

**Intervention by Ms. Pornprapai Ganjanarintr, Director-General,
Department of International Organizations, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of
Thailand at High-level Panel Discussion: "Poaching and Illicit Wildlife
Trafficking – A multidimensional crime and a growing challenge to the
international community", New York, 26 September 2013**

- I would like to take this opportunity to commend the role of Germany and Gabon in co-organizing this highly significant event.
- Thailand attaches great importance to this issue, and as you are aware, we had the privilege to host CITES COP 16 in March this year in Bangkok. The Conference was able to adopt a number of threatened animal and plant species under CITES Appendices. The Meeting also unanimously supported Thailand's proposal to designate the Third of March of every year as World Wildlife Day, an initiative which is likely to be endorsed during UNGA68.
- Due to Thailand's favourable geographical location at the heart of Southeast Asia, criminal rings have made use of Bangkok as the transportation hub for transnational crimes including wildlife crime, and trans-shipment of items such as ivory and hazardous waste. In globalization world, Thailand foresees an increase in these challenges, especially when the ASEAN Economic Community comes into effect in 2015, allowing goods, people and capital to move more freely.
- Recognizing the importance of regional cooperation to meet the challenges, last year Thailand proposed that environmental crime be prioritized under the ASEAN Framework on Transnational Crime. This is in addition to our collaboration in the ASEAN- Wildlife Enforcement Network (ASEAN-WEN), to counter the unlawful cross-border trade in endangered species. Thailand also cooperates with South Asia-WEN and INTERPOL on this issue.
- At national level, the Government has approved the national master plan on wildlife conservation, encompassing critical elements to improve wildlife protection and the environment as a whole. This includes development of a smart patrol system to protect wildlife habitats, research, improvement of law enforcement, and enhancing capacity of frontline officials. The law governing the protection of elephants is also being revised.
- Clearly this meeting in New York is expected to bring to the forefront concrete measures to combat wildlife trafficking which has become a global problem. No doubt, inputs from the international community would be most useful and contribute to the common battle faced by many countries.
