection Department (RLPD) to be a focal agency to develop the National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights. This is because the RLPD is the key government agency responsible for the promotion, protection and guarantee of human rights. The Department is also responsible for the Universal Periodic Review (UPR), the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights: ICESCR) and the development of National Human Rights Plan.

The process of developing the National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights can be summarized as follows:

#### **1. The establishment of the Committee to Prescribe, Prepare, Monitor and Analyze the Implementation of the National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights (NAP Committee)**

As the starting point, the MOJ issued the MOJ's Order No. 557/2559, dated 14 November 2016 on the 'Establishment of the Committee to Prescribe, Prepare, Monitor, and Analyze the Implementation of the National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights', whereby the Director-General of the RLPD was appointed as the Chairperson with representatives from related agencies as Committee Members, such as the National Human Rights Commission of Thailand, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Commerce, the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Labour, etc. The NAP Committee is responsible for considering and developing a plan for the drafting of the National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights

(NAP), monitoring and analyzing the implementation of the NAP, encouraging all sectors to implement the NAP, and providing recommendations on the implementation and improvement of the NAP to ensure its effectiveness.

## **2. National Dialogue on Business and Human Rights 2016**

The RLPD collaborated with the Representative of Thailand to the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR) and the Global Compact Network Thailand (GCNT) in hosting the National Dialogue on Business and Human Rights on 22<sup>nd</sup> December 2016, with the following objectives to: (1) officially announce the commitment of the MOJ, by the RLPD, in engaging in business and human rights work, (2) raise awareness on the UNGP, (3) exchange knowledge on the business and human rights work between different agencies, and (4) develop a plan to drive forward the work on business and human rights in all sectors. The RLPD subsequently reviewed the information obtained during the event and identified preliminary issues and the status of human rights infringement in the business sector. These will serve as the foundation for further research and studies necessary for the development of the NAP.

## **3. The First Regional Consultations on Business and Human Rights Issues**

The RLPD collaborated with the Manushya Foundation, the Representative of Thailand to the AICHR, and the GCNT in hosting regional consultations in 4 different regions of Thailand (Chiang Mai, Khon Kaen, Rayong and Songkhla) with the purpose of collecting information relating

to the status of business and human rights issues in all regions of Thailand. The regional consultations involved all of the relevant sectors, including state agencies, civil society organizations, private sector agencies, businesses, and individuals affected by business operations. The information obtained during the regional consultations will be used as the basis for the development of the NAP.

## **4. First Experts Meeting to Inform the Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) National Baseline Assessment on Business and Human Rights in Thailand and the development of National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights of Thailand**

The RLPD collaborated with the Representative of Thailand to the AICHR and the Manushya Foundation in hosting the First Experts' Meeting during 2<sup>nd</sup> – 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2017 at the Sampran Riverside Hotel in Nakornpathom Province. The objectives of the Meeting were to create a platform to allow for the exchange of knowledge and experience between representatives from different countries on the issues of business and human rights, including the UNGPs, the preparation of the National Baseline Assessment on Business and Human Rights, and the plan for developing the NAP.

## **5. Second Experts Meeting to Discuss the CSOs' National Baseline Assessment on Business and Human Rights in Thailand and the development of National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights of Thailand**

The RLPD collaborated with the Representative of Thailand to the AICHR, the Manushya Foundation, and the Thai

CSOs Coalition for the UPR in hosting the Second Experts Meeting to Discuss the National Baseline Assessment on Business and Human Rights in Thailand and the development of National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights of Thailand during 28th February – 1st March 2018 at The Emerald Hotel, Bangkok. The main objective of the Meeting was to discuss the findings of the National Baseline Assessment on Business and Human Rights in Thailand, as conducted by the civil society organizations, together with the comments and recommendations on how the NAP should be developed.

#### **6. Official Visit of the UN Working Group on the issues of human rights and transnational corporations and other business enterprises)**

The RLPD, in collaboration with Department of International Organization of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, welcomed the official visit of the Working Group during 26 March – 4 April 2018. The official visit provided great opportunities for relevant sectors, including government sectors, private sectors, civil society sectors, both stationed within and outside Bangkok (Songkhla, Chiang Mai, Khon Kaen, Samut Sakorn), to discuss and exchange views with the Working Group. The Working Group, then analyzed the situation of business and human rights in Thailand, and later, launched an initial report of the visit to Thailand which also covered recommendations on how to improve the business and human rights situation in Thailand, in line with international standards. The MOJ analyzed the results of the official visit and took the Working Group's recommendations into consideration in order to include them into the draft NAP.

