

TIME RECEIVED
May 22, 2015 2:51:36 PM GMT+02:00

REMOTE CSID

DURATION
146

PAGES
5

STATUS
Received

22/05/2015 14:53

NO.908 #001



No. 52101/ 339

**PERMANENT MISSION OF THAILAND
GENEVA**

22 May B.E. 2558 (2015)

Dear Sirs and Madam,

I wish to refer to your joint letter dated 21 May 2015, requesting the Royal Thai Government to provide clarification on the allegation of "push back" policies of migrants in the Bay of Bengal.

While your communication has been conveyed to the attention of the authorities concerned in Thailand, I wish to underscore the importance attached by the Royal Thai Government to tackling the problem of human trafficking for which it has announced a zero tolerance policy and to provide you with preliminary information as follows:

As you know, following the Royal Thai Government's law enforcement operations, several migrant smuggling camps have been discovered near our southern border. Consequently, many stranded migrants have been rescued by Thai authorities. They have been given humanitarian assistance, including medical care with special attention given to the vulnerable, especially women and children. The Government has also consistently affirmed its policy and commitment towards assisting displaced persons and migrants at sea on humanitarian consideration, and that we will not push them back.

On reports about a vessel comprising around 300 migrants drifting in Thai territorial waters along the Thai-Malaysian coast as alluded in your letter, I wish to inform you that, upon being notified, Prime Minister General Prayut Chan-o-cha instructed the Royal Thai Navy to inspect the situation, informing the people on board of the vessel that Thailand was ready for disembarkation in order to provide humanitarian assistance if so needed. However, those on board informed the Thai side that they did not wish to disembark on Thailand, the sea current having pushed them into Thai territorial water. They requested for food, drinking water, and fuel, which Thailand duly provided according to humanitarian principles.

Mr. François Crépeau,

Special Rapporteur on the human rights of migrants,

Mr. Christof Heyns,

Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions,

Mr. Juan E. Méndez,

Special Rapporteur on torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment

Ms. Maria Grazia Giammarinaro,

Special Rapporteur on trafficking in persons, especially women and children,

GENEVA.

Fax 022 917 9008

Reference: UA THA3/2015

-2-

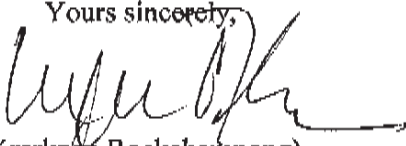
On the question of temporary shelters, the initiative is being prepared for necessary situations in accordance with humanitarian principles within the bounds of relevant domestic laws. On 20 May 2015, General Tanasak Patimapragorn, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Thailand met with the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Malaysia and Indonesia in Putrajaya, Malaysia, where a proposal that the international community will be responsible in providing Malaysia, Indonesia and Thailand with the necessary support, particularly financial assistance, to enable these countries to provide temporary shelter and humanitarian assistance to the irregular migrants currently at risk has been made.

As you rightly mentioned in your letter, recent incidents have shown that the problem needs to be addressed in a comprehensive manner and requires cooperation among countries of origin, transit and destination to find durable solutions. The issue must be addressed at its root causes as well as contributing factors. The Foreign Ministers of the three concerned countries therefore urged the international community to work collectively to solve this problem as well as underlined the need for medium and long-term sustainable solutions.

In this connection and given the urgency and the complexity of the situation, Thailand will host a Special Meeting on Irregular Migration in the Indian Ocean on 29 May 2015 in Bangkok, which will bring together the countries concerned to comprehensively work together to address the unprecedented increase of irregular migration across the Bay of Bengal in recent years. We are hopeful that this Special Meeting will lead to concrete action through which participating countries can cooperate, especially in the immediate and medium terms, based upon the principles of burden-sharing and shared responsibility. Recent press releases issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Thailand on this issue are attached herewith for your perusal.

I hope that the preliminary information provided would address some of your concerns and could be helpful for the work of your respective mandate. The Permanent Mission of Thailand remains at your disposal should you require additional information.

Yours sincerely,



(Krerkpan Roekchamnong)

Chargé d'Affaires, a.i.



ข่าวสารนิเทศ • Press Release

กรมสารนิเทศ กระทรวงการต่างประเทศ Department of Information, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Tel: 02-643-5105 • Fax: 02-643-5106-7 • Email: information02@mfa.go.th

Website: <https://www.mfa.go.th> Facebook: www.facebook.com/ThaiMFA Twitter: www.twitter.com/MFAThai

No. 206

Thailand to hold a special meeting on irregular migration in the Indian Ocean

The Royal Thai Government is organizing the Special Meeting on Irregular Migration in the Indian Ocean on 29 May 2015 in Bangkok. The Special Meeting is an urgent call for the region to comprehensively work together to address the unprecedented increase of irregular migration across the Bay of Bengal in recent years.

