

**Member States Must Empower the UN, says Thai Prime Minister  
Gen. Surayud Reaffirms Strong Support in UN Day Address**

Bangkok (United Nations Information Services) -- For all the political changes that have taken place in Thailand, supporting the United Nations remains a constant in Thai foreign policy. The message comes from a keynote address given today by the Prime Minister, General Surayud Chulanont, at the United Nations Day observance in Bangkok.

Speaking in front of about 450 UN staff members, Thai government officials, members of the diplomatic corps, students, and representatives of the civil society, Prime Minister Surayud reaffirmed Thailand's continuing support "for all the good work that the United Nations and its specialized bodies, indeed all of you, are doing for the cause of multilateralism, for the benefit of our region and the world at large."

He said Thailand was privileged to serve as the regional headquarters for Asia-Pacific of many UN agencies.

Prime Minister Surayud reiterated that for the UN to maintain its rightful place on the world stage, continuing reform was needed. "But we the Member States also have to do our share. We need to have the political will to empower the UN to take action as and when necessary. We need to provide the UN with sufficient resources", he said.

The Prime Minister wished the UN a happy 62nd birthday. "Long may you continue to serve the common good, to defend the rights of the weak and to uplift the hopes of all mankind. In these noble tasks, Thailand stands by you", he concluded.

The message was echoed by the president of the UN Association of Thailand, Amb. Manaspas Xuto.

"The UN is what we the Member States, and indeed the peoples of the UN, make it to be", said Amb. Xuto. "The future of the UN lies in our own hands. If we want to make the UN more effective, then let us give the UN the mandate and the resources to make it possible."

Amb. Xuto said that, for the UN to be successful, it would continue to need support not only of governments but also from the people, civil society and the private sector.

The UN Day observance was held at the UN Conference Centre in Bangkok. Speaking on behalf of the UN system based in Bangkok, the Deputy Executive Secretary of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), Mr. Shigeru Mochida, said that while the world had undergone enormous changes over the past six decades, the role of the United Nations had become more indispensable than ever.

Mr. Mochida thanked the government and people of Thailand for their continuing support to the UN. He recalled that, just over a week ago, the Thai Government, members of the public and the United Nations joined hands together outside the UN compound to Stand Up and Speak Out against poverty and for the Millennium Development Goals. "It was a powerful symbol of our common stand", said Mr. Mochida.

He also praised the private sector for supporting a joint exhibition at the biggest shopping mall in Bangkok to commemorate the UN Day. Over 20 UN entities are participating in the three day exhibition which adopts a uniform design to present One UN to the public.

The Bangkok observance also featured a flag raising ceremony attended by the Prime Minister and the Foreign Minister, and musical performances by a school marching band, a school orchestra, children from an international school, and UN staff members.