



Integrated Country Strategy

Thailand

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1. Chief of Mission Priorities

Our mission is to promote U.S. interests by securing the United States as Thailand's preferred defense and security partner; strengthening the economic partnership; and promoting rule of law, human rights, democratic values, humanitarian cooperation, climate actions, and global health. The U.S. relationship with the Kingdom of Thailand remains one of our most important in the Asia Pacific region and has spanned more than two centuries of friendship. We have been diplomatic treaty partners for over 185 years and security treaty allies for 65 years. Our broad cooperation—in the heart of the most dynamic and relevant region for the future of the world's security and economy—benefits both our countries, the region, and the world beyond.

The U.S.-Thailand relationship covers the full range of political, security, health, and economic cooperation. Strategically, we have deep security cooperation and robust military-to-military relations, encompassing significant joint training and exercises, including the annual Cobra Gold multilateral military exercise, the largest of its kind in Asia. We also have significant cooperation in law enforcement, with a particular focus on transnational crime and countering narcotics trafficking. We have had over 60 years of cooperation on health matters including through the Armed Forces Research in Medical Sciences and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Our goal is to continue to build on this cooperation by deepening and expanding these ties, which promote regional stability and enable both nations to effectively address complex security concerns, including the protection of U.S. citizens abroad.

Economically, our goal is to expand economic ties by promoting bilateral investment and trade. We aim to create business opportunities for U.S. companies and expand cooperation in key sectors of strategic interest. We support an open and accessible business climate that adheres to high standards for technology, transparency, and social protections. We continue to advocate policies to help Thailand achieve sustainable growth and deepen economic integration.

The United States supports democracy, human rights, humanitarian cooperation, climate actions, and global health. Throughout the world, including in Thailand, we have consistently

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encouraged governments to ensure freedom of expression and to respect human rights. We support sound governance that increases public sector accountability and transparency, strengthens anti-corruption measures, and promotes honest and open public finance practices. We aim to improve protection efforts for the environment and marginalized communities.

Sustaining a mission of this size and regional significance continues to present substantial challenges. We are prepared to face these challenges through the construction of a New Office Annex in Bangkok and New Consulate Compound in Chiang Mai; the prioritization of providing modern and secure infrastructure and a diverse and inclusive work environment; and by ensuring a secure environment for the conduct of U.S. foreign policy.

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2. Mission Strategic Framework

Mission Goal 1: Secure the U.S. as Thailand's Preferred Defense and Security Partner.

- **Mission Objective 1.1:** Strengthen Long-term Linkages with Political and Security Institutions and Increase Popular Support for the U.S.-Thai Alliance to bolster global security.
- **Mission Objective 1.2:** Increase Engagement with and Capacity of Thai Defense and Law Enforcement Institutions to make Thailand a more capable partner in addressing threats to U.S. interests, including protecting U.S. Border Security and U.S. citizens.
- **Mission Objective 1.3:** Promote Thai Leadership and Strategic Focus in Regional Venues to support a more resilient, prosperous, and secure Indo-Pacific region.

Mission Goal 2: Strengthen the Economic Partnership.

- **Mission Objective 2.1:** Increase Bilateral Trade and Investment to Advance Equitable, Sustainable, and Inclusive Economic Growth.
- **Mission Objective 2.2:** Strengthen Collaboration in Strategic Sectors, Such as Energy, Transportation, and the Digital Economy, to Enhance Global Security and Expand Shared Prosperity.
- **Mission Objective 2.3:** Advance Adoption of Good Regulatory Practices and Shared Standards to Build a Regulatory Environment Attractive to U.S. Businesses, Conducive to Expansion, and Supportive of Fair Competition.

Mission Goal 3: Promote Rule of Law, Human Rights, Democratic Values, Humanitarian Cooperation, Climate Actions, and Global Health.

- **Mission Objective 3.1:** Strengthen Transparency, Accountability, Public Participation, and a human rights-centered Rule of Law in Governing and Political Institutions.

