

**Statement for Video Recording by
H.E. Mr. Abhisit Vejjajiva,
Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Thailand
at the 1st Asia Ministerial Conference (AMC)
on Tiger Conservation
29 January 2010 at Hyatt Regency Hua Hin, Thailand**

Your Excellencies, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

1. On behalf of the people and government of Thailand, I wish to extend a warm welcome to the participants of the 1st Asia Ministerial Conference on Tiger Conservation. I also would like to thank all of you for coming to Hua Hin to participate in this conference, which marks an important milestone in the process leading to the Tiger Summit in Vladivostok, Russia, in September 2010. It is therefore a great honour for Thailand to cooperate with the World Bank's Global Tiger Initiative in hosting this event. I hope that our collaborative efforts will significantly contribute to global tiger conservation.

2. We all recognise that tigers face a very real threat of extinction as a result of a variety of factors ranging from habitat loss and prey depletion to poaching. This is in fact a challenge not only for tigers but also for biodiversity conservation and for human welfare – a challenge coming from our misperception in the past that nature's bounty is unlimited and thus can be freely exploited. Now we know that nature is not limitless, and both tigers and humans suffer if its free and unlimited exploitation is allowed to continue.

3. In Thailand, His Majesty the King has long encouraged us to live by a Sufficiency Economy that recognises the crucial importance of forests in maintaining an ecological balance. Forests are the source of clean water supply. They serve as sinks to capture and store carbon and act as natural pumps to bring moist ocean air inland to provide rain to support agriculture and industry. They are the source of many still unknown genetic resources vital to medicine, and are also places for biological as well as spiritual renewal and recreation.

4. The task before us now is of vital importance. In particular, in accomplishing this task, all of us here will no longer be remembered as part of a generation that has destroyed tigers but as champions and protectors, and as originators of initiatives for conservation of tigers as well as our entire global natural capital that is part of our planet's life-supporting system.

5. Fortunately, we have a good start to our task. Our path began last year in April 2009, when the Royal Thai Government hosted the Pattaya workshop which saw very useful groundwork discussions and produced the Manifesto on Combating Wildlife Crime in Asia.

6. In October 2009, the Government of Nepal organised the Kathmandu Global Tiger Workshop, where the world's foremost conservationists, scientists and delegates from Tiger Range Countries gathered. The workshop recommended, among other measures, the development of smart infrastructure and land use, empowerment of communities in and around tiger landscapes, improvement of wildlife law enforcement and governance, building professional capacity, and seeking innovative financing for tiger conservation.

7. Our challenge here is to proceed from these recommendations, particularly by incorporating them into future National Tiger Action Plans. Together, we can work to identify

the political, management, and financial instruments needed to create a Global Tiger Stabilization and Recovery support programme to take to the Global Tiger Summit in Russia. To accomplish these objectives, I hope that ministers from all Tiger Range Countries not only make bold and unprecedented commitments, but also provide sustained support and monitoring to recover this threatened species.

8. As the host country to this 1st Asia Ministerial Conference, Thailand is pleased to share our goals for reversing the decline of tigers, which are to:

- Promote good governance and enhance local stakeholder participation,
- Implement a smart patrolling system across the national protected area system,
- Establish a regional centre for training on patrolling and monitoring of tigers, their prey and other large mammals,
- Continue long term research on tigers and their prey to provide information for developing a scientific approach to tiger conservation,
- Increase the capacity of rangers and wildlife law enforcement staff,
- Strengthen the ASEAN Wildlife Enforcement Network (ASEAN-WEN), and
- Reach out to the business community and the general public for their financial and other types of support for tiger conservation.

9. We hope that the measures Thailand proposes to take will contribute to regional and global efforts to conserve the tiger. Our plan to establish a Tiger Regional Training Centre at the Western Forest Complex needs inputs and participation from other Southeast Asian nations. Thailand looks forward to working with its neighbours and the international community to achieve this goal.

10. I urge you to embrace the challenge to take the technical outcomes of the Kathmandu Workshop to the policy level, and help political leaders in Tiger Range Countries define bold programmes to avert the threat of tiger extinction. The wild tiger is already in crisis – this may be our last chance to save it.

