

**National Broadcast**  
by  
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- Good evening, dear citizens. On 30 August 2014, His Majesty the King has graciously granted a Royal Command appointing the Council of Ministers or Cabinet. It is an immense honour for all of its members. Last night on 4 September 2014 the Cabinet has been sworn in before His Majesty the King. The first Cabinet meeting will be on 9 September 2014. A declaration of the Government Policy Statement before the National Legislative Assembly (NLA) will follow. The Ministers will assume full responsibilities for their respective portfolios from 9<sup>th</sup> of September. However, the declaration of policy statement will be after 9 September at a date to be scheduled with the NLA. From then on there will be a handing over of national administration to the Cabinet while the NCPO will act as coordinator and monitor the progress during this transition period.

- Regarding the national administration, I wish to mention the people who must be involved in moving the country forward. These groups of people include: the agricultural sector; the industrial sector; and the economic, commercial, tourism and other related sectors. More importantly, the civil service, private sector and civil society all have a role in moving the country forward. These groups can be further broken down into subgroups of various professions and ages such as teachers, students, village health volunteers and so on. All Thais must help in this endeavour.

- Today, we need to consider that ASEAN's 3 main pillars which comprise security, economic integration, and socio-cultural integration must be driven forward within the ASEAN framework as well as in the international community context. Therefore the abovementioned groups must infuse the security aspect into their professional fundamentals – both in the bigger context and those related to the respective 3 pillars – to create stability. Resiliency must be built to support each other. Everyone must work for the benefit of oneself, the community and the nation in a conflict-free manner while upholding values of generosity; sharing; public conscience; not taking advantage of anyone; and having sympathy. All sectors should help look after each other. The government cannot look after just any one group in society as the state has limited budget. We have to distribute the budget evenly on the basis of inclusiveness and fairness for all areas. Low income earners may perceive those with high incomes as taking advantage of them. You have to understand that high income earners have invested heavily in their businesses and time – therefore, the returns would be larger and more importantly constitute a main source of the state's revenue. We should not blame them if they were honest in their undertakings, unless they became rich from corruption.

- The processed goods industry, in particular, has contributed to state revenue through tax payments at various stages of production. They have higher income so they have to pay higher taxes. We will soon adjust the tax structure.

- I really sympathise with low income earners. We will not be able to be part of the taxation system if we do not develop ourselves. Therefore if at least 70 – 80 per cent of us are in the taxation system, the state would have more revenue. There will be more budget to be dispersed to take better care of our people as needed. It is the task of this government to find ways of bringing people into the taxation system. Do not be apprehensive about paying taxes. It will be just. Those who earn less will pay less and those who earn a lot will pay more. Therefore the new government's policy will focus on how to increase individual income and raise skill levels. It would be necessary to promote low income earners to try to develop themselves and form groups or associations. If you are scattered and on your own it will be more difficult to manage, get access to budget, assistance and funds. You have to form your own groups or associations for ease of management and for the state to render support. This will provide opportunities for raising living standards and life out of poverty by being self-sufficient first.

- Sufficiency entails having moderation, rationale, and immunity before going on to business investment and expansion. Farmers should lower their expenditures, make household accounts, and gradually develop. Save by not buying unnecessary things. Youths are important so teach them to be aware of their social status. Children should not trouble their parents so much that they need to take out loans and get into debt. Children should help parents in building a more secure life so that they can look after their parents in the future. Do not fall into gambling, alcoholism, drugs, and excessive use of expensive goods. That way, the parents will not be burdened with informal debts in order for their children to get educated or a car or motorcycle or other things that are beyond their means. In the end, parents will have to sell their farmland and end up with nothing to live on, causing distress for all. The state would not be able to help because our land is limited. Children should help their parents by studying hard, be a good person and not getting addicted to drugs or other vices. When children can take care of themselves, they will not be a burden to their parents. Parents can then support their children's education.

- The only inheritance that low income earners can give to their children is education for their own development. As I mentioned before about the 12 Thai values, children should look after their parents, have self-discipline, respect their teachers and have gratitude. Do not cause grief for parents or your descendents. We need to stop this sustained suffering. We should not only wait for help from the state as it will not reach everyone. It will only be a temporary relief for long-term problems.

