Mr/Madam. Chairperson,
High Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the Royal Thai Government, it is my great honor to address the High-Level Intergovernmental Meeting on the Midpoint Review of the Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities, 2013 – 2022. This session remarks a good opportunity for us to reaffirm our commitments to realize the key roles of persons with disabilities and their representative organizations to create an inclusive society and to achieve the Asia and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities (2013 – 2022) by driving Incheon Strategy as a significant tool in order to “Make the Right Real” for persons with disabilities. In this connection, Thailand joins the international community’s efforts to ensure that persons with disabilities will not be left behind.
Mr/Madam. Chairperson,

In marking first half decade of the Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities (2013 – 2022), I wish to highlight a few impacts that Incheon Strategy have had on the protection of the rights of persons with disabilities in our country.

The Ministry of Social Development and Human is a national focal point on disability issues. Hence, the National Committee on Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities is chaired by the Prime Minister the main responsibilities to coordinate policies and plans on the empowerment of persons with disabilities at both domestic and international levels including mobilization the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and other related obligations.

The Ministry of Social Development and Human Security recognizes the importance of " the opportunities, respect, encouragement” for persons with disabilities to change “persons with disabilities” from “being burden” to be “powerful” in society and nation. Regarding to this, We strongly promotes the rights of persons with disabilities such as mobilization on reasonable accommodation and accessibilities to meet their needs, disability allowance, and employment of persons with disabilities in both government and private sectors, sign language interpreters, and personal assistant for persons with disabilities. We also enhance capacity building of persons with disabilities to be singers, musicians, and a role model. The Ministry is working in collaboration with other related agencies to enable persons with disabilities to live with others in society with dignity and equality.

Mr/Madam Chairperson,

Thailand takes the right-based approach to ensure that persons with disabilities will be able to live independently in the society. Thailand is implementing the Fifth National Plan of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (2017 -2021) with a strategic programme called EQUAL. Also, we are drafting the Second Strategic Plan on Empowerment of Women with Disabilities to promote
their participation and strengthen social security for the group and to address multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination against women with disabilities.

In international legal, Thailand ratified the CRPD and its Optional Protocol. Another process is being undertaken for Thailand to become state party to the Marrakesh Treaty. Relevant measures are being addressed to facilitate visually impaired persons and persons with print disabilities to have access to published works.

Mr/Madam Chairperson,

Thailand reaffirms our strong commitment to the Incheon Strategy as a member of Working Group of the Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities (2013 – 2022), Thailand is going to sign Memorandum of Understanding of the National Action Plan for Operationalizing the Incheon Strategy Indicators among our stakeholders. Then, and conduct the ASEAN+3 Meeting on Accessibility for Persons with Disabilities. Regarding to this, Thailand puts our tireless efforts to protect the rights of persons with disabilities corresponding to the CRPD, the SDGs, and ASEAN Decade of Persons with Disabilities (2011-2020).

To conclude, we all have travelled a long way since joining the Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities (2013 – 2022). Our task is far from over. In this regard, Thailand would like to take this opportunity to reaffirm our commitment to work with our partners in all sectors, at both the national and international levels to ensure that “no one will be left behind”.

Thank you.

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