11. Let us start the “Year-of-the-Tiger” here at Hua Hin by “*Turning the tide of extinction of wild tigers (and) Changing the way we treat the world for our future generations.*” I wish you all every success in your deliberations. **Thank you and Sawasdee krub.**

Video Message by Robert B. Zoellick, President of the The World Bank Group, at the 1st Asia Ministerial Conference on Tiger Conservation

**1st Asia Ministerial Conference on Tiger Conservation
Video Message
January 27, 2010
Robert B. Zoellick
President, The World Bank Group**

I want to thank the Royal Government of Thailand, especially Prime Minister Abhisit Vejjajiva, Minister of Natural Resources and Environment Suwit Khunkitti, and Permanent Secretary Dr. Saksit Tridech for hosting the ministerial meeting. I also want to thank the delegations from the Tiger Range Countries for attending.

- I am now more optimistic than ever about the future of wild tigers in Asia. The presence of ministers from such a diverse region indicates that we are gaining traction.
- The World Bank is impressed by the Government of Thailand's leadership and dedication. Minister Suwit Khunkitti's foresight and emphasis on improving wildlife enforcement and trans-boundary cooperation helped us get here.

Much has been achieved since the launch of the Global Tiger Initiative

- The Kathmandu Recommendations outlined specific actions that the Tiger Range Countries will take, as well as new regional and bilateral agreements.
- I recently met with Minister Bohara of Nepal and Minister Ramesh in India. Like Minister Suwit, these ministers are champions of tiger conservation. They have expanded protected areas and promoted trans-boundary cooperation with China.
- China has also announced a number of steps to deter illegal trade in tigers and reduce demand for tiger parts.

But the crisis on the ground remains

- An estimated 200 wild tigers were lost in India and Russia alone since 2008.
- There will be no room left for tigers and other wildlife in Asia without a more responsible and sustainable program for economic growth and infrastructure development.
- The tiger may be only one species, but the tiger's plight highlights the biodiversity crisis in Asia.
- Moreover, poverty could deepen if people lose the essential ecosystem services that the tiger's forests and grasslands provide.

We are at a tipping point. This is the first time the tiger is getting real political attention in every range country, offering real hope for restoring wild tiger populations.

- Tiger Range Countries' governments are eager to move forward. We must seize the opportunity and stem the tiger's decline before the Tiger Summit in September in Russia.
- This conference offers the opportunity to accelerate implementation of the Kathmandu Recommendations. National policies must be based on the best science. In so doing, national park management can be professionalized through capacity building, the use of updated technology and tools, and learning from models that reveal the true economic value of live tigers in the wild.
- As a critical first step, governments must better protect tigers from poachers. They must also protect the tiger's prey, the national parks that form core tiger breeding areas, and tiger landscapes from unsustainable infrastructure projects that are not tiger-friendly.
- The protection of existing tiger populations must be a top priority. Only then can we hope to achieve the ambitious goal to double the wild tiger populations in the Tiger Range Countries by 2022.

Regional cooperation is essential to tiger conservation and the protection of Asia's biodiversity.

- The World Bank stands ready to support implementation with regional projects in law enforcement, community development, and innovative finance. We are already working with the Smithsonian Institution on capacity development by training policy-makers and practitioners in the region.
- We want to support new projects on the Indian subcontinent, including the Terai Arc landscape that spans India and Nepal, and in the Greater Mekong Sub-region, where much habitat remains for tigers to rebound.
- The time has also come to mobilize the donor community and develop innovative financial instruments to support tiger conservation funds.
- We must reach out to the private sector and persuade business leaders to support our cause.
- A paradigm change in development is slowly emerging from Copenhagen. REDD and REDD+ financing that value forests, and the animals that live within them, are very promising avenues for support.

We must set the stage for the September summit in Vladivostok:

- Political will to act has increased. But now we need to roll up our sleeves.
- Tiger Range Country governments need to bolster national and regional tiger conservation plans in the months ahead.
- We need to deploy pilot projects on technology, park management, and capacity building; and we need to implement the scientific recommendations that emerged from Kathmandu.
- Our partner organizations and governments should also strengthen outreach and communication efforts to raise awareness among those outside the conservation community.

The Year of the Tiger is upon us. We must now embark on the path to restoring, and then growing, tiger numbers throughout their range.

- Saving the tiger will be a source of national pride for the tiger range countries. Wild tigers currently live in only 13 countries, but people all around the world want to save the wild tigers, and thus also have a stake in their survival.
- In order to succeed, it will take a partnership of nations and organizations pooling their expertise and passion.
- 2010 is the most important year ever for the tiger – it MUST be the year we take decisive steps to save this majestic species.