- On the matter of using state welfare for health and remedial measures, it must be supported by larger state revenue from taxes levied from effective trade, exports, and goods processing from raw materials. The revenue from these industries will allow us to develop the country, the welfare system, and the basic infrastructure adequately in all areas.

- On the matter of looking after the civil servants and the elderly, especially parents, this is part of the warmth of Thai culture.

- On the matter of health services, many countries are not as developed as us. Health services in our country is considered to be very good although there are some problems. But still better than many other countries. Some countries are not as ready because they have insufficient income. However, due to certain factors such as politics or administration, they are using excessive state welfare. Therefore some of these countries are on the verge of bankruptcy.

- We must work together to increase our incomes so that we can make greater contributions to the state. Please do not avoid paying taxes and be generous to those with lower incomes. Please do not force prices down unreasonably and take too much profit. Be honest to yourself and to others. The middle class should also develop themselves to help the state, while those on lower-incomes should develop their skills and find honest jobs and incomes that are appropriate to their needs. Do not stray to vices or be dishonest in making a living.

- This government will be transparent, efficient and accountable. We aim to accomplish results for the country. The civil servants must be service-minded towards citizens, because we all must be conscious of the fact that we are one family – a family of Thais in Thailand. Soon our family will expand and become the ASEAN family and we will need to interact with other communities as well as compete globally. We can no longer stand alone in today's borderless world.

- There are many things that still need to be developed. I reiterate that we can not stand alone in this world. Some people say that Thailand is already strong and does not need to depend on others, as we have never been colonized. I think we need to pause on such thoughts. That is our pride and history but now we have to learn to develop ourselves. The most important thing I would like us to improve is in human resources development. Everyone is meaningful and a strength of the country. We need to improve education at every level, adjust perceptions of co-existence, respect the law and reduce conflicts. We can have different views but we must be able to co-exist. We should not have major rifts or disagree on everything. The country cannot develop. We need to talk to each other and have a certain level of contentment. Perhaps not a hundred per cent but 50, 60 or 70 per cent would suffice. The end result is we can look after the many without disregarding a few. If the minority wants more, it would not be acceptable to the majority and vice versa. Thus we have to consider where the interests lie. We may only achieve so much today but we can make more progress if we can come together as mentioned earlier.

- Possessing virtue, morals and ethics are important for society to live together peacefully. Being a person of virtue or an ethical organization will bring about a peaceful country. Engage in dialogue and consultations at all levels; reduce tensions before arguments get out of hand. More importantly, we must not allow ill-intentioned persons to lead or guide us. If we do not learn and develop ourselves, we will not be able to unite our potential or come together as one nation. All other developments will halt and we will be unable to compete with the outside world because of wasted time in quarreling with each other. We have to find ways of reducing conflicts.

- Some countries have rapidly developed their human resources potential resulting in development at a fast pace. We can see examples in some neighbouring countries. Some countries are in top world rankings even though they have small land areas because they used intelligence and are free from conflicts. There is respect for the laws and adherence to state policies. The state can look after the people in an inclusive manner. We must work to ensure transparency and no corruption as well as non-acceptance of illegality. This will allow us to gain the confidence from foreign investments. We must be careful as confidence of foreign investors depends on many factors such as status of society social, laws and their adherence and confidence in investments made as a result of stability in the government. If we want foreign investors to invest in our country, we need to decide what we need so that it will not detrimentally affect our society such as causing pollution. But we also need to provide incentives of which stability is an important factor. We already have an advantage over many countries because Thai people are kind and cheerful. Do not become aggressive people. However, everyone must change. I also have to change such as having more consciousness. We have to be mindful about these things. Confidence is not only based on trade, it is also about industries, tourism and others. You have seen how other countries have progressed without conflicts. So if we view that the state has to provide everything and demands are being made from all sides, this will not work – everyone is a stakeholder in cooperation, in solving problems and in moving the country forward.

- Today, statistics and other media reports show that our exports have reduced. Do not be alarmed. We have to try to constantly develop. Why are our exports falling? We need to consider that some of our goods are still using old technology resulting in exporting products with the same quality over the past decade or so. We will be obsolete if we do not develop. That is why we have various funds to support SMEs to improve quality. The same goes to the Board of Investment (BOI). We need to improve our machineries to be more effective. Some of our factories do not give confidence to some investors. We need to improve on quality because if we only focus on quantity then we cannot sell our products. Coupled with political conflicts and stability issues, this will lead to lesser confidence while global competition is fiercer. The terms of bilateral and multilateral trade agreements are also changing, especially with regard to taxes. Many taxes have been reduced – some to 0 percent. If our production and labour

costs are high, then the prices for our products will be higher than our competitors and so, they will not sell. It is imperative to improve production, competitiveness, technology, product quality and build trust with other countries.

