



**International Convention on
the Elimination of All Forms
of Racial Discrimination**

Distr.: General
10 January 2023

Original: English
English, French and Spanish only

Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination

**Information received from Thailand on follow-up
to the concluding observations on its combined
fourth to eighth reports***

[Date received: 28 December 2022]

* The present document is being issued without formal editing.



I. Introduction

1. On 22–23 November 2021, Thailand appeared before the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, for the review of its combined fourth to eighth periodic reports on the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD). The Committee issued its Concluding Observations for Thailand on 1 December 2021.
2. Under paragraph 48 of its Concluding Observations, the Committee requested that Thailand submit, within one year, information in response to the recommendations made in paragraphs 22 (human rights defenders) and 24 (b) and (d) (situation of ethnic and ethno-religious groups under martial law and state of emergency) and 38 (COVID-19 and racial discrimination). Thailand provides the following information in response.

II. Follow-up Information

A. Human Rights Defenders

3. Thailand has demonstrated continued commitments to the protection of human rights defenders by highlighting human rights defenders as one of the targets under the 4th and 5th National Human Rights Plans as well as the National Action Plan on Business and Human (NAP). These Plans set out several action points aimed at protecting human rights defenders.
4. In order to ensure protection of human rights defenders, an amendment to the Criminal Procedure Code is introduced in 2018 to prevent Strategic Lawsuit Against Public Participation (SLAPP) and similar forms of harassment through the legal process against any individuals, especially human rights defenders. In this light, Section 161/1 of Criminal Procedure Code was adopted to allow courts to exercise discretion by dismissing or not accepting cases, if the courts consider that prosecution has the intention to dishonestly distort the facts or to bully or take advantage of the defendant. The plaintiff is not allowed to file a case again, but this does not exclude the power of prosecutor in filing the case. Another amendment to help protect human rights defenders from being falsely prosecuted is Section 165/2 of Criminal Procedure Code. It specifies that defendants may state facts to the court or raise an important issue that the court should order the case to be dismissed. Besides, the court may call such persons, documents, or objects to be a court's evidence for consideration of the case as necessary and appropriate.
5. Regarding prevention measure of SLAPP, Section 21 of the Public Prosecution Organ and Public Prosecutors Act B.E. 2553 (2010) empowers public prosecutors to consider a case and practice their duties in accordance with the Constitution of Kingdom of Thailand B.E. 2560 (2017), and other relevant laws in good faith. In case public prosecutors consider that criminal prosecution will not benefit the public or will affect the safety or national security or will be against the benefit of the country, public prosecutors may present to the Attorney General for dismissal of the case.
6. With regard to the enforced disappearance of human rights defenders, the Government has been committed to introducing legislation which defines and criminalizes “torture” and “enforced disappearances” in the domestic legal system in accordance with the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman, or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT) and the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance (ICPPED). On 25 October 2022, the Prevention and Suppression of Torture and Enforced Disappearance Act was endorsed by His Majesty the King and published in the Royal Gazette and will come into force after the completion of a 120-day period from the date of its publication in the Royal Gazette. It is envisaged that this Act will further strengthen Thailand's implementation of the obligations under the CAT and further enhance its commitments, including in the move to ratify the ICPPED.
7. The adoption of the Act of Prevention and Suppression of Torture and Enforced Disappearance is a milestone and a demonstration of the strong intention of the government of Thailand to seriously address the allegations relating to torture and enforced disappearance

in a systematic and institutional manner. The Act consists of 43 Sections which, among others, establish specific criminal offences of torture, enforced disappearance and cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment (CIDT) based on the definitions stipulated in the CAT and ICPPED. The key features of the Act recognize crucial provisions contained in the Conventions in particular non-refoulement principle, non-derogable rights of victim, universal jurisdiction over such crimes, superior liability, complicity liability, continued prompt and impartial investigation, retrospective criminal liability for the act of enforced disappearance, and the statute of limitation of an offence of enforced disappearance shall not commence until the fate of disappeared person can be established, taking into account its continuous nature.

8. The Act also establishes a national committee to prevent and suppress torture and enforced disappearance mandated to propose an amendment to legislations, formulate policy, regulation and plan to prevent torture and enforced disappearance, and monitor the situations of torture and enforced disappearance across the country. The Act provides preventive measures guaranteed by requiring continuing video and audio records in custody since the individual is arrested and promptly report the arrest to the public prosecutors and administrative authority. The Act establishes jurisdiction of the Central Criminal Court for Corruption and Misconduct Cases over the crimes under this Act and authorizes a wide range of government agencies to initiate the investigation under the supervision of the public prosecutors in order to expedite and ensure transparency of prosecutions and proceedings.

