



**The NHRCT is concerned about the unrest along the Thailand-Myanmar border
and also advised the government to accelerate humanitarian assistance
to displaced people and do not return them back to danger.**

The National Human Rights Commission of Thailand (NHRCT) at the meeting on 27 December 2021 discussed the situation of continued fighting along the border in Myanmar. The unrest has prompted Myanmar residents, including children, the elderly, women and pregnant women to flee across the Salween River in Mae Hong Son Province and Moei River in Tak Province entering the temporary shelter area on the border of Thailand. They now live in difficult situations since the inadequate supply of food, clean water and medicine. At the same time, Thai people who live near the border are at risk of danger to their life and property, with fear from the sound of battle and military aircraft.

The NHRCT has continued to monitor the situation with great concern as the situation affects human rights and the safety of individuals and communities along the border. Recently, the NHRCT has discussed with relevant agencies from various sectors to exchange information and facts about the situation and visited the area at the border villages in Mae Hong Son Province in the mid of November 2021. During the visit, the Commissioners coordinated human rights protection and humanitarian assistance, listened to information from people in the area to seek possible prevention and resolution to human rights impacts due to the unrest.

Initially, the NHRCT wishes that the Thai government should prepare for the upcoming fighting situation between the Myanmar Army and ethnic armed forces in order to keep security and safety along the Thailand-Myanmar border, and strictly respects international principle of *Non-Refoulement*. In addition, the government has to set a clear policy to provide humanitarian assistance to Myanmar residents entering Thailand, including workers, political asylum seekers, and people fleeing fighting. It includes adequate supply of food, clothing, housing, medicine and health care services. Considering the situation of the COVID-19 pandemic, the government should also prepare for screening, treatment of the infected and vaccination. Lastly, the government should support the establishment of mechanism at local level comprising the government agencies, private and business sector, civil society organizations, volunteers, etc., to mobilize aid and care for those escaping the unrest. This is because Thai communities near the

border areas have kinship relations with those fleeing fighting and they are willing to assist them when there are fightings in Myanmar.

To ensure safety of Thai communities along the Thailand-Myanmar border, relevant agencies should implement safety plan which includes sufficient bunkers for people in community, a contingency plan for the worsening situation and its rehearsal for local people possibly affected by the unrest.

As the NHRCT keeps monitoring the human rights impacts on the situation of human rights along the Thailand- Myanmar border, Ms. Preeda Kongpaen and Ms. Sayamol Kaiyoorawong, National Human Rights Commissioners, has scheduled to visit Mae Sot District, Tak Province in order to coordinate the initial human rights protection with local agencies. The NHRCT earnestly hopes that in such a situation where safety and lives of individuals and communities are severely affected, humanitarian assistance will be considered the first priority for all parties concerned.

Office of the National Human Rights Commission of Thailand

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