- Furthermore, some countries have applied trade barriers to prevent competition, investments and trading in products made in their countries. We have to develop ourselves to be stronger, integrate and expand to compete globally in every dimension. There are many steps involved in strengthening our processes from the stages of finding raw materials to post-processing to value-added products. We have been trying to expedite this development in the past 3 months.

- One of the significant obstacles for conducting business is the bureaucratic sluggishness and time-wasting. I have requested every state agency to find ways to shorten the bureaucratic process and provide an integrated One Stop Service. Therefore related processes need to be integrated in accordance with our overall strategy. No more aimless wandering. We need to formulate a clear country strategy in moving forward for the next 5 to 10 years, whether we will be an industrial or agricultural country or whatever. If we can follow the strategy we will be able to make progress step by step regardless of who is in government. If we can follow this there will be no problem politically. There will always be problems in national administration if one brings politics into administration. Therefore the government must have clear policies and clearly designate responsible agencies, be they the primary, secondary, or supporting agencies. These agencies must have a common understanding, allocate budget appropriately, support each other and use the budget effectively. Trust will be then be built between central, provincial and local levels.

- Regarding communication channels between the general public and the state, we have the Damrongtham Center in every province as well as the Internal Security Operation Center (ISOC) for receiving complaints, initiating contact with state agencies, information services, and facilitating citizens that wish to contact state agencies for official business. I have been informed of the progress of the operations. I thank the Ministry of Interior, the Damrongtham Centers and ISOC in every province, and other pre-existing reform bodies. Progress has been made in creating understanding and increasing participation.

- On the district-level Learning Centers by the Department of Agriculture, 882 centers have been set up. We will expedite the establishment in the remaining districts. The centers will give information on what is the most appropriate crop to plant for the various local soil and climate conditions. Some areas are repeatedly prone to drought. In some areas within the irrigation system, paddy farming can be done up to 3 times a year. Some areas are outside the irrigation system. However, farmers only want to produce products that fetch high prices or are in demand. The result is that the yields are bad and the state has to pay compensation for the fall in price. It is a waste of time and energy. So farmers can consult with the learning centers about what to do and what crops to grow. We can also adjust policies as

needed according to the nature of the problems. The important thing is without proper registration of farmers we cannot provide assistance.

- Farmers should register with the Ministry of Agriculture. If one does not register, it is difficult to provide effective assistance. We will not be able to properly manage or develop zonings if we continue with the same practices. Zonings will not happen because of people's opposition. The main reason is because they do not understand. Therefore, we need to educate them through these centers. Farmers need to understand the consequences of the different approaches. They should understand how to improve the technology, the crop strains, fertilizers and market situation.

- Today, not everyone knows how much the state gets from agricultural sales. Thus farmers want a high price for their products. The state has to then subsidise but how do we sell the products at such falling prices. We have been trying to raise the prices. We do not want the farmers with low income to be taken advantage of. However, the state cannot subsidise everything. The same goes for rubber, we need to be cautious. We are trying our best to solve the problem of low prices which is quite severe. The situation of some agricultural products has become better whereas others fluctuate according to market prices. Problems will persist if we continue to insist on certain prices without improving ourselves, with no zonings or control of demand and supply sides. So we need to develop the whole system. Please be reasonable in making any protests. There are other issues we have to solve apart from agricultural products. But we are trying to solve them all concurrently.

- On health care provisions, we aim to develop the quality of life of the people. If the people are strong, the country will also be strong. With current inadequate state revenues, the system of providing health care will not be as efficient in looking after the people, especially the elderly and children. The state does not have sufficient budget. I have mentioned earlier about the source of state revenue so we all have to help where we can for the country. If we do not look after our people well, everything else will also weaken. Children, adults, elderly and the country will all weaken.