#### **7. Second Regional Consultation to receive comments on the draft NAP**

Following the aforementioned official visit of the UN Working Group, compilation of information, together with meetings of the NAP Committee, and the RLPD, in collaboration with the Faculty of Law, Thammasat University, the NAP drafting process commenced by reviewing all information, comments and suggestions received during the year 2016-2018, such as information received during the first round of consultation, meeting with several sectors, the official visit of the Working Group, recommendations from various sectors including the NAP Committee, the National Human Rights Commission of Thailand, and civil society sectors, etc. The second round of regional consultation was hosted by the MOJ in Bangkok and the other 4 regions across the country in order to provide an opportunity for relevant stakeholders to make comments on the draft of NAP.

#### **8. Draft of NAP was uploaded onto RLPD website to get further comments via website and post**

The RLPD uploaded the draft NAP onto the RLPD website during 27 June to 31 July 2018 in order to inform the public and get further comments thereof. The RLPD also provided the opportunity for the general public to submit their comments, as well as suggestions, through the post or by email. All comments and suggestions will be analyzed and used to revise the draft NAP.

#### **9. NAP Consultation with UN agencies based in Bangkok**

The RLPD, in collaboration with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), organized a NAP Consultation with

UN agencies based in Bangkok, Thailand, on 20 August 2018 at the UNESCAP Building in Bangkok. Consequently, all UN agencies provided useful comments and suggestions for the revision of the draft NAP.

#### **10. NAP Consultation with civil society organizations**

The National Human Rights Commission of Thailand, in collaboration with the RLPD, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the UNDP, and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) organized the “Workshop on the Role of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) in Developing the NAP” on 23 August 2018 at Mida Hotel, Bangkok. The aim of this workshop was to provide an opportunity for CSOs to comment on the draft NAP. All comments and suggestions received during this workshop were very helpful for revising the draft NAP.

#### **11. NAP Consultation with the government agencies**

On 21-22 November 2018, the RLPD, in collaboration with the UNDP, organized the NAP Consultation with government sectors, especially those working in relation with the key priority issues as identified by the NAP Committee. The consultation aimed at providing a further opportunity to the relevant government sectors to recheck the substance of the draft NAP taking into consideration the possibility of implementing the NAP into practice.

#### **12. NAP Consultation with the business sectors**

On 30 November 2018, the RLPD, in collaboration with the UNDP, organized the NAP Consultation with business sectors in

order to inform them of the progress of the NAP, as well as get further comments on the draft NAP, particularly the expectation towards business sectors as indicated in pillar 2 of the draft NAP.

#### **13. Final revision of the draft NAP**

The RLPD is currently at the final stage of the revision of the draft NAP. The revised draft NAP was uploaded onto the RLPD website at the end of January 2019 and was open for more comments and recommendations up until the end of February 2019. Thereafter, the draft NAP will be revised to reflect any comments that stakeholders may have to ensure that the NAP is as complete as possible. The draft NAP will be further submitted to the Office of the National Economic and Social Development Council (NESDC), and later, to the Cabinet for final approval and official publication.

#### **Key Priority Areas to be included in Thailand’s National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights**

The RLPD has gathered relevant information, suggestions, recommendations, and comments received from a number of consultations with various sectors, The National Human Rights Commission, UN Working Group on the issues of human rights and transnational corporations and other business enterprises, as well as the current national context. Importantly, at the first regional consultation, the participants were asked to identify the top three business and human rights problems that required urgent address. The RLPD summarized all aforesaid information and proposed it to the NAP National Committee for consideration. Consequently, the NAP Committee selected 4 key priority areas to be included in the

first National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights of Thailand as follows:

1. Labour
2. Environment and natural resources including land rights and community rights
3. Human Rights Defender
4. Cross border investment and multi-national enterprise

These 4 issues were selected because they were repeatedly raised as concerns in many regions. Importantly, these problems affect the individual, community, and society as a whole.

### **Awareness raising activities on Business and Human Rights**

In order to ensure the effective implementation of the UNGPs and the NAP, the RLPD regularly organized a series of awareness-raising activities for government sectors, business sectors, including state-owned enterprises, and civil society sectors, as well as with the general public. In addition, various forms of media, e.g. animation, booklet, infographic, etc. were developed and disseminated to relevant stakeholders. Other agencies, such as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, also organized the “Youth Camp on Business and Human Rights” and the “Business and Human Rights Innovation Project” to encourage the younger generation to get involved in promoting the implementation of the UNGPs. The National Human Rights Commission of Thailand also developed the “Human Rights Due Diligence Handbook” as well as continually providing training programmes for relevant stakeholders. These efforts will help aid in implementation of the UNGPs, as well as improve the situation of business

and human rights in Thailand. These collaborated activities affirm the Government’s commitment to attach great importance to the issue of business and human rights and every agency will certainly continue to operate and improve all of these activities in a constructive manner.