- **Mission Objective 3.2:** Maximize Coordination on the Environment, Climate Change, Transboundary Water, and Other Key Regional/Global Issues.
- **Mission Objective 3.3:** Strengthen Global Health Security and Health Cooperation to Improve Global Health Outcomes.
- **Mission Objective 3.4:** Protect and Assist Vulnerable Populations, Strengthen Thailand's Capacity as a Humanitarian Partner and Regional Hub, and Maintain U.S. Humanitarian Leadership throughout Southeast Asia.

Management Objective 1: Dramatically expand Mission Thailand's USG-owned physical footprint by constructing a 14-story New Office Annex (NOX) in Bangkok and a New Consulate Compound (NCC) in Chiang Mai to solidify the Mission's role as the primary USG hub for Southeast Asia and the Mekong region.

Management Objective 2: Provide modern and secure infrastructure, operational capabilities, and a diverse and inclusive work environment to support effective diplomacy.

Management Objective 3: Provide effective program management and resource allocation to ensure a secure environment for the conduct of U.S. foreign policy and safeguard the Chief of Mission community.

3. Mission Goals and Objectives

Mission Goal 1 | Secure the U.S. as Thailand's Preferred Defense and Security Partner.

Description | To protect America's security at home and abroad, Mission Goal 1 will deepen our long-standing security alliance with Thailand and boost the capacity of Thai security institutions to advance our common goal of a free and open Indo-Pacific. This includes strengthening traditional military to military relations, increasing cooperation on non-traditional security threats such as transnational crime, and promoting Thai leadership in regional security institutions. We will also work to promote continued support for the U.S.-Thai alliance among Thai elites, Thai youth, and the population more broadly.

Objective 1.1 | Strengthen Long-term Linkages with Political and Security Institutions and Increase Popular Support for the U.S.-Thai Alliance to bolster global security.

- **Justification** | Our 65-year security partnership with Thailand is a critical component in our ability to protect American security and interests in the Indo-Pacific region.
- **Linkages** | This objective supports the 2021 Interim National Security Strategy Guidance, 2018 National Defense Strategy, the 2022-2026 State-USAID Joint Regional Strategy, and the 2019 USINDOPACOM Theater Strategy.
- **Risks** | Failure to demonstrate continued robust U.S. engagement will allow malign narratives to grow unchecked and negatively impact security.

Objective 1.2 | Increase Engagement with and Capacity of Thai Defense and Law Enforcement Institutions to make Thailand a more capable partner in addressing threats to U.S. interests, including protecting U.S. Border Security and U.S. citizens.

- **Justification** | Our allies are more reliable and more capable when they have the capacity to address their own security challenges. Thailand's ability to deter threats to its sovereignty, including both traditional threats as well as transnational crime and

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cybercrime, and bilateral law enforcement cooperation, from promoting the health and safety of U.S. citizens to countering trafficking in persons and the smuggling of WMDs and illicit narcotics will strengthen the bilateral partnership and make Thailand a more capable partner in addressing threats to U.S. citizens.

- **Linkages** | This objective supports the 2021 Interim National Security Strategy Guidance, 2018 National Defense Strategy, the 2022-2026 State-USAID Joint Regional Strategy, the 2019 USINDOPACOM Theatre Strategy, the 2022-2026 Consular Affairs Functional Bureau Strategy, and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Strategic Plan for Fiscal Years 2020-2024.
- **Risks** | Weakened security institutions and unchecked transnational criminal activity will erode Thai sovereignty and push Thailand to seek support from other foreign partners. Lack of robust engagement with Thai law enforcement would also increase risks for both U.S. citizens in Thailand and U.S. national security.

Objective 1.3 | Promote Thai Leadership and Strategic Focus in Regional Venues to support a more resilient, prosperous, and secure Indo-Pacific region.