- Therefore, do not allow provocateurs to lead or incite you to believe that this person or that person is to blame for this and that or for your poverty. Some people have insinuated that the monarchy was the cause of this and that. I must say that the highest institution has never been involved. We have to look at the past role of the monarchy. His Majesty the King has been able reach out to areas where the government may not have been able to. He has not favoured any particular group but has looked after all Thais, especially those who have low incomes and face hardships. His Majesty has provided assistance to every administration that has been in office. We must be sensible, consider the facts carefully, and be rational so as not to be swayed by these inciters and could violate the institution. This may lead to legal implications. The laws are aimed at protecting the royal institution as it is not in a position to respond. We need to look back into our long

history before we became a nation-state. Refrain from making judgments on the basis of what you hear but consider the intention of the inciters. Today, Thailand's strength is based on the monarchy institution and stability. These two elements must go together with development of the country. We are Thai so we should not bring in all of the western values. I have said before about not destroying our heritage. We should not create a new house by destroying our old home. Foreigners visit Thailand to enjoy our heritage, historical monuments and palaces. This is one legacy of our monarchy. Please think about it and do not bring the monarchy into our disputes. I for one shall not accept this.

- We have to look back at ourselves before blaming others. Consider why we still have low income. Have we been working hard enough? Have we really worked to develop ourselves? Or are we content to live day-to-day on such meagre means? However, your children must have a better life than you. They should not have low paying jobs. So the children must get an education and study hard. Otherwise they will be unable to think and in turn will not develop. Those who think of becoming rich fast by doing illegal activities, selling drugs or getting addicted to drugs may end up with broken lives interspersed with jail time. One must find an honest way to make a living and endure.

- Today's rich people, provided that they did not cheat, most likely went through hard times. A lot did not come from a well-to-do background and faced a hard life before they became wealthy. They look for opportunities and develop themselves. They built themselves up from very little. If we have the persistence, no matter how poor we are right now, we will always have the opportunity to be successful. Do not waste time blaming someone else. It is a waste. The government and I will do our very best to perform our duties for the benefit of all citizens, using measures that are appropriate, transparent and effective. Now we must ensure that the three levels – the state, the private sector, and the public – work in sync and cooperate with each other in good understanding. If we can cooperate like this, then nothing can stand in our way. Citizens should be patient. These problems have accumulated over many decades. They cannot all be resolved within a few months. In the past 4 months we have set the foundations for the country. The government must now continue to build on this foundation, so that our country remains peaceful, develops and prospers.

- On the National Reform Council (NRC), the good news is that there are currently over 7,000 applicants with postal applicants yet to be counted. They have been nominated by various entities as well as through selection process at the provincial level. I have given already guidelines about the selection process that there must be quality. These 250 NRC members will play a part in determining the country's future.

- It is not only the NRC but also the NLA, the government and the people who will determine the direction in which the country will move forward. Today I request that a peaceful situation be maintained and not to engage in unconstructive verbal exchanges that would hurt the process. Our intentions are

clear on what to achieve. NRC members should have information to support what they say. Their comments should not be based only on their personal thoughts but on reason. Otherwise it would be difficult to reach any agreements. The recommendations from the 11 reform agenda groups are by no means conclusive. The proposals have to be considered by the plenary session of the 250-member council and passed as a council's resolution. However, for those people who have not been selected, I thank you for applying in large numbers which show your dedication to the country. How can we connect them to the reform process? Perhaps they could form groups in provinces and submit their additional information and recommendations either to Damrongtham Center of the Ministry of Interior or to the ISOC. We can then collect these additions and send to the Secretariat of Parliament for further transmission to the NRC.

- The NRC would have kept everyone informed of their work progress so anyone could submit additional comments on that basis. Please do not create disorder. Again I do not want protests and quarreling to take place yet. Please think of what we would like to accomplish in the days ahead.

### **Security**

- As for the progress of suppression and prevention of further forest encroachment in the past month, there have been cases in many areas such as the Koh Change Marine National Park in Trat Province and Tab-Kwang – Muak Lek National Reserved Forest in Saraburi Province. In these investigations, the NCPO will ensure that fairness is upheld. Officials must consider concurrently applying the principles of political science and jurisprudence.

