



สมาคมสิทธิเสรีภาพของประชาชน

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■■■■■ UNION FOR CIVIL LIBERTY ■■■■■

Conference: Concluding Observations of Committee against Torture, (23rd May 2014)

Over three days, 29th April until 1st May, 2014, a delegation of the Royal Thai Government presented to the Committee against Torture, UNHCHR, Geneva, the first report of Thailand on its compliance with the Convention on Torture, ratified on 2nd October and entered into force on 1st November 2007.

At the time, ratification of the Convention was considered a significant step forward in establishing human rights in the Kingdom. Thailand is still notable as a State where the three most serious of human rights abuses linger on, the death penalty, human slavery, and torture. The Committee against Torture (CAT) is the body of 10 independent experts that monitors implementation of the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment by its State parties. State Parties are required to submit an initial report on their fulfillment of their undertakings made under the Convention within one year of entry into force of the Convention. The first submission is a solemn occasion when a State justifies its practice of a rejection of torture before the UN Committee against Torture.

Thailand was already five years late when a team of 23 delegates of the Thai Government made its submission, and was requested to explain the long delay. The team was led by Pol. Col. Naras Savestoman, Head of the Delegation. Members of the delegation consisted of four diplomats, two senior academics and an assistant, three senior police officers, a military representative of ISOC Region 4, and eleven representatives of Thai Ministries.

In 2014, one country in two continues to practice torture. And not only authoritarian regimes, some democratic States are also affected. **Torture and its prevention is not a political issue, it is an abuse of the most basic rights of citizens which cannot be violated or abrogated for any motive or in any circumstance.** The Committee in its observations of 23rd May expressed its deep concern at the declaration of Martial Law and called on the State Party to adhere to the absolute prohibition of torture and to ensure that the application of Martial Law in no way violates the rights guaranteed in the Convention.

In response to the concerns of the Committee and with the sense of responsibility of participants in the first report submission of the Royal Thai Government the following representatives of Civil Society Organizations present a Thai translation of the Concluding Observations of the Committee against Torture. We are also pressed by a sense of urgency caused by the long delay in submission of the first report. How many people have been tortured in the five years of delay? Further, there is evidence that priority in use of force, the arrest of innocents and the use of torture to extract confessions in the Southern Border Provinces is leading to a monstrous escalation of violence. ("South chaos hits new low", Bangkok Post, 30th May 2014). Such problems are core issues raised in the Concluding Observations of the Committee against Torture. We present a Thai translation of the Observations as a guide to the absolute urgency of reform and support the recommendation to propose the issue of administrative decentralization in dealing with the crisis.

Student Christian Centre, 328/1 Phayathai Road, Tuesday, 3rd June 2014, [14.00](#) to [15.30](#)

Angkhana Neelapaijit, Justice for Peace Foundation
Pornpen Khongkachonkiet, Cross Cultural Foundation (CrCF)
Kingsley Abbott, International Commission of Jurists (ICJ)
Danthong Breen, Union for Civil Liberty (UCL)