- **Justification** | As the second largest economy in ASEAN and one of only two treaty allies in that body, Thailand can play a key role in advancing our common security interests within Southeast Asia's regional institutions. Whether it is maritime security in the South China Sea; trafficking of drugs, wildlife, and people; or malign activities on the Mekong, Thailand can help lead countries in the region to a more robust assertion of their sovereignty while also advancing U.S. policy goals.
- **Linkages** | This objective supports the 2021 Interim National Security Strategy Guidance, 2018 National Defense Strategy, the 2022-2026 State-USAID Joint Regional Strategy, and the 2019 USINDOPACOM Theatre Strategy
- **Risks** | Absent robust leadership in regional bodies such as ASEAN, the countries of the region will become increasingly vulnerable to third country efforts to undermine their unity and sovereignty, with corresponding negative impacts on U.S. interests.

Mission Goal 2 | Strengthen the Economic Partnership.

Description | The U.S.-Thai economic partnership undergirds our security alliance and has built prosperity over decades for the citizens of both our countries. As competitors work to expand their economic influence in Thailand, the United States must act to reinforce this foundation built over two centuries of friendly commerce. We will work to deepen trade relations, stimulate demand for U.S. products and services, eliminate barriers that preclude U.S. firms from fair and open competition, and identify commercial opportunities within Thailand that support U.S. jobs and exports.

We will emphasize areas of U.S. excellence that can support promotion of innovation and entrepreneurship in Thailand and collaboration in key sectors including, energy, telecommunications, infrastructure, and higher education. We will work with Thailand to improve the business environment and seek additional opportunities for U.S. companies—and their commensurate high standards—to contribute to both our nations' economic growth and prosperity.

We will also collaborate with Thailand in regional and multilateral economic institutions, to include during Thailand's 2022 Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) host year and our 2023 host year.

Objective 2.1 | Increase Bilateral Trade and Investment to advance equitable, sustainable, and inclusive economic growth

- **Justification |** Trade and investment are core components of the economic ties that have linked the United States and Thailand for over two centuries. Stimulating Thai demand for U.S. products and eliminating technical barriers to trade should help to reduce trade imbalances. Thailand's home-grown companies are increasingly venturing into overseas markets and are an important source of potential investment in the United States.

- **Linkages** | This objective supports the 2021 Interim National Security Strategy Guidance, 2018 National Defense Strategy, the 2022-2026 State-USAID Joint Regional Strategy, and the EAP Joint Regional Strategy.
- **Risks** | Failure to expand reciprocal trade will expand the trade deficit.

Objective 2.2 | Strengthen Collaboration in Strategic Sectors, Such as Energy, Transportation, and the Digital Economy, to Enhance Global Security and Expand Shared Prosperity.

- **Justification** | Thailand's economic objectives and the United States Indo-Pacific Strategy are well aligned in sectors including science and technology, energy, transportation infrastructure, telecommunications, and the digital economy. U.S. standards for quality, transparency, and social and environmental protections will ensure that U.S. involvement in these sectors benefits both the United States and Thailand.
- **Linkages** | This objective supports the 2021 Interim National Security Strategy Guidance, 2018 National Defense Strategy, the 2022-2026 State-USAID Joint Regional Strategy, and the EAP Joint Regional Strategy
- **Risks** | Inadequate U.S. investment or incomplete follow through on initiatives would leave nascent projects and emerging opportunities for competitors to seize.

Objective 2.3 | Advance Adoption of Good Regulatory Practices and Shared Standards to Build a Regulatory Environment Attractive to U.S. Businesses, Conducive to Expansion, and Supportive of Fair Competition.

- **Justification** | U.S. firms thrive in regulatory environments conducive to business and healthy competition, and Thailand will benefit from an enhanced business climate. As Thailand improves its regulatory environment, it should be able to attract a larger share of regional supply chains. The United States plays to its strengths when we collaborate on economic growth through market-driven solutions, entrepreneurship, high standards of environmental and social protections, and an ecosystem that promotes innovation.

