

As of 1 June 2014, 12.00hrs

**National Broadcast**  
**by General Prayut Chan-O-Cha,**  
**Head of the National Council for Peace and Order,**  
**on 30 May 2014, 21.30hrs**

Good evening. On behalf of the National Council for Peace and Order, I would like to thank all different groups of people and government officials who have supported and cooperated with the National Council for Peace and Order (NCPO) throughout the previous week. The situation on the whole has been relatively calm.

The reason NCPO has taken control of the national administration was because of the prolonged political deadlock and protests. There were also various violent situations, use of warfare weapons, including corruption and widespread illegal activities, affecting the well-being and livelihood of all people. The caretaker government was unable to perform their duties effectively. Both the disbursement of national budget for fiscal year 2014 and the budgetary process for fiscal year 2015 had been severely delayed. If these problems *were to* persist, Thailand's economy *would have been* adversely affected, as well as the interests of those countries which have economic ties and long-term commitments with Thailand.

The NCPO has taken control of the situation, temporarily, in order to stop the violence and break the deadlock that *had* prevented the previous government from moving the country forward, and to solve urgent problems affecting the economy. This is to return happiness and safety in lives and properties to the Thai people as well as foreign nationals residing in Thailand, and to place the Monarchy, who is always revered and protected by the Thais, above all conflicts.

The scope of the work of the NCPO comprises two main parts:

**The first part is concerned with maintaining national security.**

The invocation of Martial Law, the supreme security law, was necessary as it allows officials to take immediate control of violent situations. General laws had been ineffective in preventing violent conflicts from spilling over, harming innocent households. The application of Martial Law also ensures safety and security to lives and properties of all people while all sides learn to respect law and order, as well as human rights. However, having said that, all officials will try to apply provisions from Martial Law only at a minimum and

as necessary to ensure minimal effects on the people and to avoid human rights violation. When the situation returns to normal, the Martial Law will be immediately lifted.

Regarding the curfew, it is intended to restore peace and order, and to provide security for the society. There might be some disruptions in people's daily lives and commutes. We have to strictly enforce the curfew in the beginning in order to separate perpetrators of crime from law-abiding citizens, and to stop transportation of military-grade weapons and explosive devices as well as other illegal activities, such as narcotic smuggling. It is also to stop armed-groups from committing violent acts which have become a more frequent occurrence with a growing tendency to escalate. Since 22<sup>nd</sup> May, many members of armed-groups have been apprehended and large quantity of military-grade weapons have been seized.

Possible adjustment of the curfew period will depend on the situation. The NCPO has already shortened the curfew, from between 22.00 to 05.00hrs to between 00.00 to 04.00hrs. As the situation improves, curfew hours will be shortened in areas without violent incidents, and in tourist areas. Eventually we are planning to lift the curfew altogether as soon as possible.

To minimize the effects of the curfew, some exemptions have been announced for some people and organizations. For example, Public-health workers and organizations such as doctors and hospitals, energy transports, night shift workers, as well as those travelling abroad, are allowed to travel during curfew hours with the permission of relevant police/military personnel in their respective areas. This relaxation of the curfew has been carried out without any incidents. People feel safer in traveling to and from their homes after having been subjected to risks caused by violence and prolonged protests for the past 6 months and after having to live amidst conflicts for almost 9 full years.

Regarding the summons of certain individuals, it was necessary for us to request that they report to the officials. These individuals, such as protest leaders, key protest supporters, certain thinkers, and politically-motivated opinion leaders, are directly or indirectly involved with the protracted political conflicts. These people were requested to report to officials in order to give them a cooling-off period. They now have the opportunity to reflect on their beliefs and actions, and to listen to the others' opinions. It is hoped that eventually all of them will put our country before themselves and learn to live harmoniously and act constructively in a society where individuals can have

differences of opinions. Under Martial Law, these individuals can return home within seven days, while those who face criminal charges will undergo judicial process.

Individuals who reported themselves to the NCPO were invited to stay as our guests for a period from 1-2 day, up to 5-6 days. People with a violent tendency would stay longer than others, but not exceeding 7 days. They were well looked after and accommodated. Let me assure you once again that all human rights principles have been fully respected – there has been no torture, threats or any physical violation. On the other hand, those who failed to report themselves to the NCPO are considered uncooperative in the reconciliation effort, and hence directly breaking the law. They will be prosecuted according to the law. Some of these people are still inciting violence; their efforts shall firmly be stopped.

All the measures that we have been used above had one common goal – to restore peace, order, and security to our society. We cannot keep fighting each other just because we think differently, or, even worse, use the law to our own advantage. Such actions will only create further conflicts that could devastate our country and its credibility in the international community. I strongly and sincerely urge all sides to put Thailand above themselves, to cooperate and unite, and to stop violent action. Differences should be discussed in order to find agreeable solutions, move the country forward and return happiness to the people.

