



Migrant Working Group (MWG) Statement

Thailand called to expedite efforts to enhance human rights protection as per the pledges given to the world community following the condemnation by members of the European Parliament concerning its human rights violations

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On 13 March 2025, the European Parliament voted by 482 to 57 to condemn Thailand for its violation of human rights and breaches of democratic principles concerning the illegal deportation of the Uyghurs to China and the use of the lese-majesty law. It demands that Thailand suspend the deportation of the remaining Uyghurs who are still detained and to reform the lese-majesty law.¹

In addition, the European Parliament members call on the European Commission to use the ongoing negotiations on the Free Trade Area (FTA) as a leverage for Thailand to meet such demands and urge Thailand to proceed to ratify the core International Labor Organization Conventions. Such demands are a supplementary part of the terms in the negotiation process of the Free Trade Area agreement including a Sustainability Impact Assessment, in order to analyze the economic, social, human rights and environmental impacts that may occur. This may apply to the Corporate Sustainability Diligence Directive (CSDDD) of the European Union, which requires companies that operate in Europe to adopt measures to mitigate adverse

¹ https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/RC-10-2025-0174_EN.html?fbclid=IwY2xjawl_ZjpleHRuA2FlbOlXMAABHWWdLZ382htq71gUR_ZZAKAPh2472jSJEYmVrozur9CAHRwM2wilxVle-g_aem_HyxJBfcy-NL-ezf5h16ohg

impacts from the violation of labor rights throughout their supply chains including the supply chains that are linked to a third country like Thailand as well.

The Migrant Working Group (MWG) deems that the European Parliament's resolution is not unprecedented. Rather, such demands have repeatedly been made by the Thai civil society and the world to the Thai government, but they have been ignored. Therefore, the European Parliament's resolution simply highlights how the basic problems in human rights protection have not been resolved in accordance with the international instruments to which Thailand is a state party. These include the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) or various pledges made by Thailand to the international community, including Thailand's pledge to become a model country for the protection and promotion of human rights and democratization,² as a result of which it has been elected as a member of the United National Human Rights Councils (UNHRC) for the term of 2025-2027 on 9 October 2024. Otherwise, in its mid-term report under the UNHRC's Universal Periodic Review (UPR) (for the period of 2023 - May 2024)³, Thailand has claimed to have adopted the Prevention and Suppression of Torture and Enforced Disappearance Act B.E. 2565 which prescribes the right to freedom from torture as a non-derogatory right and how the law has been drafted based on the non-refoulement principle. Thailand has also reported about its effort to establish the National Screening Mechanism (NSM) according to the Regulation of the Office of the Prime Minister on the Screening of Aliens who Enter into the Kingdom and are Unable to Return to the Country of Origin B.E. 2562 as a testament to its determination to uphold customary humanitarian practice and the non-refoulement principle through its collaboration with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and other allies in accordance with Recommendation 52.79).

Delay in the addressing of human rights problems asides, the Migrant Working Group (MWG) has found Thailand has yet to overcome challenges as far as its effort to expand its economic partnership with key alliances including member countries of the European Union is concerned even though the European Union is the third largest importer from Thailand. In 2021,

² <https://thai-inter-org.mfa.go.th/th/content/คำมั่นของไทยในฐานะประเทศลงสมัครคณะมนตรีสิทธิมนุษยช?cate=62dfa3b9e5c6102618683d32>

³ <https://humanrights.mfa.go.th/upload/UPR-MidTermUpdate2022-May2024-July2024-TH.pdf>

Thailand's exports to the European Union were worth about 13.3 billion euros.⁴ Meanwhile, Thailand has resumed its negotiations with the European Union regarding the FTA agreement following the establishment of an elected government in 2019.

Therefore, the Migrant Working Group (MWG) urges that the Thai government stop ignoring voice of the Thai people and international community. An effort should be made to address human rights violations urgently and concretely, through the reform of laws that impede the protection of human rights, freedom and democracy. This can help to restore the rule of law and credibility of Thailand in international forums. In addition, clear and urgent measures must be put in place to end labour rights violation and to reform the labour relations law. This can pave the way for Thailand to ratify the core ILO Conventions no. 87 and 98 concerning the right to association and collective bargaining. Failure to act according to its international obligations shall not just affect Thailand's human rights status, it shall also have ramification on its economy and stability of its international trade. Any further imperviousness will simply make Thailand fall under more pressure due to trade and investment sanctions from international community which will make us lose the economic opportunities and dent the country's credibility in a long run.

With respect in human rights and human dignity
Migrant Working Group (MWG)

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⁴ https://www.eeas.europa.eu/thailand/shphaphyuoraelapraethsithy_th?s=181#:~:text=ค่าและเศรษฐกิจ-,ความสัมพันธ์ทางการค้าและเศรษฐกิจ,อันดับที่%204%20ของไทย