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Keynote Address by Jim Adams, WB Vice President for East Asia and Pacific Region, at the 1st Asia Ministerial Conference on Tiger Conservation

**1st Asia Ministerial Conference on Tiger Conservation
Hyatt Regency Hua Hin, Thailand
Opening Session - January 27, 2010
Keynote Remarks by Jim Adams**

I am very pleased to be back in Thailand and here today in Hua Hin.

It is a distinct honor for me to represent President Zoellick at this conference, and to share the podium with Minister Suwit and Secretary Tridech.

I am also grateful for the participation of Prime Minister Abhisit today to demonstrate the strong support of the Government of Thailand for our work together on tiger conservation. As World Bank President Bob Zoellick reminds us, the year of the tiger is here and it is now time to seize the momentum to save wild tigers, take our successes to scale and operationalize our approach.

As President Zoellick said, let's take decisive steps as partners to save this majestic species. I know that my colleagues in the World Bank will do their part to achieve this objective.

The World Bank and the international community applaud Thailand's leadership on sustainable development planning, conservation and particularly of wildlife law enforcement and governance. This was evident in your hosting the ASEAN-WEN Secretariat, sponsoring the meeting of conservation experts in Pattaya in April last year, and now in hosting this first-ever ministerial meeting on tiger conservation.

In just two weeks, we will ring in the Year of the Tiger. This is an opportune moment for us to convene this conference to focus on the future and sustainability of the natural ecosystems of Asia, because how wild tigers fare is a core indicator of how Asia's ecosystems will fare. But time is running out for the wild tiger. We need to make bold decisions now to reverse the trend towards the extinction of this majestic creature.

The nations of the Asia and Pacific region have been the world's most dynamic economies for the last 20 years. The pace of change is astonishing, so much so that economic growth, infrastructure development, and urbanization are defining phenomena for Asian people, including those of the tiger range countries. Even during the financial and economic crises of the past two years, Asia's developing economies have remained quite stable. In fact, it is Asia's growth that is driving the global recovery.

During this period, the World Bank is proud to have been intensely engaged as a strong development partner with our Asian partner governments to drive this growth. We welcome the development milestones achieved and the economic prosperity that have improved the lives of so many Asian people. But it has also taken a significant toll on Asia's environment, ecosystems, and biodiversity, forcing us to re-think our development paradigm.

Environmental degradation and the looming challenges of climate change are changing how we define and measure economic growth. Economic development that imposes large, but usually hidden, costs on the environment is simply unsustainable—and eventually will turn around and cause dire consequences. We now realize more than ever that environmental sustainability must be central to development.

Why is tiger conservation a priority at the World Bank?

The Global Tiger Initiative is one of the drivers of the World Bank's commitment to new strategies that balance economic development with nature conservation, biodiversity and environmental protection. Some may ask, why is the World Bank making tiger conservation a priority?" The reason is that in many parts of Asia, saving wild tigers is at the very heart of the conservation and biodiversity agenda.

In the next few days, we will hear much about the plight of the wild tiger. We'll hear how the tiger faces a near-term threat of extinction, and we'll hear that only about 3,200 of these magnificent animals survive today when a century ago 100,000 lived in habitats across Asia.

These facts alone are reason for action. Many of you have taken up the call, and some of you have devoted your

lives to saving wild tigers. We share the belief that the loss of such beautiful symbols, of such an important part of Asia's cultural heritage, would be tragic and so unnecessary if we act now.

But beyond the beauty and heritage these creatures represent, the ongoing decline of the tiger habitat is symptomatic of the loss of Asia's forests as a whole – the landscapes which are the habitats of the wild tiger. The disappearance of a species at the top of the food chain will endanger all of the species that live below it. Clearly other species of wildlife are also suffering similar plights. It is an issue at the center of the biodiversity and conservation agenda.

What's more, ecosystems, endangered species, biodiversity and loss of habitats are inextricably linked with the livelihoods of the poor. So this is not merely a crisis of one charismatic species; it represents a crisis for many such species and biodiversity across Asia, and that is of immediate concern to the international community.

What happens to tigers has real-life implications for people, both for those who live in tiger habitats and sometimes even for those hundreds or thousands of miles away. And we know that the same deforestation in Asia that contributed to the tiger's decline is already having devastating effects on many Asian people as well. The loss of wild tigers is a barometer for the health of ecosystems across Asia. We urgently need a new approach.

