



Monday, 11th April 2016

Call for Action – Southern Peasants’ Federation of Thailand leaders and Khlong Sai Pattana community request support from National Human Rights Commission of Thailand (NHRC), Department of Special Investigations (DSI), and friends of the SPFT for protection of community-based HRDs

(Correction on previous information in PI Alert: สุพจน์ ภาพสังคม is pronounced Supoj Karasong in Thai.

He is aged 41 years old, not 39 years old.)

Following the targeted shooting of community-based **Human Rights Defender Supoj Karasong**, on Friday 8th April 2016, afternoon, the Southern Peasants’ Federation of Thailand (SPFT) has taken measures to care of Supoj Karasong, as well as to lobby relevant authorities to take action to investigate on the attack and provide protection for Khlong Sai Pattana community and SPFT leaders. Mr Supoj, at the time of writing, is convalescing in Surat Thani hospital. He had an operation on Friday night, and he is now conscious and doing okay.

So far, Chaiburi District Police has taken some steps towards conducting an investigation into the targeted shooting of Supoj. On Friday 8th April 2016, at approximately 15:55 (over 1 hour after the attack) 10 Chaiburi District Police officers came to the incident scene and stayed for 1 hour. They found one bullet head inside Supoj's car, type .38 next to Mr Supoj's notebook bag (and eight bullets wherein Supoj's body). They interviewed a Khlong Sai Pattana community member who was nearby when the attack happened. On Sunday 10th April 2016, at approximately 20:00, Chaiburi District Police officers came to interview Supoj in the hospital room. The Investigation Officer in charge of the Police investigation on this case is, Pol. Lt. Col. Awut Arumpan (Mobile +66 (0)81-7476977).

However, despite the on-going Police investigation, Protection International (PI) remains concerned that no gunmen have yet been apprehended since Friday's shooting. In the context of 4 Khlong Sai Pattana community members being killed over the past six years and continued threats against SPFT land rights defenders, community members and SPFT leaders are at high-risk. Furthermore, the impunity of gunmen which has come from the fact that no one has been brought to justice for these 4 assassinations and assassination attempt, puts in immediate danger the lives of these community-based HRDs.

On Monday 11th April 2016, SPFT Steering Committee members and PI submitted a joint complaint letter to the National Human Rights Commission - Subcommittee on Civil Rights Chairperson, Commissioner Angkhana Neelapaijit. Namely, the complaint letter requests that the NHRC follow-up on the District Police investigation into the crime, and coordinate with relevant authorities to provide urgent protection measures to support Supoj, his family, Khlong Sai Pattana community members and SPFT leaders. The letter also seeks the NHRCT's coordination with the Department of Special Investigations to take up the cases of the 5 Khlong Sai Pattana HRDs who have been victims

of targeted shootings over the past six years¹. In a press conference afterwards Commissioner Angkhana Neelapijit said that it is her opinion as NHRCT Commissioner that DSI should take up the case of SPFT HRDs as influential people are involved in the aggressions against the community-based HRDs. The involvement of influential people in this case means that it is within DSI's duty to take up these cases.

In line with this opinion, all observers at Uncle Chai Bunthonglek's verdict hearing on 9th March 2016, decided with SPFT to request DSI to take up the case of Uncle Chai and the other 3 Khlong Sai Pattana members. Namely, the International Commission of Jurists (ICJ) has requested DSI to take up the case of SPFT community-based HRDs². The shooting of Supoj makes this of utmost importance. Hence, the SPFT has submitted a request to meet with DSI Director of Complaints Department, Mr Banthit, at 10:00AM on Tuesday 12th April 2016.

At this time, we call on you to;

1. Call and meet with the Ministry of Interior, Royal Thai Police Chief, Ministry of Justice Rights and Liberties Protection Department, in order to alert them of the high-risk situation of community-based HRDs in Khlong Sai Pattana community, and the need for immediate protection measures to guarantee the security of Mr Supoj Karasong, his family, Khlong Sai Pattana community members and SPFT leaders. Please see Annex 1 with an updated list of these relevant authorities to call, including the Chaiburi District Police Station, and Surat Thani Governor.
2. **Please join the SPFT at the DSI Office, at 10:00AM on Tuesday 12th April 2016**, (Address: Building B, Government Complex Commemorating His Majesty the King's 80th Birthday Anniversary 5th December, B.E.2550 (2007), 120 Chaengwattana Road, Laksi District, Bangkok 10210), when the SPFT submit their request to DSI to take up the cases of community-based HRDs. If you may join that would be most welcome to support the SPFT and demonstrate your concerns over the need for thorough investigations and proceedings for the cases of SPFT HRDs. To monitor the progress of the SPFT cases and follow-up on DSI action on these cases, please contact DSI Director-General, Pol.Col. Paisit Wongmuang (Office Tel. +66 (0)28319888).

Annex 1 – Authorities' contact details:

Minister of Interior

General Anupong Paochinda

พลเอก อานูพงษ์ เผ่าจินดา

Tel 0-2224-6320 Extension 50004

Fax 0-2226-4371

¹ See the SPFT Facebook post for full content of the joint SPFT-PI complaint letter (in Thai) submitted to Commissioner Angkhana Neelapijit:

https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=495110084012276&id=314937238696229

² See ICJ's letter to Thai authorities requesting DSI to take up the case of SPFT land rights defenders:

<http://www.icj.org/thailand-accountability-for-killings-of-land-rights-activists-demands-involvement-of-department-of-special-investigations/> (in English)

<http://icj.wpengine.netdna-cdn.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/Thailand-Chai-case-News-2016-THA.pdf> (in Thai)

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