Regarding the prohibition of political gatherings of more than 5 people, this also is necessary. Because we are in the initial phase of our operation, the NCPO cannot allow any group to create untoward incidents that may affect the stability of the country. If one group is allowed to form, then others will follow and the situation will escalate. We ask all groups not to gather during this sensitive period in order to avoid unnecessary confrontation. The NCPO will take appropriate legal measures against any group that violates this law.

Regarding freedom of the media, some programs or stations have to be suspended because some of these channels, including social media, have been used, during the past 9 years of protracted conflict which culminated in continuous protests of the last 6 months, to distort facts and propagate hatred among the people. Coercion, threats and propaganda have been used by each side to widen their circle of supporters, leaving people who are neutral “lost” in the middle. One side questioned the propriety of certain cases – some of which are already being dealt with by our judicial process – while the other side –

limited by their roles as state officials – used the law to argue their case , leading to a deadlock where a democratic solution is inadequate. So-called “academics” were interviewed, propagating unbalanced and incomplete facts and creating confusion among the people. These were the reasons why some of the media have to be temporarily suspended. The NCPO does not have a policy of interfering with the use of social media in any form.

Regarding the management of government organization, it should be the internal affairs of each organization. As for the recent reorganization of some agencies, this is necessary to reduce inherent conflicts within those agencies. It is certainly not to promote one side while punishing the other as some people claimed. People who have been reshuffled are those who were involved with the previous government, some of whom were in authoritative positions which caused difficulties and conflicts under the administration, and thus needed to be reassigned for administrative purposes. All internal reshuffles are within the purview of the permanent secretaries, and caretaker Chief of Police. Inter-ministerial reshuffles are, on the other hand, previously under the responsibility of the Prime Minister/Cabinet members, so they need the approval of the Head of the NCPO. These reshuffles are necessary to regain the trust and confidence of the general public, and do not reflect negatively on the performance of the concerned individuals.

**The second part of NCPO’s work concerns national administration.**

After Thailand’s national administration has been paralyzed in legal deadlock for many months, resulting in the disruption of budgetary disbursement for 2014, both the general public and government agencies have been adversely affected. It is necessary to have a government with full power to drive the country forward and ensure that the budgetary process for 2015, due to start very soon [1<sup>st</sup> October 2014], will be completed in time, so that Thailand can move ahead towards joining the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC).

For the most part, the NCPO will use existing rules and regulations in the administration of all government agencies, unless there are emergencies or urgent problems that need immediate attention. The NCPO will not order any government agency to perform illegal activities, or activities that unlawfully favour specific individuals. We will only assign a working committee to work alongside those in the agencies to move the work along effectively, expeditiously, transparently, in order to regain the trust of the people.

For those who are concerned that the NCPO will be spending the national budget inefficiently, I would like to reassure you that it is not possible. All financial transactions must strictly adhere to the existing rules and regulations of each agency. Discussions and enquiries on relevant rules and regulations will always be made to ensure transparency.

We will adhere to fiscal prudence and not overspend the national budget. We will also keep national debt in check. We are in the process of finding out the actual figures of the disbursed budget [of 2014 fiscal year] to distinguish between those that have been spent and those that have not. We are trying to increase the credibility of the national financial system in the eyes of the international community and foreign investors. Thailand is fortunate to have a good economic foundation and, with good and effective direction, we can become a key driver in the ASEAN as well as global economic community in the future.

Priorities for the rest of the 2014 fiscal year [ending 30<sup>th</sup> September] are:

a) Plans/projects delayed due to the political vacuum, which have direct impact on the economy, especially those affecting the basic needs of the people. We began by approving a budget of 92,000 million baht to be paid to rice farmers participating in the rice-pledging scheme. Some of this amount has already been paid out;

b) Plans/projects that have been approved but could not be carried out due to the legal constraints experienced by the previous government. These will be prioritized and carried out as soon as possible, especially those that affect cash flows of the economy, natural disaster funds, public utility funds, or national emergency funds. These funds do not involve extraordinarily large sums of money or mega projects.

c) Mega projects that require special budget. These will be studied carefully and considered very carefully for their costs and benefits. If they pass such considerations, they will be given the go-ahead project by project in the most transparent manner; for example, the dual-track train project, electric train project, and other public infrastructure projects. We will try to use normal fiscal processes for these projects, or perhaps private sector financing to reduce the country's financial burden. The consideration and implementation of these projects will be transparent. Not all projects will be carried out. Every project will begin with the planning integration of all ministries concerned to ensure maximum benefit for the people. The projects will not be approved based on

popularity or political reasons as was the case in the past. This approach will allow us to move forward with the planning of the 2015 budget, which should be under the responsibility of the next government/cabinet before 1 October 2014.

