



## **PDRC Statement by Suthep Thaugsuban: 27 Jan. 2014**

Good afternoon. I am here today to explain PDRC's views on the continuation of Bangkok shutdown to the public. Thank you for joining today's briefing.

### No negotiations with Chalerm's renegade group

The People's Democratic Reform Committee exists to safeguard the public interest. The Thaksin regime, on the other hand, serves only itself to the extent that it has denounced the rule of law. The proxy government under Yingluck Shinawatra is no longer legitimate. The declaration of the emergency decree was also groundless and thus illegal. Therefore, orders from the renegade group of Chalerm Yubamrung (CMPO: Centre for Maintaining Peace and Order) are unlawful.

As a result, Chalerm's offer for the CMPO to negotiate the return of protest sites on specific dates warrants no attention. It is also self-contradictory because Chalerm simultaneously declared he would take siege of various sites and arrest all PDRC core leaders, speakers, and protesters within the next 72 hours. It is obvious that Chalerm's offer to "negotiate" is simply an excuse for him to quash peaceful protesters and suppress their constitutional right to express themselves. The outcome has been predetermined.

We thus reject any and all attempts to "negotiate" by this group. However, we are willing to accommodate those citizens affected by the shutdown to ease their discomfort.

### The PDRC exists to serve the public; we will continue peaceful demonstrations

The PDRC instigated Operation Bangkok Shutdown with massive support from the Thai public. They have taken to the streets in millions to demand reform before the next election. Reform can only take place when the Thaksin regime is rooted. The regime is destructive and also a danger to Thailand; corruption, graft, and unlimited abuse of power endanger the well-being of all Thais. The public is demanding the end of the Thaksin regime, and the PDRC is here to serve them. Consequently, we are committed to continuing the shutdown until Thaksin's puppet government resigns to pave the way for reform before the next election.

To the public: we vow to always remain by your side. If the illegitimate government attempts to use force against citizens and reclaim any protest sites, we will be there with you. We will sit with you at every stage under attack by these brutal officials. Violence only begets violence; hence, we will not use violent means to resist any sieges by the state.

We reiterate our determination to remain steadfast in our course of peaceful, unarmed, non-violent demonstrations. Protesters are innocent and unarmed. Accordingly, law enforcement officials who are part of Chalerm's unit should not carry any arms and weapons on them.

### Quashing peaceful protesters is unlawful

To Surapong, Chalerm, and Adul: You claim to be in charge of law enforcement, yet you have failed citizens time and time again. Innocent demonstrators are being killed in daylight right

under your eyes yet you refuse to assist them or bring the culprits to justice. You are undeniably accomplices to pre-meditated murder.

We are giving the CMPO one more day to shut down. Otherwise, we will mobilize to surround your headquarters.

We reiterate our goal of pressuring Yingluck's government to step down from its care-taking duties to pave the way for reform before the next election. We insist on non-violent means to this end, and will try our best to accommodate innocent civilians who are unfortunately affected by the shutdown.

Thank you.

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