- On narcotics-related arrests, there are a total of 22,886 cases in August 2014. There were over 20,000 suspects arrested and nearly 3 million tablets of amphetamine, around 21 kilograms of heroin, 31 kilograms of methamphetamine, and over 1,000 kilograms of cannabis were seized. The officials also seized assets of 180 narcotics suspects worth a total value of 107 million Baht. There were also 26 cases of public officials arrested for alleged involvements in narcotics crimes. On the prison search measure, officials had seized 603 cellphones, 1,776 tablets of amphetamine and 528 grams of methamphetamine. Officials involved in the crimes have been punished as this is very dangerous to the society.

### **Economy**

- The NCPO's meeting last Tuesday has directed that all government agencies accelerate the spending of fiscal year 2015 budget for the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter so that the budget is distributed to the local areas and to the people by way of public projects. The Ad Hoc Committee of the NLA will have considered the budget proposals and preparing to submit to the NLA for approval so that the budget is disbursed in time for the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter.



- The meeting also encouraged organizing seminars and meetings in the country as a way to stimulate domestic tourism. Small construction projects and renovations will be allowed in the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter. Please do not believe that some groups have received quotas because they know the Head of the NCPO or other Ministers. I reiterate again that please inform us of anyone who has claimed so. We shall investigate and take legal action. I have said before that I have never instructed anyone or given any quotas. There is no quota system. Everyone has to enter the competitive bidding process. There are clear arrangements regarding bidding, contracts and TORs. Therefore, large scale projects will proceed continuously and every ministry must be able to show results in budget spending for all quarters. As I have mentioned before – do it first, take real action, successful results and sustainable. We must think about what kind of tangible results we expect to see in one year and must relate to the 5-year national development plans. Successive government should adopt this strategy to ensure a sustainable development.

- Nevertheless, there is a need for all governmental agencies to strictly follow the Bureau of the Budget's spending requirement. I have already instructed that changing the category of budget spending is not allowed. Any shifts should be under the same category and supported by rationale. Agencies must effectively manage the allocated budget to ensure the maximum benefit to the people as we have limited budget. I have mentioned earlier about how we should increase state revenue to ease the distress of the people and really solve the problems as well as distribute the budget so that it reaches the people in all regions in a just and inclusive way.

- On the progress of the consideration of the draft Annual Budget Act for fiscal year 2015, the Ad Hoc Committee has already approved budget for 19 ministries and one agency that is not under any ministry. At this stage, nearly 4.5 billion Baht were cut and the details of the cut were reported to the Committee on Budget on 3 – 4 September 2014. The Committee will submit the final budget proposals to the President of NLA on 11 September for consideration of this agenda at the NLA session on 17 September 2014.

- On trade and investment, we have instructed the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Commerce, the Ministry of Industry and other relevant governmental agencies to establish Trade and Investment “One-Stop-Service” Centers nationwide to facilitate trade and investment from both Thai and foreign investors. The Center would serve to shorten the bureaucratic steps and save time for business people. The Center would also provide all trade and investment information for investors.

- On investment promotion, we have instructed the Board of Investment (BOI) and other governmental agencies to expedite all investment proposals. The proposals must be carefully screened. There are 2 subcommittees that will scrutinize the proposals before submitting to the main board for approval. We will expedite new proposals and the renewal of investment permits so as to create more

jobs and income for Thai people. We have also instructed the BOI to prioritize approving permits for value added investments as well as those investments that would generate technology transfers, especially for Thai small and medium enterprises.

- On confidence-building and investment incentives for foreign investors, Mr. Shigenobu Nagamori, Founder and Chairman of the Board of Nidec Corporation, from Japan, paid a courtesy call on me on 28 August 2014 at the Royal Thai Army Headquarters. Nidec is a major global producer of electronic motors and parts. They support Thailand to be the biggest manufacturing base in the future. They will also make further investments to their existing facilities here. I asked about how to create incentives for Thailand which may have to start with research institutions. For example, in the automobile industry, he suggested that we should not compete in the car engines area but should develop motors as in electronic cars. They are ready to help us. I ask the concerned agencies to see how to work this out. I want us to be able to stand on our own. The Japanese company assured us of their confidence in our stability and affirmed that they will not move their manufacturing base out of Thailand but will invest more. He also mentioned that overall the Japanese and other western countries investors he met understood the situation in Thailand. He expressed satisfaction with the work of the NCPO on trade and investment; politics should be left to politics; and confident that we can solve the problems in a sustainable way with stability and positive impact on future.