- All financial plans/projects will be carried out in a similar manner, or as close as possible to, those under the responsibility of a normal government. Emphasis will be placed upon the monitoring system to ensure transparency and fairness.

- Transportation and public utility infrastructure, such as water management, road construction or maintenance, especially those necessary for ASEAN connectivity, will be given immediate priority. However, they will not be made a burden to the new government. Therefore, all ministries and agencies must cooperate and integrate their efforts.

- We are considering measures which could manage the prices of agricultural products sustainably without bringing on more problems like measures applied in the past. Some of these measures include 1) cost reduction, such as the cost of fertilizers and seedlings; 2) increase productivity while reducing areas used, 3) environmentally-friendly measures such as substituting chemical fertilizer with organic fertilizers and use of local raw materials, and 4) improving the quality of Thai products in order to compete with other countries.

- At present, the NCPO has given first priority to making payments to farmers in the rice-pledging scheme. The Bank of Agriculture and Agricultural Cooperatives (BACC) is the responsible financial institution in this scheme and the NCPO is considering various measures to alleviate the BACC's financial burden.

- We are also considering the promotion of free and fair trade, the reduction of monopolies, the establishment of central markets [so that regional distributors could not form cartels], and the effective management of tax collection. In addition, special economic zones will be established to support small factories along Thailand's borders and rural areas. This is to provide economic opportunities not only for Thais but also our neighbours, which could help prevent illegal migrants from crossing into inner provinces of Thailand, thereby giving more work opportunities to Thai nationals.

- Concerning energy, we are also in the process of considering measures to oversee energy management. Everything has to be within the rule of law and financial regulations. This includes the establishment of more private funds and large national funds to reduce the fiscal burden. As for state enterprises, we will try to improve and modernize them. We will urgently develop renewable energy sources from wind, solar power, and biomass.

- Boards of state enterprises will have to be restructured to ensure effectiveness, transparency, and good governance. They need to be equipped with able technocrats who can ensure transparency, impartial auditing, as well as good governance.

In summary, Thailand and the Thai people still face many problems that require immediate attention and timely solutions. Enough time has been wasted on conflicts. It is time for us to move forward for the benefit of our country.

### **Roadmap of the NCPO:**

**1) Phase 1:** The first phase will involve efforts to achieve national reconciliation as soon as possible, at least within two to three months. In addition to security operations, a reconciliation center will be established for central and rural reforms paving the way for the second phase. We will begin in all areas starting from family units upwards to villages, sub-districts, districts and provinces. The NCPO has assigned the Internal Security Operations Command (ISOC) to be responsible for holding dialogue between all sides to ensure a successful second phase. A reform committee will also be set up to pave the way for a confrontation-free second phase. There is no restructuring of any agencies, no request for monetary payment, or any proposal of amnesty.

**2) Phase 2:** A provisional constitution is being drawn up by NCPO's legal team. A legislative council will be established to select an interim Prime Minister, appoint cabinet members to administer the country, and draft a new constitution. A reform council will also be established to resolve existing conflicts, with solutions that can be accepted by all sides. This will probably take approximately one year. It could be longer or shorter depending on the situation and cooperation from all sides. If the situation returns to normal, and a successful reform and national reconciliation and social harmony have been achieved, we will move to the third and final phase.

**3) Phase 3:** A general election under a democratic system which is legal and accepted by all sides. We will modernize existing rules and regulations in order to achieve a just legal system ready for the globalization age so that decent, honest people will be in the administration of our country that will carry out good governance.

All that I have said above cannot be achieved in time without peace and security. It will not happen if there are still protests without a true understanding of democracy and the realization that we are doing this for the country and the Thai people, and that it will be beneficial for the development of the country and the relationships with our allies.

I think that all of you share my feelings. For the past nine years, I have not been happy. But after the 20<sup>th</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2014, we have at least regained our sense of security. The NCPO does not want power for our own benefit. It was because the country was not able to move forward. If government officials and the military did nothing, who would help the Thai people resolve this deadlock when the democratic mechanisms are paralysed; when there are incessant conflicts; when people do not trust the government; and when the rule of law does not work. Please trust our intentions. We, the government officials, civilians, police, and military, must support one another. Our country must come first.

The NCPO understands the concerns of our international friends. We understand that we are living in a world that values democracy. All we are asking for is to give us time to reform in order to mend our democratic system and make it right, just, responsible and beneficial to all people. With everyone's cooperation to help move the country forward, the situation will improve. We believe that, [if you were in our situation for the past 9 years] you would choose the well-being of your country above a flawed democratic system.

There are many issues that need cooperation from all sides. Nothing can be achieved if there are still protests or disruptions to our efforts. Please give us time to resolve the problems. After we have achieved our mission, the military will go back to our national defense duties, and look after the country and the people, and to ensure long-lasting happiness and prosperity in accordance with the philosophical principles bestowed by His Majesty the King. Thank you.

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