### **Thailand’s leading roles in ASEAN region**

Thailand, as the first ASEAN country to develop the NAP, is usually named as a business and human rights champion in ASEAN region. During the past few years, Thailand has hosted a number of activities related to awareness raising on the UNGPs and the issue of business and human rights for the benefit of ASEAN as a whole. Some examples are as follows:

#### **1. Seminar on Driving forward the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights in Thailand**

The National Human Rights Commission of Thailand, in collaboration with the MOJ, Thailand’s Representative to the AICHR, the GCNT, and the UNDP, hosted the *Seminar on Driving forward the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights in Thailand* on 31<sup>st</sup> May 2017 at the United Nations Convention Center in Bangkok. The main objective of the Seminar was to disseminate knowledge on the UNGPs to state agencies, the business sector, and civil society organizations, as well as ASEAN friends. The Prime Minister, Gen. Prayut Chan-o-cha, chaired the Seminar and presided over the signing of a “Declaration on Cooperation for Driving Forward the UNGP in Thailand”, as an example for other ASEAN Member States. Thereafter, the Prime Minister reiterated the Royal Thai Government’s commitment on

business and human rights, explicitly citing the three pillars of the UNGPs, at various occasions, including during the “*Arts of the King: Moving towards Sustainable Development*” programme, which was broadcasted nation-wide on 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2017 at 8.15pm.

## **2. AICHR Regional Workshop on Business and Human Rights: Moving ahead with National Action Plans**

The RLPD collaborated with the AICHR, ASEAN CSR Network, the UNDP, and the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) in hosting the *Regional Workshop on Business and Human Rights: Moving ahead with National Action Plans* during 1<sup>st</sup> – 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2017 at the United Nations Convention Center in Bangkok. The objective of the event was to provide a platform for representatives from different ASEAN countries to exchange knowledge relating to the UNGPs.

## **3. Sharing Thai experiences on business and human rights to Indonesia**

On 5 November 2017, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Indonesia, the European Union, Oxfam, and the International NGO Forum on Indonesian Development, co-hosted the Regional Workshop on Business and Human Rights in Jakarta, Indonesia. The organizers invited Thailand to give a presentation as one of the best practice countries among ASEAN Member States. The RLPD sent a representative to share Thailand’s experiences on driving the implementation of the UNGPs, promoting the issue of business and human rights, and the NAP drafting process to relevant sectors in Indonesia. The participants of the workshop appreciated

the political commitment of the Royal Thai Government in this regard and, later, officers from 2 countries continued to exchange experiences in this issue.

## **4. AICHR Training Programme on Business and Human Rights**

The RLPD, in collaboration with the AICHR, the UNDP, and the ASEAN CSR Network, hosted a Training Programme during 13<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup> November 2017 at the Dusit Thani, Bangkok with the objectives of (1) building capacity among government officials, representatives from state enterprises, and businesses within the ASEAN Region and (2) promoting their understanding about the business and human rights issues, the UNGPs and the responsibility of the state in providing remedies in cases where business operations infringe on human rights, the promotion and protection of human rights by state enterprises, as well as (3) exchanging experiences and views on the development, problems, obstacles, and challenges relating to the issues of business and human rights in the ASEAN region.

## **5. AICHR Interregional dialogue: Sharing good practices on business and human rights**

The RLPD collaborated with the AICHR, the ASEAN CSR Network, the GCNT, the OECD, the UNDP, and the UNESCAP in hosting the *ASEAN Interregional dialogue: Sharing good practices on business and human rights* during 4<sup>th</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> June 2018 at the United Nations Convention Center in Bangkok. The objective of the event was to provide a platform for representatives from different ASEAN countries to exchange experiences

and good practices relating to the implementation of the UNGPs.

## **6. Sharing Thai experiences on business and human rights to Malaysia**

On 16 August 2018, the National Human Rights Commission of Malaysia organized the Workshop on Business and Human Rights at Putrajaya, Malaysia. The representative of RLPD, Thailand, was invited to share good practice to representatives of different sectors in Malaysia. The participants commended the advancement made by the Royal Thai Government and urged the government of Malaysia to follow the Thai model.