9. During the period that the Prevention and Suppression of Torture and Enforced Disappearance Act has not entered into force, the National Committee for Managing Cases Relating to Torture and Enforced Disappearance has been working since 2017 on screening cases, following up cases, providing remediation to victims and developing measures to prevent torture and enforced disappearance. The National Committee is chaired by the Minister of Justice and comprises 18 members from government agencies, civil society organizations and academia. It is mandated to promptly investigate and follow up allegations of torture and disappearance, to provide redress if a violation is found, and to promote protective mechanisms to prevent future occurrences of such cases. Any public officer who is found to have been involved in torture and/or enforced disappearance will be prosecuted in accordance with the criminal law.

10. Committed to improving impartiality, fairness and transparency of the investigation on disappeared persons, the government has worked closely with Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), National Human Rights Commission of Thailand, civil society organizations and other relevant agencies. Those key partners are included in the investigation team to visit and conduct fact-finding interview of relatives and families of the disappeared persons. In addition, the technique for investigation of enforced disappearance has also sought to adhere to the standards and guidance of the United Nations Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances (WGEID) on sensitive engagement with the victims' families in the search and investigation which requires, in particular, trust building, re-traumatization avoidance and enhancement of families' understanding. On 13 September 2022, during the virtual meeting between the WGEID and Thai government agencies, Thailand reaffirmed its readiness to engage constructively with the WGEID and all partners to further make progress on prevention and suppression of the acts of torture and enforced disappearance, shared Thailand's experiences, efforts and challenges and welcomed the learning of good practices in other countries and from the examples given by members of the Working Group.

11. In addition, a number of seminars and workshops have been consistently conducted to promote understanding of relevant government officials about the CAT and ICPPED. For example, the Rights and Liberties Protection Department together with the International Commission of Jurists (ICJ) and OHCHR developed a capacity-building training course for medical personnel, law enforcement officers and other responsible officers on the subjects of human rights, investigation and forensic science in torture, enforced disappearance cases, including unlawful deaths as referred to by the Istanbul Protocol and the Minnesota Protocol. Moreover, training courses on torture and enforced disappearance prevention have regularly been provided for state officials in the armed forces, the police, prisons and other related agencies. The trainings were both part of routine programmes and special sessions in order for them to conduct their work with full human rights awareness and to prevent human rights

violations committed by state officials. The Ministry of Justice has joined hands with the OHCHR to organize human rights training for all stakeholders including human rights defenders. The Ministry of Justice was invited to be a resource person in several trainings for human rights defenders, particularly Human Rights Defenders Summer School, annually organized by OHCHR in Bangkok, to enhance the capacity of human rights defenders in Thailand. The Ministry of Justice has consistently carried out a series of trainings for various sectors including government sector and business sector to understand the role of human rights defenders and demonstrate why human rights defenders are essential actors in contributing to the on-going efforts of promoting and protecting human rights.

12. The Ministry of Justice continues to provide legal aid services to protect and assist human rights defenders, regardless of their nationality through the implementation of the Justice Fund Act, the State Compensation Act and the Witness Protection Act. Recently, the Witness Protection Act was amended to broaden definition of witness to include persons, including human rights defenders, who have provided information and testimony to the authorities and faced unsafe situation. In addition, human rights defenders are able to request officers from the Ministry of Justice to observe court proceedings where human rights defenders are involved in the case to ensure transparency in the justice process.

B. Situation of ethnic and ethno-religious groups under martial law and state of emergency

13. The application of special laws in Southern Border Provinces of Thailand is rigorously based on the principles of necessity, proportionality and non-discriminatory. The laws aim to deal with the existence of violence perpetrated by some groups in those specific areas and address the problems in a more effective and timely manner for the safety of civilians and the public at large. According to the statistics, the violent incidents have also dropped since the special laws have been enforced.

