Thailand hosts the Ambassadorial Retreat on the Review of the Human Rights Council

On 8 December 2010, at the Royal Orchid Sheraton Hotel in Bangkok, Mr. Theerakun Niyom, Permanent Secretary for Foreign Affairs, delivered an opening remarks during the opening session of the Ambassadorial Retreat on the Review of the Human Rights Council (HRC). Later on the same evening, Mr. Kasit Piromya, Foreign Minister, hosted a reception in honour of the participants in the Ambassadorial Retreat which included representatives from 80 permanent missions in Geneva, including Mr. Sihasak Phuangketkeow, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Thailand to the United Nations in Geneva, NGOs, national human institutions, and Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, including Ms. Kyung-wha Kang, Deputy High Commissioner for Human Rights.On 8 December 2010, at the Royal Orchid Sheraton Hotel in Bangkok, Mr. Theerakun Niyom, Permanent Secretary for Foreign Affairs, delivered an opening remarks during the opening session of the Ambassadorial Retreat on the Review of the Human Rights Council (HRC). Later on the same evening, Mr. Kasit Piromya, Foreign Minister, hosted a reception in honour of the participants in the Ambassadorial Retreat which included representatives from 80 permanent missions in Geneva, including Mr. Sihasak Phuangketkeow, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Thailand to the United Nations in Geneva, NGOs, national human rights institutions, and Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, including Ms. Kyung-wha Kang, Deputy High Commissioner for Human Rights. The purpose of the Ambassadorial Retreat is to review the work and functioning of the Human Rights Council (HRC) as stipulated in the UNGA Resolution 60/251, which provided for a review process of the HRC to begin five years following its establishment.

In his opening remarks, Permanent Secretary Theerakun stated that Thailand attached importance to fundamental rights and freedoms in the Thai society. In this regard, to promote and protect human rights is imperative element in Thailand's national and foreign policies. And as such, Thailand, through constructive engagement and dialogue, is firmly committed to the review process of the HRC so as to forward its role in promoting and protecting human rights. As the current President of the HRC, Thailand is committed to achieving inclusive participations of all member countries and stakeholders in the review process, paving way for a productive session of the Working Group to be held in January 2011, which will contribute to enhancing efficiency of the HRC in addressing real human rights challenges.

On his welcoming remarks during the reception held in honour of the participants of the Ambassadorial Retreat, Foreign Minister Kasit wished the participants a success in their deliberations on the review session of the working of the HRC in promoting and protecting human rights and fundamental freedoms. He emphasized Thailand's determination to become a matured democratic and a truly opened society, as well as promoting human rights a normal practice in everyday life in the Thai society. He also underlined the social vices such as money politics, patron-client relationship, misunderstanding of democratic values, etc. to be rid off as Thailand moves towards becoming a fully matured democracy. In this regard, Foreign Minister Kasit urged the HRC Secretariat and other UN bodies, and the international civil society to assist Thailand in achieving this goal through sharing of good practices, technical knowledge and experiences so as to strengthen and enhance the working of relevant public institutions in Thailand. He also expressed appreciation to the HRC and international community for their positive attitude towards the future of Thailand on this matter.

In addition, Foreign Minister Kasit welcomed the recent general election in Myanmar and urged international community to work together to assist Myanmar in its democratization process.

Royal Thai Consulate-General, Chicago. December 10, 2010