

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**END THE CRACKDOWN IN THAILAND**  
**Scholars and observers call for immediate halt to violence**

On Saturday, 10 April 2010, Thai state security forces began a crackdown against red-shirted protestors throughout Bangkok. Reports from news agencies and observers indicated that there were large mobilizations of security forces throughout the city and water cannons, tear gas, rubber bullets, live ammunition, and other forms of violence were being used against protestors. As of 11.30, 11 April 2010, Bangkok Emergency Medical Service (Erawan Center) reported 20 deaths of 16 civilians and 4 soldiers (<http://www.ems.bangkok.go.th/report/dead4.pdf>) and as of 9,30 a.m., 834 injuries (<http://www.ems.bangkok.go.th/new110453%2009.30%20pm.html>).

Concerned with the use of force by Thai state security forces, a group of scholars and observers of Thai politics wrote and circulated a petition on the evening of 10 April. The petition, appended to this press release, calls for an immediate end to the State's use of force, noting that "it has become clear that while a resolution may be difficult to broker, the use of force will only prolong the crisis and lead to devastating injury and loss of life." The petition calls on Thailand's leaders to immediately end its repressive measures and return to negotiations.

"It is clear that Thailand's political tensions cannot be resolved by the use of force. Meaningful negotiations on the timing of the next election are an essential step in resolving the current crisis. Even more important in the longer term will be a commitment by all sides to accept the decision of the electorate," said Andrew Walker of the Australian National University.

114 people have already signed the petition, and the number is growing. At noon on 12 April 2010, Bangkok time, the petition will be sent to Prime Minister Abhisit Vejjajiva, Army General Anupong Paochinda, Foreign Minister Kasit Piromya, and Deputy Prime Minister Suthep Thangsuban. Simultaneously, the petition will be sent to the members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and other foreign governments.

"If there is any possibility of a democratic future in Thailand and the development of the rule of law, the use and threat of violence must immediately stop. The state of emergency, including censorship measures, must be repealed," says Tyrell Haberkorn of the Australian National University.

## PETITION FOR AN IMMEDIATE END TO THE CRACKDOWN IN BANGKOK

To: Royal Thai Government

As a concerned observer of Thai politics, I am writing to call for an immediate end to the crackdown by Thai state security forces against protestors in Bangkok. I am deeply concerned by the use of water cannons, live ammunition, tear gas, and other forms of violence against red-shirted protestors throughout the city. As the crisis has grown over the course of 9-10 April 2010, it has become clear that while a resolution may be difficult to broker, the use of force will only prolong the crisis and lead to devastating injury and loss of life.

The Royal Thai Government describes itself as a democracy – this is the time for leaders to govern in a democratic fashion. The resolution of the crisis can begin with an end to the violent crackdown and a return to negotiations.

Sincerely,

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