14. Thailand is aware of the temporary nature of special laws which their existence requires the condition of exigencies. In this connection, the application of special laws is periodically reviewed on the basis of necessity in light of changing circumstances. Until present, the Cabinet has revoked the application of the Emergency Decree on Public Administration in Emergency Situations B.E. 2548 (2005) in total of eight districts encompassing three southern provinces which are Yala province, Pattani province and Narathiwat province. It must be noted that on 14 September 2021, the Cabinet approved an Action Plan for the gradual lifting of the Emergency Decree in the Southern Border Provinces for the years 2022–2027.

15. Thailand reaffirms that these special laws are complementary measures and do not substitute of the due legal and judicial process. The rights of individuals regardless of nationality, subject to criminal process, are protected under normal criminal laws and legitimacy of legal system. Importantly, these laws do not have the objectives of reinforcing a climate of impunity or granting officials immunity from prosecution. In practice, there have been many cases where officials acting pursuant to these laws were sued in a torture case and ruled to make compensation to the injured persons.

16. In order to ensure that special security laws are strictly implemented in a limited and supervised manner, the Internal Security Operations Command's Region 4 adopted several measures as well as guidelines for the law enforcement officers in the Southern Border Provinces to implement the Emergency Decree and the National Security Act in compliance with international obligations and standards, especially the principles of necessity and proportionality. The Office of Attorney General provided instructions for the law enforcement officers operating in such areas to ensure that search, arrest, detention or imprisonment shall only be carried out strictly in accordance with the provisions of the law and to ensure the right of those arrested and accused of a crime to promptly access a lawyer at all stages of the legal process according to Criminal Procedural Code.

17. With regard to legal remedies, a victim of human rights violation particularly of the acts of torture and enforced disappearance is entitled to apply for state compensation through the two main legislations regardless of nationality and ethnicity. First, the State

Compensation Act ensures the right to receive state compensation for victims of crime such as offence against life and body, sexual offence, offence against liberty and offence against property. Second, The Southern Border Provinces Administration Centre's (SBPAC) Remedy Manual 2012 offers compensation up to 7 million THB to the persons affected by actions committed by government officers occurred in the Southern Boarder Provinces. From 1 October 2021 to 30 September 2022, SBPAC's Remedy Manual has compensated 460 persons affected by human rights abuses committed by government officers including those suspected, charged, accused or detained under special security laws, totaling 30,015,546 THB (797,797.90 USD).

18. Since October 2022, SBPAC has allocated budget of 1,244,605 THB (33,131.60 USD) to conduct a number of seminars and trainings for 200 relevant officials with a view to improving the effectiveness and efficiency of remedial system and strengthening remedial measures for those suffered from psychological impact of the application of special security laws in the Southern Border Provinces. Moreover, to improve the quality of life of those affected by the situation, the government will pay tuition fees and monthly allowance for children of those affected by actions committed by government officers from kindergarten until college degree (not older than 25 years).

19. In addition, the Ministry of Justice has continued its effort to disseminate legal and human rights knowledge to promote public understanding about ethnic groups in Thailand. A number of trainings, seminars and workshops were conducted to train law enforcement officers, youth and teachers in educational institutions and religion teaching schools, local media personnel and local communities to enhance their understanding about human rights standards and laws and their application including provisions under the ICERD.

20. In case of a person with limited means/from low-income family subject to criminal process, the Justice Fund Act will ensure their access to legal aids by offering her/him the cost of bail, lawyer fees, court fees, forensic examination fees, and other expenses related to trial free of charge. In order to ensure fair proceedings to non-Thai speakers, professional interpreters will be provided to defendants and plaintiffs, the injured persons, the accused and the witnesses free of charge since the pre-trial proceedings.

21. As for the Witness Protection programme, ethnic groups are eligible to be protected if they become witness in criminal cases according to the Witness Protection Act. Importantly, earlier this year, the Office of Witness Protection under the Rights and Liberties Protection Department of the Ministry of Justice has issued a new Witness Protection Regulations to ensure appropriate treatment to witness according to their differences and specific needs, including ethnic groups. To date, all witnesses protected under our witness protection programme are 100% safe.

22. A wide range of channels to access those legal aid services has been developed both online and onsite to remove geographical barrier and facilitate full access to justice for all. The individuals can apply for legal assistances and legal remedies at the Provincial Justice Offices and Damrong Dhamma Centers located at every province nationwide, including in three Southern Border Provinces. Online platforms are also available; for example, the Ministry of Justice's website, online application called "Justice Care" and Hotline Service, to offer free legal counselling, enable online complaint reporting and track status of their complaints as well as all requests submitted to the Ministry.