The increasing complexity of the problem demands a multi-faceted approach. Countries of origin, transit, and destination must work together to address the problem comprehensively by addressing the root causes as well as all the contributing factors along the way. Thailand is firmly committed to this cooperative and coordinated approach, and the upcoming ratification of the ASEAN Convention Against Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children (ACTIP) to be signed at the 27th ASEAN Summit in Kuala Lumpur in November 2015, and the ASEAN Plan of Action (APA), will serve as a testament of our commitment to this cause.

The one-day meeting, to be attended by senior officials from 15 affected countries, including Australia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Vietnam, Bangladesh - and the U.S., among others, as observers, as well as relevant international organizations: UNHCR, IOM, and UNODC, will build on the progress of the Bali Process on People Smuggling, Trafficking in Persons and Related Transnational Crime. It will also follow up on the existing work done on this issue, particularly the Special Ministerial Conference on Irregular Movement of Persons held in Jakarta in 2013.

The meeting, which will be opened by Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs and chaired by Mr. Norachit Sinhaseni, Permanent Secretary for Foreign Affairs, will provide a forum for exchanges of information and intelligence on the current situation on irregular migration by sea and its challenges, as well as to demonstrate their strong commitment to strengthen cooperation and foster more concrete actions. Such actions may include, inter alia, cooperation on information and intelligence sharing as well as coordination in law enforcement to dismantle transnational criminal networks, and collective information campaign at countries of origin, transit, and destination to promote awareness and prevent exploitations.

12 May 2015



ข่าวสารนิเทศ • Press Release

กรมสารนิเทศ กระทรวงการต่างประเทศ Department of Information, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Tel: 02-643-5105 • Fax: 02-643-5106-7 • Email: Information02@mfa.go.th

Website: <https://www.mfa.go.th> Facebook: www.facebook.com/ThaiMFA Twitter: www.twitter.com/MFAThai

No. 212

Reports on boat with migrants found near Satun Province

Regarding reports about a vessel comprising around 300 migrants drifting in Thai territorial waters along the Thai-Malaysian coast, near Satun Province, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs wishes to inform facts as follows.

Upon being notified, Prime Minister General Prayut Chan-o-cha instructed the Royal Thai Navy to inspect the situation, informing the vessel that Thailand was ready to provide humanitarian assistance if so needed. However those on board informed the Thai side that they did not wish to disembark on Thailand, the sea current having pushed them into Thai territorial water. They requested for food, drinking water, and fuel, which Thailand duly provided according to humanitarian principles.

The problem of irregular migration in the Indian Ocean has become more complex, affecting many countries and demands a multi-faceted and internationally-coordinated approach. The Royal Thai Government is therefore organizing the Special Meeting on Irregular Migration in the Indian Ocean on 29 May 2015 in Bangkok. The Special Meeting is an urgent call for the region to comprehensively work together to address the unprecedented increase of irregular migration across the Bay of Bengal in recent years. The one-day meeting will be attended by senior officials from 17 affected countries such as Australia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Vietnam, and Bangladesh, and observers including the U.S., as well as relevant international organizations: UNHCR, IOM, and UNODC.

16 May 2015



ข่าวสารניתเทศ • Press Release

กรมสารนิเทศ กระทรวงการต่างประเทศ Department of Information, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Tel: 02-643 5105 • Fax: 02-643 5106,7 • Email: information02@mfa.go.th

Website: <https://www.mfa.go.th> Facebook: www.facebook.com/ThaiMFA Twitter: www.twitter.com/MPATHai

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs discussed the issue of irregular movement of people in the Indian Ocean

On 20 May 2015, General Tanasak Patimapragorn, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Thailand visited Putrajaya, Malaysia upon the invitation of Minister of Foreign Affairs of Malaysia to discuss with both Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Malaysia and Indonesia on the issue of irregular movement of people in the region. The meeting urged for a comprehensive solution and concerted efforts in addressing the unprecedented increase of irregular migration in the region.

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs emphasized that the situation demands an immediate response for protection of irregular migrants at sea on the basis of international burden sharing and in accordance with their respective domestic laws.

The Foreign Ministers also underlined the need for medium- term and long- term sustainable solutions. Countries of origin, transit, and destination as well as the international community must work collectively to solve this problem which should not be left to any country alone.

The meeting fully agreed with Thailand that relevant countries must express their strong commitment to work together and with other relevant parties to rid the region of people smugglers and human traffickers and to prevent irregular migration flows. This could be done by, among other things, creating and strengthening the network of law enforcement officers, increasing communication with people on the ground and promoting development at countries of origin. They urged not only the countries involved in the region, but also the international community to share more responsibility in this endeavor.

Thailand attached great importance to humanitarian assistance and will not push back migrants stranded in the Thai territorial water. To explore possible cooperation from relevant countries and international organizations, Thailand will hold the Special Meeting on Irregular Migration in the Indian Ocean on 29 May 2015 in Bangkok. The meeting will be attended by 17 countries, 2 observers and 3 international organizations. It will provide a forum for relevant parties to constructively discuss and to demonstrate their strong commitment to strengthen cooperation in seriously preventing and solving the problem of irregular migration in the region in a concrete and sustainable manner.

20 May 2015