



Statement of the National Human Rights Commission of Thailand (NHRCT)

The NHRCT warns all parties involved in the protest to abide by international standards and urges them all not to resort to violence

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The National Human Rights Commission of Thailand (NHRCT) is deeply concerned over the situation on 17 November 2020 when the demonstrators rallied in front of the Parliament during the parliamentary session to consider the proposed amendments to the constitution and the police applied crowd control methods by using water cannon and water mixed with tear gas to deter the demonstrators. Compounded by several clashes between groups of different political views, it results in a number of injuries. Considering that the situation may escalate the greater violence and serious human rights abuses among dissenting groups, the NHRCT urges all parties the following:

1. Protesters and people with different opinions should respect the right of a person to own his/her thought and belief, including the freedom of expression. The dissenting groups are urged to avoid confrontation and not to create conditions or communication by any means to intensify conflicts, not to incite hatred, and also not to resort to violence against others in all situations.

2. The government must reiterate, to the law enforcement officers, the need to use method of negotiation without discrimination to all protesters for peaceful settlement. In the situation where there is no warning sign of violence, the method(s) used to deter protesters must not affect the right to life and safety of persons whoever they are. The international standards of crowd control should be applicable to the most extent possible in order to ensure appropriate methods and steps which will be proportional to the seriousness of situation.

3. The government should promptly and equitably provide remedies for all injured or affected people from the demonstration and also strengthen measures to prevent confrontation and clashes between dissenting groups. Additionally, the police should expedite the investigation to bring the persons(s) who initiated the attacks causing a number of injuries to justice.

4. Members of the Parliament in capacity of people representatives should jointly adhere to the parliamentary process for the constitutional amendments by listening to all parties, which will help de-escalate the tense situation and prevent further violent conflict.

The National Human Rights Commission of Thailand

18 November 2020