

Speech
Delivered by Hon. Mrs. Pikulkeaw Krairiksh
Leader of the Thai Parliamentary Delegation
at the Parliamentary Event on Interfaith Dialog
Theme “The Parliamentary Role in Promoting Interfaith and Cultural
Cooperation”
21st - 24th November, 2012
The Grand Hyatt Hotel
Nusa Dua, Bali
Republic of Indonesia

Honourables,
Dr. Marzuki Alie,
Speaker of the Indonesian House of Representatives,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my great honor and pleasure to be here with all of you and to represent the Thai Parliamentary Delegation at the Parliamentary Event on Interfaith Dialog under the subject of “The Parliamentary Role in Promoting Interfaith and Intercultural Cooperation”. Also, I would like to extend my special thanks to Honourable Dr. Marzuki Alie, Speaker of the Indonesian House of Representatives for his exceptional efforts in his role as the key organizer initiating the new contribution to the interreligious development of the world today.

Under globalization, we are looking at the world in which people are exchanging their unique characteristics on a regular basis into various facets of life. Rooted between the lines of any dialogue regarding cultural values is a need for mutual understanding and respect in order to achieve a positive and constructive result for all parties involved. I believe that we can achieve such goal amidst the highly diverse community such as ours by being understanding, tolerant and respectful towards people of different values. I also have faith in the fundamental goodness of all people and I am certain that differences do not mean segregation. It is for the benefit of our global community that we strive to integrate such differences. We learn from our diversities and to foster understanding among different beliefs, thereby enhancing the level of acceptance in the community.

As we know, there are many common principles within religious and social background and beliefs while corresponding to each other, may result from misunderstandings among people and cultures. If the moral, philosophical, and ethical common ground can be recognized and appreciated, we would be able to move forward a positive outcome in the development of human relations. I believe without question that the parliaments and the parliamentarians who represent the ideological values of people in different areas, can play influential roles and confront the difficult challenges which to bring about a positive outcome based on democracy and ensuring the provision of human rights among all people.

Thailand is a country where we endeavour not only to tolerate our difference, but also to integrate them and to gain from them. Like our neighbours, our country's population is formed up of people with many differing mixtures of cultures and beliefs and we strive always to appreciate and value such diversity. In Thailand, we are fortunate to be bordered by the neighbouring cultures of Laos to the North, Cambodia to the East, Myanmar to the West, and Malaysia to the South. As Thais, we believe that we benefit from geographical location as we are enriched by and have compassion and understanding for the diversity of faiths and cultures that have long been among our most deeply rooted national characteristics. We take great pride in our history of embracing and supporting a wide range of traditions and beliefs and we continue to grow in our commitment to live together in peace and respect. We are blessed to have the calm and comforting sovereignty of His Majesty the King, the pillar of all faiths and supporter of all religions.

Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

We, as Parliamentarians, are here to connect the dots. Our mission is to generate a unified alliance within interfaith and intercultural communities of our region. Parliamentarians are chosen by people of diverse beliefs and backgrounds to be the face and the voice that will lend itself to their needs and wishes, and we are charged with the responsibility of further movement toward a peaceful coexistence within and among our communities of our region. The Thai Parliament has the Standing Committees on Religions which has the purposes to maintain and support the preservation of arts and traditions, as well as regional folk wisdoms. This serves us as the significant venue to promote Interfaith and Intercultural cooperation in Thailand.

I am inviting all of you to take an active role in this event and to become a strong link in the chain to expand the cooperation of the faiths and cultures of the people we represent. Let us give value and meaning to this parliamentary event and seek the underlying causes of social difficulties rooted from misunderstandings between different beliefs and cultures. We will share our experiences to create a greater spirit of trust and cooperation among faiths, and to provide equal protection and respect for the basic human rights of all people.

Thank you for your kind attention.