- On promoting small and medium enterprises, there have been many meetings to formulate a clear strategy in promoting SMEs. There are many types of SMEs and some companies are not even aware they are in fact SMEs. You have to check which category you are under and register. Some companies therefore have not registered because they do not want to pay taxes. You should register so that the state can help you. There are at least 2 million SMEs that have not registered. Please register so that you can develop. As I have mentioned if we do not join the taxation system, the country will continue to have difficulties. Money received in the form of taxes from high and middle income earners is not sufficient to support a large number of poor people. Therefore, the amount of taxes paid would be proportionate to the size of business. This will in turn help in the development of businesses from establishment to expansion and incremental growth. If you could set up systematically and come together cohesively, we can then support you in finding funds or other incentives. SMEs are an important part of the economy as they employ a large work force and play a supporting role to other large industries.

- The target is to increase SMEs contribution to the country's GDP to 38 per cent and increase another 50,000 SMEs registrations. The strategy also identifies SME High-Growth target group for 2015 – 2016 in 11 sectors: infrastructure, automobile parts, food and beverages, education service, agriculture, transportation and logistics, tourism, health service, herbal beauty products,

technology, energy, and other sectors that have high impact on the country's economy including machinery, food industry, rubber products, packaging, textile, jewelry and retailing. These sectors would serve as the country's long-term economic foundation.

- On market promotion for Thai rice, the NCPO has approved the Rice Trading Agreement between the Government of Thailand and the Government of the Philippines and assigned the Minister of Commerce or representative to sign the Agreement. In the Agreement, the two Governments agree to rice trading in an amount of no more than 1 million tons per year from 2014 to 2016. The Agreement is also subjected to global rice price and situation as well as annual rice production in the two countries. The Foreign Trade Department has forecasted that the Philippines would import rice around 1.15 million tons this year. They also plan for rice auction at the Government-to-Government arrangement at the end of 2014.

- On complaints and grievances received, so far we have received more than 40,000 cases. There must be answers to all requests and complaints to reduce the pressure and misunderstanding. The people should at least be informed of the action to be taken but they should also understand that some things cannot be expedited as they wish due to factors such as legal limitations. Therefore, all parties – government, civil service and the people – must trust each other.

### **Social matters**

- On transparency, NCPO has expedited the matter during the past period. There has been inspection of many projects by the Committee on the Inspection of Public Expenditures in collaboration with the Anti-Corruption Organization of Thailand. They are considering an anti-corruption system to verify large projects' transparency called COST. The team of COST from Europe had met with the Chair of the Committee on the Inspection of Public Expenditures on 3 September 2014 to discuss ways to establishing initial COST program in 3 large scale projects worth tens of billions. There has to be examination in every step from planning, design and construction. Officials involved must be careful not to make mistakes.

### **Legal and Judicial Process Matters:**

- One of the main issues causing distress for many citizens is the issue of outdated laws and unjust laws that do not fit current ways of life, business practices, and other activities. The NCPO has assigned the Legal and Judicial Process Working Group to collect and suggest proposals for the National Legislative Assembly (NLA) to consider improving and modernizing. So far the NCPO has proposed 11 draft laws to the NLA and 5 more shall be proposed this week. These Draft Acts include: international air transport; aviation standards; road transportation; promoting skilled labour; and weight measurements. There are other laws that are currently being amended such as anti-corruption laws, laws on

international trade and investment, human rights laws, human trafficking laws and laws on forced labour. This must be evident to the international community otherwise we stand to lose our credibility.

### **Creating Understanding in the International Community**

- The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, through our Ambassadors abroad, has continued engaging with the international community to create better understanding about developments in the country as well as to provide information on Thailand's economy and the challenges to trade and investment.

- For example, our Ambassador in Helsinki had recently met with the Director General of the America and Asia Department of the Finnish Foreign Ministry to brief on Thailand's political developments and to request that Finland consider lifting its current travel advisory on Thailand. Finland has since expressed understanding on the situation and stands ready to host the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thai –Finland Political Consultation Meeting in Finland in the beginning of 2015.

- Thailand's Ambassador to Germany recently hosted a lunch for the German Asia Pacific Business Committee to inquire about the German business sectors' perceptions on Thailand. They showed understanding and satisfaction with the progress being made.