## **7. Asian Youth Partnership on business and human rights (Asian Youth Camp on Business and Human Rights)**

On 23-25 August 2018, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in collaboration with the UNDP, Office of High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), and Asian Law Students Association (ALSA) Thailand co-organized the Asian Youth Partnership on business and human rights, otherwise known as the Asian Youth Camp on Business and Human Rights, in order to raise awareness on business and human rights issues among the youth, as well as provide an opportunity for building networks on business and human rights in the region.

## **8. Sharing Thai experiences on business and human rights to Vietnam**

On 5 December 2018, the Government of Vietnam and the UNDP hosted training for state-owned enterprises in Vietnam. In this training, a representative of RLPD, Thailand, was invited to share the good practice of Thailand to assign state-owned enterprises

to lead by example for other business sectors in implementing the UNGPs, as well as to conduct business activities while respecting human rights. The participants expressed their interest in applying the Thai example in practice.

## **Thailand's role at international level**

As a leading country in the ASEAN region, Thailand has played an active role every year by participating in the UN Global Forum on Business and Human Rights which is the biggest annual conference on business and human rights.

### **1. The 6<sup>th</sup> Session of the UN Forum on Business and Human Rights**

The RLPD collaborated with the Department of International Organizations of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Thailand's Representative to the AICHR, and the UNDP in hosting a Side Event titled "*Moving Forward with NAPs on Business and Human Rights: Progress and Experiences in Southeast Asia*" during the 6<sup>th</sup> Session of the UN Forum on Business and Human Rights on 29<sup>th</sup> November 2017 at the United Nations Office, Geneva, Switzerland. The main objective was to exchange knowledge on the implementation of the UNGP in the Southeast Asia region, including (1) the development of the NAP through the cooperation between the state, businesses/private sector and civil society organizations, (2) the development of policies relating to business and human rights, (3) raising awareness and capacity building to ensure efficient implementation of the UNGP and (4) the development of a Southeast Asian strategy on business and human rights.

Apart from the side event, the representative of the MOJ also shared

Thailand's development on implementing the UNGPs and developing the NAP at the plenary session in the 6<sup>th</sup> Session of the UN Global Forum on Business and Human Rights whereby Thailand received compliments on the strong commitment of the government and the progress of implementation of the UNGPs.

## **2. The 7<sup>th</sup> Session of the UN Forum on Business and Human Rights**

The Thai delegation, comprising of representatives from government sectors, private sectors, civil society sectors, and the youth, played a significant role in the 7<sup>th</sup> session of the UN Global Forum on Business and Human Rights. As for the government sectors, the representative from the MOJ was invited to be a speaker in the following sessions: (a) Plenary Session on "Government action: Are States making progress on the UNGPs? Challenges, innovations and lessons learned from implementation" (b) Side event on "Government action: Trends and challenges in promoting business respect for human rights in Asia (Part I)". The Representatives from the National Human Rights Commission of Thailand shared their experiences in the session on the "Role of NHRIs in facilitating access to remedy for business-related human rights impacts". Representatives from private sectors shared their good practices on how to conduct business while respecting human rights in the snapshot session "Human rights-based sustainable fisheries: an experience from the Thai Tuna Industry" and the side event session "Government action: Trends and challenges in promoting

business respect for human rights in Asia (Part II)". The representatives from civil society organizations joined many discussions as speakers, such as the session on "New perspective on overcoming hurdles for parent company liability", the session on "Safeguarding human rights defenders", and the session on "Human Rights Due Diligence in practice in the global food and beverage sectors". Finally, the Thai youth also shared their business and human rights innovations, namely, "ALLRIGHTS Application" and "Health Check Application" in the snapshot session "Roles of the youth in moving forward the UNGPs". The active participation of the Thai delegation affirms the government's commitment to and the leading role of Thailand on business and human rights.

### **Next Step for Thailand**

The Royal Thai Government will continue to attach great importance to the issue of business and human rights and affirm its commitment to implement the UNGPs in an effective and concrete manner. As for the NAP, the RLPD will try to finish the NAP and propose it to the Cabinet within the first half of the year 2019. The Ministry will also continue to publicize the NAP to different agencies and develop a handbook on effective implementation of the NAP to ensure tangible and effective outcomes. Periodic reviews of the NAP and its implementation will also be made in order to improve and develop the NAP in a manner which would cause it to be reflective of the ever-changing nature of society.

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