C. COVID-19 and racial discrimination

23. Thailand already explained the public health service system and the four national healthcare schemes in Thailand which can be considered universal and non-discriminatory in the statements and additional information complementing the presentation of the combined fourth to eighth periodic reports of Thailand.

24. Healthcare services for non-Thai people including migrant workers, groups with status problems as well as stateless people, are covered by two main healthcare schemes; first Social Security Scheme for the private formal sector, and second the private health insurance. On the latter, the Ministry of Public Health has been allocated a budget to set up and

administer this system which provides the healthcare insurance to migrant workers, including those migrant workers who were undocumented, and the Thai government has registered them through the nationality verification system.

25. The COVID-19 outbreaks in Thailand has had a widespread impact. Thailand has taken concrete steps to ensure that all individuals in Thailand irrespective of legal status including ethnic and ethno-religious groups, migrants, asylum seekers, displaced persons are protected to overcome the health crisis posed by the pandemic. Among those initiatives approved by Cabinet's resolutions are 1) allowing illegal migrant workers of three nationalities (Cambodia, Myanmar and Lao PDR) to legally stay during the pandemic and offering food supplies and other essential assistance to those affected by the closures of workplaces; 2) granting automatic visa extensions for migrants holding temporary stay status to ensure they can access social benefits including healthcare; 3) notifying and regulating employers to offer COVID-related care assistance essential for their employees who have contracted COVID-19; 4) allowing migrant workers of three nationalities (Cambodia, Myanmar and Lao PDR) who do not have work permit to be registered with no immigration consequences enabling them to benefit from social security scheme; and 5) establishing quarantine units and accommodation isolation units in construction sites, establishments, factories and workplaces as well as arranging vaccines for all employees regardless of nationality for free.

26. The government has initiated a number of policy responses to assist migrant workers of three nationalities during COVID-19 up to date including:

- Cabinet's resolution issued on 4 August 2020 granted extensions of legal stay and work permit for 237,944 migrant workers of the three nationalities until 31 March 2022;
- Cabinet's resolution issued on 10 August 2020 allowed 32,006 migrant workers under the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between Thailand and the three neighboring countries who completed their four-year term from 1 November 2020 to 31 December 2021 to carry on working in Thailand for another 2 years;
- Cabinet's resolution issued on 29 December 2020 allowed 434,153 migrant workers of the three nationalities who illegally entered Thailand to stay in the country during the new surge of COVID-19 pandemic;
- Cabinet's resolution issued on 13 July 2021 allowed migrant workers in possession of work permits and those who could not apply for extensions of their work permits resulting from COVID-19 containment measure, to continue their stay and work in Thailand until 13 February 2023. 1,089,552 migrant workers benefitted from this resolution;
- Cabinet's resolution issued on 28 September 2021, allowed undocumented migrants workers to carry on working legally in Thailand until 13 February 2023. As of 14 February 2022, this resolution allowed 353,776 undocumented migrant workers in construction sites and factories to be registered to grant their legal stay status and work permits;
- Cabinet's resolution issued on 15 March 2022 allowed 21,758 migrant workers under the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between Thailand and the three neighboring countries who complete their four-year term in 2022 to legally stay in Thailand for another six months in order for them to apply for work permit and temporary work permit extensions;
- Cabinet's resolution issued on 5 July 2022 allowed migrant workers whose work permits will be expired by 13 February 2023 and those undocumented migrant workers to temporary stay and work in Thailand until 13 February 2025. This resolution has been in effect since 1 August 2022.

27. Thailand ensures the inclusive and equitable vaccination scheme as a matter of public health, fairness and human rights to prioritize needs over migration status in implementing right to equitable access to health services for all. The Government has made clear instructions and entitlements to COVID-19 vaccination for non-Thais by announcing

Guidelines on vaccination against COVID-19 for non-Thais enabling asylum seekers, displaced persons, marginalized groups, unvaccinated migrant workers who travelled to Thailand and those undocumented to receive the COVID-19 vaccine free of charge. In this regard, the Department of Disease Control in collaboration with relevant local authorities has been designated to register and arrange vaccines for non-Thais requested for COVID-19 vaccination for free in each local jurisdiction nationwide. Importantly, the guidelines also provide flexible procedures with limited documentation requirements aiming to facilitate undocumented persons to reserve their vaccinations without validation of passport number or 13-digit identification (Thai-national validation).