- The Director General of European Affairs Department had recently met with Ambassador Jesus Miguel Sanz, Head of the Delegation of the European Union to Thailand, and Mr. Ugo Astuto, Director for South and Southeast Asia of the European Union, in which the EU conveyed that it was closely monitoring developments in Thailand while at the same time aware of the complexity of the situation in Thailand. Nevertheless, they still have some concerns which are normal in the international community. We need to understand and respect each other. There is no need to take offence. It is normal.

- The Permanent Secretary for Foreign Affairs recently hosted a lunch for Mr. Scot Marciel, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for East Asia and the Pacific Affairs. The U.S. Ambassador, our Deputy Permanent Secretary for Foreign Affairs, and the Director-General of the Department of American and South Pacific Affairs also attended. At this event the United States conveyed that it was following up on Thailand's progress according to the NCPO's Roadmap, and understood the recent political developments in the country while having some concerns. In consideration of all this, the formation of an interim government to oversee problem solving and reforms represented an opportunity for both sides to increase cooperation albeit with a few legal restrictions. However the United States wishes to move ahead with cooperation with Thailand on a number of issues.

## **Other issues**

- On the problem of the broadcasting of digital television, satellite television and analog television, I requested the National Broadcasting and Telecommunications Commission (NBTC) and other concerned agencies to quickly address the issue in accordance with the laws. Operators should think of the benefits that the people will receive from gaining access to viewing television and information all systems. As for the set-top box coupons, the NBTC will expedite its distribution so that the digital television industry can move forward.

- Another important issue I want to mention is on Martial Law. Please do not be overly concerned. I try to do everything possible to quickly ease the situation. You are all aware of what has been happening. You may not see it but we do because we have agencies and personnel to constantly monitor the situation. I do not want to maintain Martial Law but restrictions will be eased gradually as the situation improves. I will tell you when. But we need to have measures for maintaining stability. Please wait for our signal. Regarding publications, it is a political issue. I am not going to involve myself in this dispute. Please ensure that any publications are just and fair to both sides. The legal team will use laws and evidence to prove their case rather than take the publications into account. It is a legal matter.

- About the appointment of the Cabinet, the Ministers will not commence their duty until the 9<sup>th</sup> of September after the first Cabinet meeting which will discuss the government's policy statement that will be declared before the NLA. The ninth of September will be the first day of work. We try to adhere to the laws and constitutional norms. Even though we had already taken oath of office before His Majesty the King, we will fully perform our duties after we have delivered our policy statement. Therefore, do not let anyone make demands before then. We are civil servants so we must be down to earth and look after our people.

- On floods, I am very concerned. Earlier this evening, there was a broadcasted programme to clarify on how we are tackling the flood situation. It is related to our national water policy on floods and drought in the future. The irrigation department and NCPO, Ministry of Interior and Department of Disaster Prevention and Mitigation have provided an overall picture of the situation. Please do not be alarmed. Some areas will always be inundated as they are low lying areas. There are now more people residing in these areas which have been known to face flooding. Previously in these areas, houses are built on high pillars. But now with expansion of families the open space below the houses is used for living quarters. In the olden days, every house has a boat. The whole water management system has to be rectified from upstream in the north to the drainage of overflowing water in lower areas.

- His Majesty the King has long given direction on water conservation and drainage systems so as to prevent overflow of main rivers and waterways. Thai people have traditionally built houses on high stilts along the canals. Now due to limited space we build houses at ground level. It floods every year so we need to consider our options and regulate our living spaces carefully so we are not affected by floods.

- I assure you that all Cabinet Ministers will give full cooperation with each other. Everyone understands that we need to act swiftly, effectively and transparently with consideration given to all segments of society. Please do not be worried.

- Regarding our athletes that will be participating in the Asian Games to be held in the Republic of Korea, I wish them good health, strength and encouragement. I hope we win many gold medals. A lot of athletes hope that winning medals could provide them with a good future. I hope our athletes can exceed their target of 13 gold medals. We actually should have set a higher target of perhaps 20 gold medals. If we set a low target we will get lower than expected. If we set higher expectations but could not reach all of them, then we might not be that disappointed. We need to think a bit beyond.

- We will continue to see each other for some time. Please do not tire of us yet. You do not have to like us a lot, but please love us for a long time.

- Thank you and good night.

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