- **Linkages** | This objective supports the 2021 Interim National Security Strategy Guidance, 2018 National Defense Strategy, the 2022-2026 State-USAID Joint Regional Strategy, and the EAP Joint Regional Strategy.
- **Risks** | If reforms aimed at improving the business climate fail to stimulate sufficient growth, Thailand could pivot toward a greater state involvement in the economy or increase carveouts and protections for state-owned enterprises

Mission Goal 3 | Promote Rule of Law, Human Rights, Democratic Values, Humanitarian Cooperation, Climate Actions, and Global Health

Description | The United States will work with the Royal Thai government and civil society partners in support of free, fair, credible, and participatory governance. Developing a stronger partnership with Thailand will result in the enhanced ability to counter non-democratic forces in the region and deter malign influences. Thailand is a longstanding regional hub for civil society organizations; strengthening collaboration on assistance to vulnerable populations will advance U.S. humanitarian leadership throughout Southeast Asia. These, in turn, will strengthen our partnership across the board, whether in security cooperation, trade and investment, or countering transnational crime and global health threats.

Objective 3.1 | Strengthen Transparency, Accountability, Public Participation, and a human rights centered Rule of Law in Governing and Political Institutions.

- **Justification** | Thailand only recently returned to an elected form of government. This continues to seek further reforms to strengthen Thailand's democratic institutions, the rule of law, and promote human rights. Increasing the capacity of governing and political institutions and civil society organizations to ensure participation will enhance the accountability of leaders to their citizens and provide productive channels for Thais to work out political differences.
- **Linkages** | This objective supports the 2021 Interim National Security Strategy Guidance; the EAP Joint Regional Strategy; the 2022-2026 Consular Affairs Functional Bureau Strategy; and the National Defense Security Strategy.

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- **Risks** | Failure to consolidate democratic gains and/or return to the contentious politics of the past two decades will both weaken Thailand’s ability to partner with the United States and pose challenges to the U.S.-Thai relationship, potentially providing opportunities for other regional powers.

Objective 3.2 | Maximize Coordination on the Environment, Climate Change, Transboundary Water, and Other Key Regional/Global Issues.

- **Justification** | Increasing the capacity of Thai organizations through partnerships, technical assistance, and education and exchange programs will help solidify public confidence and productivity of these organizations and their ability to resist outside threats. This will help improve environment protection efforts, protection of marginalized communities and other regional/transboundary issues
- **Linkages** | Supports the 2021 Interim National Security Strategy Guidance, the EAP Joint Regional Strategy, the 2022-2026 State-USAID Joint Strategic Plan, and 2019 USINDOPACOM Theatre Strategy.
- **Risks** | Participation in efforts to address regional issues could be interpreted as “outsider” interference, undermine credibility of domestic Thai organizations, and could be exploited by media beholden to other regional influencers. Risks to our humanitarian objectives include an increase in xenophobia (including as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic) or policy shifts to be more inward-facing and security-centric, both of which would make it difficult for Thailand to enact policies more supportive of vulnerable migrants and regional humanitarian initiatives.

Objective 3.3 | Strengthen Global Health Security and Health Cooperation to Improve Global Health Outcomes.

- **Justification** | The United States will enhance Thailand’s capacity to address biosecurity threats to public health. Healthy populations are more equipped to have sustained and inclusive prosperity. Lack of access to quality health care could lead to political

instability and opportunities for other regional powers to step in and provide services, increasing their profile in Thailand.

- **Linkages** | These activities contribute to the 2022-2026 State-USAID Joint Strategic Plan, the EAP Joint Regional Strategy, and the United States Government Global Health Security Strategy.
- **Risks** | Thailand could see regional suppliers and producers as better able to provide support against health threats at a lower cost, sacrificing quality for quantity.

