



## Thai Alliance for Human Rights (TAHR)

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**The President, Barack Obama**

**The White House, 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., Washington DC, 20500**

*Dear Mr. President:*

I am writing to thank you and your administration for standing by the principles of democracy and universal human rights and to hopefully ask you to send a stronger signal to General Prayuth Chan-Ocha, the tyrannical and rights abusive junta leader undemocratically representing Thailand at the ASEAN Summit to be held during February 15-16, 2016 in Rancho Mirage, California.

General Chan-Ocha and his allies cunningly robbed the power from an elected government and have been using bluntly abusive and dictatorial measures to suppress the opposing voices so as to remain in power under a more effective dictatorial regime. Reports by human rights agencies and institutions around the world have well documented the gross and various abuses and crimes against students, activists, politicians, academics, journalists, lawyers, and any citizen deemed as a threat to the junta's rule both in and outside Thailand. Indeed, there is no need to state the obvious.

Mr. President, you yourself did address human rights issues with Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra during your visit to Thailand in November 2012, and you had, in August 2011, issued an official order denying the U.S. visa of entry to all rights abusers and any individual who has directly or indirectly supported human rights violations. In addition, I am sure that you have abided by the US laws, especially the Foreign Assistance Act Section 508, which sets a clear limit on how much you can associate with leaders rising to power by coup d'état. So, I thank you for all these. I know that General Chan-Ocha is coming to the United States for the second time, and I appreciate your difficulty in balancing between the need to uphold the principles of democracy and human rights and the need to maintain the crucial relations with Thailand, the United States' once best ally in Southeast Asia.

However, may I ask you to take this opportunity to address democracy and human rights to ASEAN leaders in the clearest manner possible so that General Chan-Ocha will realize that his time in power is almost over and that he needs to truly return power to the Thai people, which, at this juncture and based on facts on the ground, is not the case in Thailand? The strong and clear signal that you will be sending to the world at this unprecedented summit held in the U.S. soil will be left as one of your legacies worthy of praise and appreciation by the global communities. Thank you very much for your attention and further actions.

Most respectfully,

Snea Thinsan, Ph.D.

Executive Director & Founding President

Furnished: TAHR Board of Directors and TAHR Executive Committee