Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs discussed the issue of irregular movement of people in the Indian Ocean

On 20 May 2015, General Tanasak Patimapragorn, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Thailand visited Putrajaya, Malaysia upon the invitation of Minister of Foreign Affairs of Malaysia to discuss with both Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Malaysia and Indonesia on the issue of irregular movement of people in the region. The meeting urged for a comprehensive solution and concerted efforts in addressing the unprecedented increase of irregular migration in the region.

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs emphasized that the situation demands an immediate response for protection of irregular migrants at sea on the basis of international burden sharing and in accordance with their respective domestic laws.

The Foreign Ministers also underlined the need for medium-term and long-term sustainable solutions. Countries of origin, transit, and destination as well as the international community must work collectively to solve this problem which should not be left to any country alone.

The meeting fully agreed with Thailand that relevant countries must express their strong commitment to work together and with other relevant parties to rid the region of people smugglers and human traffickers and to prevent irregular migration flows. This could be done by, among other things, creating and strengthening the network of law enforcement officers, increasing communication with people on the ground and promoting development at countries of origin. They urged not only the countries involved in the region, but also the international community to share more responsibility in this endeavor.

Thailand attached great importance to humanitarian assistance and will not push back migrants stranded in the Thai territorial water. To explore possible cooperation from relevant countries and international organizations, Thailand will hold the Special Meeting on Irregular Migration in the Indian Ocean on 29 May 2015 in Bangkok. The meeting will be attended by 17 countries, 2 observers and 3 international organizations. It will provide a forum for relevant parties to constructively discuss and to demonstrate their strong commitment to strengthen cooperation in seriously preventing and solving the problem of irregular migration in the region in a concrete and sustainable manner.

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20 May 2015