A New Approach for the Bank

I have worked with the World Bank for over 30 years, and I have seen many changes. Historically, the environment strategy for World Bank-funded activities is based on safeguards and the "do no harm" principle. And within different sectors of the World Bank, we emphasized mainstreaming environmental considerations into our activities and projects.

At the end of this year, the World Bank will release its new environment strategy. We intend to move beyond the narrower safeguards and "doing no harm" approach to embrace a broader perspective which takes account of the overall environmental sustainability of the World Bank Group's portfolio. In other words, the World Bank is moving from the "do no harm" approach to the "do measurable good" approach by finding a place for fighting climate change, protecting biodiversity and ecosystems and conserving wildlife within the mainstream of its development paradigm.

Tiger range countries face severe challenges with climate change impacts, deforestation, degradation of habitats and rapid urbanization. Within our new approach, the crisis facing tigers and other wildlife is similar to other sustainability challenges confronted by our environmental and infrastructure programs. It overwhelms local capabilities and transcends national boundaries.

The new approach will emphasize smart infrastructure - within and across borders- applying green standards to tiger conservation habitats and introducing effective and professional management of national parks and protected areas. Innovative financing would be allocated to the most innovative, community-linked programs, such as eco-tourism, and development corridors which promote sustainability and biodiversity. Technological and scientific innovation will help establish monitoring frameworks, guide research and develop capacity building programs and bring to bear the best habitat designs within the biodiversity community.

In the future, tiger range countries would gain much more than the higher likelihood of keeping wild tigers within their borders. Substantial benefits would accrue by decreasing trafficking crimes on borders, bringing economic advantages to poor communities and learning more about the ecosystems that sustain their lives and the economic well-being of neighboring communities.

We appreciate the energy and commitment of the 13 tiger range countries. Since its launch in 2008 by partner organizations and President Zoellick, the GTI has gained momentum and helped provide opportunities for stakeholders in the tiger range countries to come together to seek real solutions and develop smarter wildlife conservation strategies. As President Zoellick reminded us, Asian leaders now accept that regional cooperation is a necessity for tiger conservation, wildlife preservation and protection of diversity.

The World Bank must also take up the challenge: moving wildlife and habitat conservation to a mainstreamed position in our everyday business. The GTI platform is one of the ways we can do this. How well the Global Tiger Initiative is internalized into the World Bank's everyday business in Asia – its work on infrastructure, its investments, its role in urbanization, and its own ecological footprint – will be the real test of our seriousness. The World Bank stands ready to support regional projects in law enforcement, community development and innovative finance.

For my part, I am determined that my teams in Asia work collaboratively with partner countries, regional and international stakeholders and constituencies to operationalize this new approach. With concerted effort, we can

make a real difference and save the remaining tigers before time runs out.

But the Global Tiger Initiative is not only a commitment by the World Bank. It is an alliance of governments, international organizations, civil society and other dedicated partners. The World Bank's convening power, as well as its political and financial leverage, do make it an important part of the GTI. We can help bring financing to the table to make the world safer for tigers and healthier for its biodiversity. We can also support research and encourage the smart infrastructure strategies and programs on the ground required to make an impact.

I am optimistic about the tiger's future. The GTI has already galvanized strong cooperation and partnerships to address this wild tiger crisis. The Kathmandu Global Tiger Workshop demonstrated how GTI has evolved and matured into an instrument of change, a platform to develop and test innovative ideas and take them to scale. All 13 of the TRCs presented and updated their national strategies on tiger conservation, and agreed to a far-reaching set of recommendations for future action that will be discussed and refined as you meet over the next few days.

Here at Hua Hin, we are witnessing the convergence of political will. Political will at higher levels, combined with national action and international support, can create the essential conditions for wild tiger recovery.

The Road from Hua Hin to Vladivostok

As we move toward the September Tiger Summit in Vladivostok, I do challenge and urge the dedicated men and women in this room to take your conversations and ideas for solutions to the next level. Your passion—and the critical importance of your cause—must be conveyed to all of the ministries whose actions influence tiger conservation, from finance and justice to transportation, natural resources and mining ministries, and it must reach the boards of directors of large corporations and industry who can help make a difference on the ground.

