

Opening Speech

delivered by

H.E. Prof. Pornpetch Wichitcholchai

at the 9th WSPU General Assembly

13 November 2018, at 9.00 hrs.

Dusit Thani Bangkok Hotel

Bangkok, Thailand

Sawasdee Krub (สวัสดีครับ)

Honorable Parliamentarians,

Distinguished Delegates,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

1. On behalf of the National Legislative Assembly and the people of the Kingdom of Thailand, it is indeed a great pleasure for me to extend my warmest welcome and the sincere good wishes of the people of Thailand to all participants of the 9th General Assembly of the World Scout Parliamentary Union. With regard to our theme, “Roles of the Parliament in Supporting Scout Movement towards SDGs Achievement” and its related

sub- themes, it is gratifying to see parliamentarians, national scout representatives, and especially young people from around the world gathering here today to share their views, concerns and experiences relevant to these issues. This is an opportunity for our young citizen to discuss the common challenges they have encountered in the past, and to identify new challenges anticipated in the future. We believe that this is significant opportunity to assure young people that their voices are being heard even during these times of rapidly changing global issues.

2. Needless to say, there are many complex changes generating both positive and negative impacts on people all over the world. Dealing with such issues will require both local and global responses. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is foreseen as an effective means to improve people's lives and the planetary conditions. The Sustainable Development Goals Report of 2018 shows progress on many fronts, but three years after implementation there are still progress gaps in all 17 SDGs. Collaborative partnerships at all levels and by all stakeholders – government, local and national state

agencies, the private sector, civil society, and youth organizations - are essential for further progress and SDGs achievement.

3. Since over one-third of the SDGs targets emphasize the role of young people and because future developments will lie in their hands, their voices are extremely important. The roles of young people and youth organizations have been increasingly recognized as key drivers of development. In this regard, I appreciate the Scout movement as non-formal education that aims to support young people physically, mentally and spiritually, and to prepare them with the life skills necessary to be active and responsible citizens who will be committed to positive change for a better world today and in the future.

4. As the Legislative branch, parliaments have an important role in harnessing the potential of youth and facilitating scout development through the legislative process and functions, which include law making, budgeting, and investigating the Executive's policies and implementation. I also appreciate the World Scout Parliamentary Union as

an organization that can unite the members of the Legislature and Scouts to increase fellow parliamentarians' understanding of the significance and usefulness of scouting.

5. Realizing such worthiness, Thai parliament established Thai Scout Parliamentary Association in 1996 to promote scouting among parliamentarians as well as provide legislative support to the scout movement. Currently, Thai National Legislative Assembly places great importance on youth development through scouting and has carried out the supportive activities, for example, Advanced Unit Leader Training Course for the National Assembly, and 15 projects of Youth Democratic Leaders Development through Scouting Project from 2013 until now.

Honorable Parliamentarians,

Distinguished Delegates,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

6. At this 9th General Assembly, I believe that the efforts of all participants will bring the substantive views and fruitful suggestions that help prepare young people to address the

challenges of today and the future, make positive change around them, and contribute to a sustainable future. I wish the meeting a great success and you all a very pleasant stay in Bangkok. With that, I am pleased to declare the commencement of the 9th General Assembly of the World Scout Parliamentary Union.

Khob Khun Lae Sawasdee. (ขอบคุณ และสวัสดิ์)