Objective 3.4 | Protect and Assist Vulnerable Populations, Strengthen Thailand's Capacity as a Humanitarian Partner and Regional Hub, and Maintain U.S. Humanitarian Leadership throughout Southeast Asia.

- **Justification** | Thailand is a longstanding regional hub for humanitarian organizations that support vulnerable populations and has been a transit destination for hundreds of thousands of refugees and vulnerable migrants, including those displaced by conflict in Burma. Strengthening U.S.-Thailand collaboration on assistance to vulnerable populations will advance U.S. humanitarian leadership both in Thailand and neighboring countries but also will make Thailand a more active champion for humanitarian priorities in Southeast Asia.
- **Linkages** | These activities contribute to the 2022-2026 State-USAID Joint Strategic Plan, the EAP Joint Regional Strategy, Goals 1, 2, and 3 of the 2022-2026 PRM Functional Bureau Strategy, and the March 2021 Interim National Security Strategy Guidance.
- **Risks** | Anti-migrant sentiment among the Thai public, policies overly focused on security at the expense of humanitarian considerations, and diplomatic pressure from Thailand's authoritarian neighbors could lead Thailand to constrain humanitarian cooperation, especially for politically sensitive vulnerable populations.

4. Management Objectives

Management Objective 1 | Dramatically expand Mission Thailand's USG-owned physical footprint by constructing a 14-story New Office Annex (NOX) in Bangkok and a New Consulate Compound (NCC) in Chiang Mai to solidify the Mission's role as the primary USG hub for Southeast Asia and the Mekong region.

- **Justification** | U.S. Mission Thailand's operations in Bangkok and Chiang Mai have outgrown their current facilities. The construction of NOX Bangkok and NCC Chiang Mai will enable USG agencies to consolidate their presence in each city in secure, modern, compounds on USG-owned properties, allowing the mission to vacate leased office space that does not meet State Department security standards
- **Linkages** | These activities are linked to the Joint Regional Strategy management objectives of the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs and USAID's Bureau for Asia on providing an administrative platform that enables the mission to effectively pursue US foreign policy interests in the region. They are also linked to the Overseas Building Operations (OBO) Functional Bureau Strategy.
- **Risks** | Projects are delayed by travel restrictions and rigorous entry requirements imposed to mitigate the spread of the COVID-19, which could reduce the migrant work force available in a labor market already strained by very low unemployment rates for skilled constructions workers.

Management Objective 2 | Provide modern and secure infrastructure, operational capabilities, and a diverse and inclusive work environment to support effective diplomacy.

- **Justification** | U.S. Mission Thailand provides regional technical and training support for the U.S. diplomatic and consular facilities throughout the Indo-Pacific region. As a regional hub which deploys technicians to neighboring posts, Mission Thailand needs to

be at the forefront of State Department advances in mobile computing, security engineering, training, and the adoption of new applications to improve employee mobility and productivity.

- **Linkages:** These activities are linked to the U.S. Department of State's Information Technology Strategic Plan.
- **Risks |** Restrictions in international travel delay the deployment of technical personnel and equipment needed to implement modernization programs in the region.

Management Objective 3 | Provide effective program management and resource allocation to ensure a secure environment for the conduct of U.S. foreign policy and safeguard the Chief of Mission community.

- **Justification |** Mission Thailand's Regional Security Office is responsible for protecting 48 U.S. government agencies at a Post with nearly 4,000 members in its COM community, making Mission Thailand one of the world's largest Missions. The sound management of security programs, including the Local Guard Program, Surveillance Detection Program, Residential Security Program, and the Marine Security Guard Program, are required to secure Mission personnel in a variety of settings. This security foundation serves as the platform upon which U.S. foreign policy is built.
- **Linkages |** These activities are linked to the Department's Joint Strategic Plan and the Bureau of Diplomatic Security's Functional Bureau Plan.
- **Risks |** DS special agent staffing levels must be commensurate with the continued expansion of DS programs and the increasing size of the COM community.