



No. 52101/ 163

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

๒๙ February B.E. 2559 (2016)

Dear Sirs and Madam,

I wish to acknowledge the receipt of your joint letter ref. UA THA 9/2015 dated 25 February 2016, regarding the investigation, charges against, detention and/or conviction of 26 persons for alleged crimes of lèse-majesté, including 15 individuals who are being tried by military courts.

While your communication has been duly forwarded to the authorities concerned in Thailand for their further consideration, I wish to reiterate that our lèse-majesté law is not aimed at curbing people's rights to freedom of expression, but gives protection to the rights or reputations of the King, the Queen, the Heir-apparent, or the Regent in a similar way libel law does for commoners.

Under the Thai Criminal Procedure Code, the due process of law is guaranteed for proceedings on lèse-majesté cases, as with other criminal offences. Throughout the legal process, the defendant has the right to contest the charges and the right to a fair trial, as well as assistance from a legal counsel, if the case is brought before the court. As for those found guilty, they have the right to appeal with higher courts, and once their cases become final, they may request royal pardons.

/ ...

Mr. José Guevara,

First Vice-Chair of the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention,

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,

Mr. Dainius Puras,

Special Rapporteur on the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health,

Mr. Michel Forst,

Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders,

Ms. Mónica Pinto,

Special Rapporteur on the independence of judges and lawyers,

GENEVA.

I also wish to reaffirm that Thailand attaches great importance to the freedom of expression. I hope that the above information will help allay some of the concerns you have.

With my best regards, I remain,

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Than Thongphakdi', written in a cursive style.

(Thani Thongphakdi)

Ambassador and Permanent Representative