



No. 52101/ 240

PERMANENT MISSION OF THAILAND
5, Rue Gustave-Moynier
1202 GENEVA

2 April B.E. 2558 (2015)

Dear Sirs and Madam,

I wish to refer to my letter No. 52101/137 dated 24 February 2015, acknowledging the receipt of your joint letter concerning the killings of Mr. Pitan Thongpanang, Mr. Somsuk Kohkrang and Mr. Chai Bunthonglek; the attempted killing of Mr. Suwit Jeh-Soh and his family; the alleged temporary incommunicado detention of Mr. Pianrat Boonrit; and alleged threats made against environmental and land rights defenders and community members.

In this connection, I would like to provide you with information received from the relevant authorities of Thailand in reply to your above-mentioned letter, as follows:

- Mr. Michael K. Addo,
Chairperson of the Working Group on the issue of human rights and transnational corporations and other business enterprises,
- Mr. John Knox,
Independent Expert on the issue of human rights obligations related to the enjoyment of a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment,
- Ms. Hilal Elver,
Special Rapporteur on the right to food,
- Mr. David Kaye,
Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression,
- Mr. Maina Kiai,
Special Rapporteur on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association,
- Ms. Michel Forst,
Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders,
- Mr. Christof Heyns,
Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions,
- Mr. Baskut Tuncak,
Special Rapporteur on the implications for human rights of the environmentally sound management and disposal of hazardous substances and wastes,

GENEVA.

1. Progress has been made in the investigation of the killings of land activists. In the case of Mr. Chai Bunthonglek, two suspects were arrested on 26 February 2015 and currently under investigation.

2. Regarding the case of Mr. Pitan Thongpanang, the police have identified a suspect. However, the evidence gathered so far is still insufficient to issue an arrest warrant. Nevertheless, the police continues to investigate this case.

3. For the cases of Ms. Montha Chukaew and Ms. Pranee Boonrat, two persons have been arrested in November 2012. At present, their cases are under consideration of the Court of First Instance.

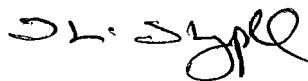
4. Mechanisms exist at both provincial and national levels for consultations and redress. People affected can seek assistance and information about government policies. Under the Damages for the Injured Person and Compensation and Expense for the Accused in Criminal Cases Act B.E. 2544 (2001), the Rights and Liberty Protection Department provides financial remedy to the family of Ms. Pranee Boonrat.

5. The 3rd National Human Rights Plan clearly stipulates Natural Resources and the Environment as one of 11 priority dimensions and designates farmers as one of 15 target groups.

6. It is also important to take into account the long history and the complexity of land disputes. Certain violent incidents are the result of conflicts among various interest groups, usually supported by local influential groups. Some incidents of land encroachment and protest involved mobilization of villagers by those outside the areas. Such cases must not be considered as a matter of land rights activists working for local communities. In addition, some activists engage in outright intimidations of officers and intentional violations of law and order. One must never pre-judge or prematurely rush to conclusion about the nature of this complicated problem.

I hope that the abovementioned clarification will help address your concerns. Should additional information be received from Bangkok, I shall convey it to you in due course. The Permanent Mission of Thailand remains at your disposal should you require additional information.

Yours sincerely,



(Thani Thongphakdi)

Ambassador and Permanent Representative