28. In addition, foreign residents in Thailand have been included in this undertaking especially those aged 60 years and above, those who are at least 12 weeks pregnant, and those who have any of the following underlying medical conditions; chronic respiratory diseases, cardiovascular diseases, chronic kidney diseases, cerebrovascular diseases, any type of cancer during chemotherapy, radiotherapy and autoimmune therapy, diabetes, and obesity.

29. With regard to Myanmar displaced persons, the Thai government, partnered with the UNHCR, Thai Red Cross and Chulabhorn Royal Academy (CRA), implemented COVID-19 vaccination programme for displaced persons fleeing Myanmar residing in nine temporary shelters in Thailand since September 2021. As of November 2022, 26,384 persons were vaccinated with 1 dose, and 23,780 persons with 2 doses. In all shelters, screening and quarantine units have been set up aiming to ensure the maximum security against the spread of the disease. Beyond access to vaccinations, medical treatment, hygiene items and facilities, Thailand has consistently put efforts to raise awareness by integrating COVID-19 prevention communication messages into its ongoing outreach activities, ensuring that materials and messages are shared in a culturally appropriate manner and in relevant languages.

30. In summary, the Government has allocated budget up to 98 million THB (2.76 million USD) for COVID-19 vaccination for non-Thais, including displaced persons, undocumented migrant workers and groups of persons with status problems from October 2021 to June 2022.

31. Following the discovery of COVID-19 infected individuals outside mainstream healthcare schemes, including among non-Thai citizens, Thailand has treated all patients regardless of their legal status on humanitarian grounds by covering medical costs of those infected with COVID-19. There are up to 3,267 persons with status problems who received medical treatment which amounts to 21.107 million THB (595,906 million USD) between October 2020 and March 2022. Recently, The Cabinet's resolution of 2 August 2022 approved financial assistance up to 1,923.1426 million THB (5.43 million USD) to support medical costs incurred during October 2021 to June 2022 for any individuals outside mainstream healthcare schemes.

32. The COVID-19 pandemic has long-term adverse impact on jobs and incomes including members of ethnic groups living in the highland. In this light, the Department of Social Development and Welfare (DSDW), in collaboration with public agencies and private agencies, has initiated a number of projects in order to alleviate the economic and social impact on people living in the highland. The programmes strive to address the issues faced by the tribal community, explore avenues of promotion to create a robust tribal brand identity, and build and enhance the entrepreneurial capabilities of the tribal artisans. For example, under the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed by DSDW and Total Access Communication Public Company (DTAC), the Tribal Entrepreneurship Development Program for Young Entrepreneurs has been introduced aiming at improving the lives of the tribal community in the highland and exploring avenues of promotion through online platforms to expand the local and international markets. The trainings build and enhance the entrepreneurial capabilities of the tribal artisans to create business value to successfully achieve the entrepreneurial goals. This programme has been implemented in eight provinces in the northern region of Thailand. There are 863 people living in highland benefitted from the programmes who have successfully created tribal brand identity in online platforms such as TikTok and Facebook. This constitutes a 15-50 percent increase of their annual incomes equivalent to 9,200 THB (258 USD) to 15,000 THB (423 USD) per household.

33. The initiatives include Promotion of Contemporary Karen Textile Programme in Uthaithani Province which has been initiated to improve the quality of products. There are

60 people from artisan groups who have been introduced to new product types and designs in line with market demands, understanding of market needs and trends. The training also focuses on helping artisan groups get familiar with e-commerce websites to provide an alternate avenue for the sale of products during the COVID-19 pandemic. This programme brought about 1,500 THB (42.35 USD) increase of their monthly incomes. In addition, Improving Quality of Life Programme, under collaboration between the DSDW and Central Retail Corporation Public Company Limited, has been implemented to create employment opportunities for three tribal groups in five villages in Kampaengpetch Province. The trainees have been trained on artisan wool kitting to provide handmade decorating products in the markets, from which they have earned 353,336 THB (9,976 USD).

