



## PRESS RELEASE

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#### Current Political Situation in Thailand

- The Royal Thai Government acknowledges that the so-called Red Shirt's demonstration that has been going on since 12 March 2010 is a part of the democratic process in Thailand.
- The Government recognizes and respects the freedom of peaceful and unarmed assembly, the freedom of speech and the freedom of the press under the Thai Constitution which are also in accordance with the applicable international human rights standards and rules.
- The exercise of such freedoms has a concomitant duty not to abuse the said freedoms, for example by inciting or provoking acts of violence or by distorting information to achieve an objective of the group exercising such freedoms.
- The Government has adopted a non-confrontational approach by, among other things, temporarily relocating its headquarters to a place far from demonstration venues. It has taken action against the abuse of the said freedoms by obstructing communication that incites hatred or misunderstandings among members of the Thai society and this kind of government measure is permissible by the relevant international human rights rules.
- On 10 April 2010, the Government sought to clear a major thoroughfare linking one part of Bangkok to another part of the capital city across the Chao Phraya River, since it considered that the occupation of the thoroughfare by the demonstrators was unnecessary and had been blocking traffic flows between the two parts of Bangkok. The Government security forces were instructed to strictly abide by the Rule of Engagement as universally recognized. Tear gas and rubber bullets were used to disperse resisting demonstrators. Live ammunitions were to be used only for warning shots and self defence which must be proportionate.
- According to some independent media sources, the tragic loss of lives and injuries were instigated by several heavily armed and masked *agent provocateurs*. After realizing that human lives were in danger, the Government showed its voluntary self-restraint by ordering the security forces to withdraw despite the capability to overwhelm the Red Shirts' resistance by the use of force
- The Government has expressed its condolences to both the Red Shirts and the security forces for the loss of lives. The National Human Rights Commission of Thailand has now taken up the investigation on the incident by: (a) scrutinizing the autopsy to determine the causes of death; and (b) determining accountability of the individuals and agencies concerned.
- All parties have expressed their full commitment to avoid endangering the safety, welfare and interest of foreigners in Thailand.

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13 April 2010