

**DETERIORATING HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION IN THAILAND**

15 March 2016

Mr President

The International Commission of Jurists (ICJ) draws the Council's attention to the deteriorating human rights situation in Thailand.

Since the 22 May 2014 *coup d'état*, the National Council for Peace and Order (NCPO), the military government, has presided over a marked deterioration in human rights protection.

An interim Constitution adopted by the NCPO gives the government sweeping, unchecked powers inconsistent with the fundamental pillars of the rule of law and human rights.

Article 44 of the Interim Constitution has been used to issue orders prohibiting gatherings of more than five persons for political purposes; allowing for the detention of persons for up to seven days without charge in unofficial places of detention including military camps; and expediting the acquisition of private land for the creation of 'Special Economic Zones'.

Government figures confirm that at least 1,629 civilians have faced prosecution in military courts located throughout Thailand. In addition to violating international standards that generally prohibit the trial of civilians by military courts, in many cases individuals were charged for merely exercising their rights to freedom of expression and assembly. Hundreds more civilians have been summoned to military camps, arrested or visited at their homes by the military.

Space for civil society to discuss human rights issues in a public forum has also diminished. Certain events have either been ordered not to proceed or have been heavily attended by military observers.

Ahead of Thailand's upcoming Universal Periodic Review before the Human Rights Council on 11 May, the ICJ urges member and observer states to call on Thailand to replace the interim Constitution with one that fully recognizes and gives legal protection to all human rights, and to end ongoing violations of human rights, including the prosecution of civilians in military courts.

I thank you.

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