The international donor community also has an important role to play. I know that representatives from our partner development organizations like the Asian Development Bank are here, as are bilateral donor agencies. As the GTI gains momentum, new partners can be brought together before the Tiger Summit in Vladivostok to solidify funding mechanisms for the proposals and strategies that have been discussed in Pattaya, Kathmandu, and now Hua Hin.

A most important year for Biodiversity; a crucial year for the tiger

Ladies and gentlemen, 2010 is the United Nations International Year of Biodiversity as well as the Year of the Tiger. There are seismic shifts taking place in Asia. These require seismic shifts in how we create programs and policies that balance sustainability and growth.

When we gaze into the eyes of a tiger, we are really seeing the face of biodiversity on our planet. It would be a travesty if wild tigers disappeared into the realm of history, and it would signal our failure to adapt and to address the modern problems of development, conservation and biodiversity.

We have adapted before, though, and I believe—as strong partners together—we can be catalysts for innovation—and for long-term success.

Speaking both for President Zoellick and World Bank colleagues, I want to assure you that we will continue to support the tiger range countries and the goals of the Global Tiger Initiative. It is the people in this room who stand at the front lines, taking on the sustainability challenges of the 21st Century, and on behalf of President Zoellick and the World Bank, I thank you for taking on this fight.

Speech by Vinod Thomas Director General, Independent Evaluation Group, The World Bank at the 1st Asia Ministerial Conference on Tiger Conservation

1st Asia Ministerial Conference on Tiger Conservation
Vinod Thomas
Director General, Independent Evaluation Group, The World Bank
January 29, 2010

Good morning to all. I would like to start by expressing my solidarity and deep gratitude to the Royal Government of Thailand, especially to Prime Minister Abhijit Vejjajiva, to the Minister of Natural Resources and the Environment Suwit Khunkitti, to Permanent Secretary Dr Saksit Tridech, as well as to the distinguished Ministers and delegates from the tiger range countries, and vital members of the international community. May I at the outset pay a special tribute to Minister Suwit for providing critical leadership and marshalling political will at the highest level.

I have witnessed extraordinary passion and momentum at this meeting, exemplified by the presence of the Ministers today. Here in Hua Hin, we are living an unusual moment. It was unthinkable just a decade ago that a multi-country ministerial meeting such as this, calling for action in tiger conservation, would take place. That this has happened is a tribute to each and every one of you, to your idealism, your commitment, your pragmatism, your hard work.

As the head of the independent body that monitors and evaluates the World Bank Group and reports to its Board of Directors, I can also pay this tribute: it is remarkable that President Zoellick has rightly placed tiger protection and biodiversity conservation high on the list of priorities as an integral part of the development agenda, and I applaud him for that. It is crucial that this priority become a connected part of the institutional fabric of the World Bank Group, its partners and the countries.

Lessons

Yet when it comes to past environmental destruction, there is enough blame to go around, and the World Bank Group, along with others, has had its share -- even as in evaluation, attribution of impacts and responsibilities is extremely difficult. Currently my Evaluation Group is doing a modest, desk assessment of 20 (out of 115) WB supported infrastructure, ecosystem and other projects, including in India, with potential impacts on tiger populations and habitats. This work in progress seems to be giving sobering lessons for the trends in tigers and biodiversity, less when it comes to identifying threats and planning, and more in ensuring monitoring supervision and follow-up.

Those who work on biodiversity conservation will recognize the limits placed by the lack of baseline information, which itself turns into a vicious cycle of inadequate priority for conservation, weak data and monitoring, poor knowledge of impacts and the continuation of insufficient conservation practices. The positive news is that it is being increasingly recognized that projects depend on resource bases and the integrity of ecosystems. But we now need to link objectives to the means of attaining them and support institutional capacity to deliver. Promising directions are decision support systems (developed by a consortium of NGOs) to anticipate better the impacts such as those on tiger populations, and the promotions of ecosystems services.

To the WBG's credit, its institutional architecture has a built-in accountability and oversight mechanism to identify "fault" lines and to enable the learning of lessons from both successes and failures. In the case of tigers, as in many other instances from natural disaster management to primary education, lessons of the past are being taken to heart and learnt, and they are reflected in new directions. Climate change and REDD, for example, is a case in point. We will need to take risks as we go along, but for that we must also build in the lessons learnt -- because we need all the innovation and risk taking to meet the daunting challenge of saving the tiger.

