



Press Statement by PDRC Spokesperson Akanat Promphan: 20 Feb. 2014

**Civil Court upholds citizens' right to peacefully demonstrate;
Yingluck's caretaker premiership detrimental to Thailand**

Civil Court upholds citizens' right to peacefully demonstrate

(20 Feb. 2014) Today PDRC spokesperson Akanat Promphan welcomed the Civil Court's decision striking down previous state measures announced under the Emergency Decree. In sum, the court upheld demonstrators' constitutional right to peacefully protest without arms or violence, and effectively prohibited the defendants (Yingluck Shinawatra, Centre for Maintaining Peace and Order Chief Chalerm Yubamrung, and National Police chief Adul Saengsingkaew) from forcefully dispersing or subverting peaceful demonstrations.

At the same time Akanat harshly criticized the reactions of Chalerm and DSI chief Tharit Pengdit to the Civil Court decision.

“Chalerm and Tharit are already attempting to distort the court's order. Tharit's take is that the Civil Court has prohibited CMPO from enforcing the Decree at all. I think Tharit should reread the decision; the court is actually saying that the state may enforce the Decree in an appropriate manner and on a non-discriminatory basis. Previous “enforcements” utterly failed this standard. The bashing and killing of peaceful citizens on 19 February 2014 at Saphan Phan Fah, for example, is clearly an inappropriate application of the Decree (images #1 - 4). Preparing to shoot demonstrators to disperse them is also inappropriate (image #5 - #6). Therefore, Yingluck and CMPO's endorsement of violence against peaceful protesters, including their refusal to prosecute assailants of rally sites and protest leader residences, must stop.

CMPO chief Chalerm said he disagreed with the Civil Court's ruling because demonstrators were neither peaceful nor unarmed. Chalerm is wrong. Our demonstrations accord with our constitutional right to peacefully protest the failures of Yingluck's government. We have been very careful to avoid disturbing others unnecessarily,” Akanat stressed.

Caretaker PM Yingluck is a lame-duck leader

The PDRC spokesperson also rebuked the caretaker prime minister's inability to govern.

“Yingluck is detrimental to Thailand's interests,” declared Akanat. “Not only has she denied accountability for the Phan Fah killings and brutality, she has rejected her liability for the rice pledging scheme. When she did address the scheme on 18 Feb. 2014 she failed to indicate how her government would pay the farmers and when payment would be completed. Does she have any answers at all? Perhaps this is why she repeatedly refuses to meet the farmers.”

Regarding next steps, Akanat announced that the PDRC will continue to: (1) pursue Yingluck wherever she goes; (2) attack the Thaksin regime by targeting its corporate interests; and (3) continue demonstrations to pressure Yingluck and her cabinet to resign.



IMAGES #1 - #2





IMAGES #3 - #4





IMAGES #5 - #6

