Statement by SHero Thailand
UPR Info Pre-session 53 – Thailand
Thematic Issue: Gender-Based Violence

President,

Distinguished delegates,

My name is Mai Jansomboon, and I am speaking on behalf of SHero Thailand, a survivor-led organisation advancing access to justice and GBV law reform.

Thailand has made progress since the previous UPR cycle. The Equal Marriage Act has taken effect, making Thailand the first country in Southeast Asia to recognise marriage equality. In December 2025, amendments to the Criminal Code expanded the definition of rape and, for the first time, criminalised sexual harassment as a distinct offence. These are welcome steps. However, significant gaps remain in both the legal framework and its implementation as follow;

First, Thailand's Domestic Violence Victim Protection Act does not adequately protect survivors of intimate partner violence, particularly those who do not live with the perpetrator, and continues to prioritise family reconciliation over survivor safety. With amendments now before Parliament, Thailand should ensure that the revised Act protects intimate partners regardless of cohabitation and prioritises survivor safety over family reconciliation.

Second, the Criminal Code continues to define rape primarily through force, threats, or the victim's inability to resist, rather than the absence of freely given consent. As a result, law enforcement officials often focus on evidence of physical resistance instead of whether genuine consent existed. Although the 2025 amendment expanded the scope of rape to cover more forms of penetration, the offence is still not built on consent. Marital rape offences remain compoundable, allowing perpetrators to avoid accountability through settlement.

Third, survivors continue to face serious barriers in accessing justice. In 2023, Thailand's one-stop crisis centres recorded more than 12,000 survivors of violence. Yet only over 200 domestic violence cases were filed directly with the courts. Undocumented migrants, asylum seekers and refugees often fear arrest or deportation when reporting domestic or sexual violence. Survivors also continue to experience victim-blaming, repeated interviews, inadequate privacy during proceedings, and a shortage of trained female justice officials, with women comprising only 6.6 percent inquiry officers nationwide, resulting in secondary victimization and discouraging reporting. Essential services remain

inadequate. State-run shelters are limited to one place per province, none designed for adult survivors without children. The government's own 2023 report acknowledges insufficient personnel. SHero's casework confirms that some provincial centres have as few as one officer. No dedicated fund exists for survivor reparation or a long-term psychosocial support, and inaccessible services for survivors with disabilities.

We therefore respectfully encourage recommending States to call on Thailand to:

First, immediately, through the current parliamentary amendment process, amend the Domestic Violence Victim Protection Act to protect all survivors of intimate partner violence regardless of cohabitation status and remove provisions that prioritise family reconciliation over survivor safety.

Second, amend the Criminal Code without delay to adopt a consent-based definition of rape, making the absence of freely given consent the central element of the offence, ensuring that all forms of non-consensual sexual penetration are criminalised, and removing provisions that allow marital rape offences to be settled or penalties reduced.

Third, ensure that all survivors, including undocumented migrants, asylum seekers and refugees, can safely report gender-based violence without fear of arrest, detention or deportation.

Thank you.