Action

It is worth remembering that it has often taken a crisis for extraordinary actions to replace business as usual. We see that clearly in the economic sphere, be it financial reforms in Thailand or Korea after the financial crisis, or economic reforms in India or Brazil after the economic crisis, or environmental stewardship in Japan after an environmental crisis. But here is the rub when it comes to tigers.

Unfortunately some crises signal impending losses that are irreversible. In this case we must make sure that in the window of time available, all efforts are made to make sure results accrue. When the patient is on life

support, all systems must go. But even in emergency care in the ICU, we need not only speed but also protocols, the best skills and a high degree of coordination. We need both speed and quality. In that spirit, we'd like to see that the Declarations that come out of Hua Hin are bold and visionary, ones that inspire us to lift the game.

That is also why this meeting is special. We need the work of all the partners, civil society organizations, international institutions, country leaders. We need to harness knowledge and put lessons of experience to use. All the countries, assembled here, from Bangladesh and Nepal to China and Russia, have lessons to share and collaboration to strike. There are regional protocols to be established, and financing to be mobilized including from the international financing agencies such as the World Bank Group.

With a dwindling and yet the largest remaining tiger population, India has an enormous weight to carry, much to do, and at the same time a wealth of experience and an encouraging line of action. And consider China, who has brought the Panda from the brink of extinction. Could China translate those lessons for saving the tiger as well? Social sciences tell us that it is most likely going to be a mix of command and control and market incentives, combining a continuation of the ban on tiger trade – national and international, building incentives and making investments that China has excelled in.

Sustainable development

Stepping back from our immediate discussion for a moment, the plight of the tiger is in many ways hard to explain to a child. The magnificent animal is an emblem if not the symbol of nations, from soccer teams and sports equipment to beer and confections. If this iconic creature is a reflection of the wealth of nations, you would expect that it would be guarded. Furthermore, its needs are basic – a prey base, habitats and a modicum of protection. Yet we as a society have failed to protect it curiously in the name of the wealth of nations. Poaching and illegal trade in tiger parts, infrastructural and population encroachment and habitat loss are all to blame for the plummeting tiger population.

In the end it is economics that is behind the tiger's fate. And so we need to turn to economics for an answer as well. Today we get the unmistakable sense that we are at an inflection point, and that not only the tiger's survival but also human survival depends on sustainable development. There is a gathering storm that threatens to undercut development. Natural disasters, especially hydro-meteorological ones such as the prolonged droughts in Africa and Australia, and hurricane Katrina and the growing floods and storm surges throughout Asia from Nepal and Bangladesh to Indonesia and Vietnam, are just some of the manifestations.

When we recognize these threats, the distinction between the short term and the long term behind which economists hide, disappear. Growth versus the environment becomes a false dichotomy. Eco-friendly is no longer just good ecology; it is good economics as well.

That brings us to today's global economy. The huge increase in spending to stimulate the economies in today's crisis conditions is a unique opportunities to spend the money differently from the past – in green technologies, in more sustainable livelihoods. Not doing so would also lock us into further disastrous directions for the next generation. There are some signs, however modest, of such a paradigm shift – you can see it in the stimulus packages of Korea, China and Mexico. Tiger conservation must build on this prospect. That's why even in the midst of a financial crisis, it is opportune to talk about saving tigers.

Going forward

During this meeting, we have heard voices of idealism and notes of pragmatism on the best ways forward. The challenge before us now is to translate this reservoir of support into action and results. The challenge is to follow up on the good intentions of this meeting, take actions, and monitor results to ensure that the ensuing period between one meeting and the next tracks progress. Global Tiger Initiative has been a glue providing vital continuity and knowledge exchange, and it must continue to do so. Kathmandu saw the blending of technical excellence with political will under the stewardship of Minister Deepak Bohara. From Hua Hin we must take actions forward and begin to stem the decline in tiger population before the next summit in September in Vladivostok, Russia, with a Ministerial council to monitor measures and results,

Friends, this after all is the year of the Tiger – and with the backdrop of Hua Hin, it really can be. Let's embark on an unmistakable path of reversing the precipitous fall in tiger population and help it grow over the years. Doing so will not only save the tiger in the wild, it will also increase the real wealth of nations. That is not an empty dream, but one that we can live by if we pull together at this crucial and historic moment.

Thank you.

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