34. In order to mitigate liquidity shortages and avoid bankruptcies as a consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Ministry of Finance adopted a range of temporary measures. SMEs debt restructuring was implemented by the Ministry of Finance and Bank of Thailand by adopting Guideline on Sustainable Debt Restructure for the Debtors of Specialized Financial Institutions. This initiative has also included the effort to collaborate with commercial banks to adopt long-term debt restructure framework to durably support debt affordability and debt relief such as reduction of penalty interest rates and installments during 1-2 years from the beginning phrase of debt restructure. Besides, in 2021, financial institutions and Specialized Financial Institutions implemented 2-month debt moratorium on principal and interest for the SMEs and small-scale debtors, both employers and employees in businesses that were forced to close as a result of the government's anti- COVID-19 measures and orders. Debt moratorium was in effect for 2 months during July and August debt service cycles in 2021.

35. In 2020, the Ministry of Finance introduced credit guarantee measures to encourage commercial banks to provide medium and long-term loans with more relaxed requirements than they would otherwise require lower collateral, lower interest rates. The measures include 1) Portfolio Guarantee Scheme (PGS) Project for SME entrepreneurs giving 30% guarantee coverage worth 150,000 million THB (4,234.89 million USD); 2) Micro Entrepreneurs 4 (Micro 4) giving 35% guarantee coverage worth 25,000 million THB (705.82 million USD); and 3) PGS Soft Loan Extra for SME entrepreneurs worth 90,000 million THB (2,540.94 million USD) to lessen the risk of debt-overhang and stimulate increased loans to the SMEs.

36. Furthermore, to relieve burden on all employers and insured persons, the contribution rate of Social Security Fund has been reduced for six times since March 2020. Currently, the rate has been reduced from 5% to 1% (May - July 2022) for insured employees or one-fifth of the usual rate prior to the pandemic. This has benefitted 13.14 million insured employees and 496,442 employers who could save in total of 143,206 million THB (4,043.08 million USD). In case of self-employed persons who participated in social security scheme, the contribution rate of Social Security Fund has been dropped from 300 THB (8.47 USD) to 180 THB (5.08 USD) per month. Around 10.78 million self-employed persons can save in total of 3,243 million THB (91.56 million USD) due to this scheme.

37. In the face of massive job losses due to COVID-19, the Social Security Office has introduced an increase in unemployment compensation benefits for all insured persons for their loss of income resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. Since March 2020, unemployment due to force majeure including 14-days quarantine decided by the physician, or unpaid leave due to temporary suspension of business because of COVID-19 prevention, an insured person will receive compensation at the rate of 50% of daily wage for up to 90 days. Until May 2022, around 2.58 million insured persons have benefitted from this emergency unemployment compensation benefits amounting to 19,926.97 million THB (562.59 million USD).

38. The Social Security Office also approved an increase in the unemployment compensation benefits in case of lay-off, resignation and end of contract for insured persons. This policy was in effect from 1 March 2020 to 28 February 2022. In case of resignation or end of contract for a specified employment period, an insured person would receive compensation at the rate of 45% of daily wage for up to 90 days. Those who were laid off would receive compensation at the rate of 70% of daily wage for up to 200 days. Around 2.33 million insured persons benefitted from this scheme worth 56,031 million THB (1,582 million USD).

39. In case of construction site closure due to government order issued on 25 June 2021 to reduce employees' exposure to COVID-19 in the workplace, the Social Security Office compensated 412.58 million THB (11.660 million USD) for 81,128 insured persons for unemployment. The government also inspected construction sites to register uninsured employees in order to extend access to unemployment compensation benefits to them.

40. The government approved financial support to employers and insured employees in nine business sectors affected by lockdown in 29 red-zones provinces. This financial support scheme was implemented between 4 August 2021 and 31 March 2022. Around 192,951 employers and 3.75 million insured employees benefitted 32,542.27 million THB (919 million USD).

41. The aforementioned financial assistance has also been extended to a voluntarily insured person including 1) an employee who has worked and been an insured person and retired from work but wishes to remain covered for social security benefits, and 2) a self-employed person. Around 8.58 million voluntary insured persons received financial assistance of up to 71,214.63 million THB (2,010 million USD).

42. The government of Thailand has also been responding by offering credits for businesses to access cheap loans and to contain employment. The Social Security Office in collaboration with five commercial banks massively supported emergency credits of up to 30,000 million THB (847 million USD) with low-rate interest payment for loans made by businesses. From 3 April 2020 to 31 December 2021, credits worth 9,635.33 million THB (273 million USD) were granted to 1,623 businesses listed with the Social Security Office. This credit scheme successfully preserved 112,456 jobs across the country.
