



## ข่าวสารนิตะค • Press Release

กรมสารนิตะค กระทรวงการตางประเทศ Department of Information, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Tel. 02-643-5105 • Fax.02-643-5106-7 • Email: Information02@mfa.go.th

Website: <https://www.mfa.go.th> Facebook: [www.facebook.com/ThalMFA](http://www.facebook.com/ThalMFA) Twitter: [www.twitter.com/MFAThai](http://www.twitter.com/MFAThai)

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### Comments on Briefing Notes by Spokesperson for the UN High Commisner for Human Rights

With regard to Briefing Notes by Ms. Ravina Shamdasani, Spokesperson for the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on situation in Thailand, released on August 19, 2016, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Thailand wishes to clarify as follows:

1. Thailand supports and highly values freedom of expression and believes it is a basis of a democratic society. However, as with any countries around the world, the government is obliged to strike the right balance between such rights and the need to uphold public order and to prevent social divisiveness as the country is moving forward to achieve a genuine democracy and social reconciliation;
2. On the issue of military court, defendants under the court enjoy exactly the same set of rights as those who appear before the civilian courts, as guaranteed by the Criminal Procedure Code. Such rights include the right to fair trial, the right to fair and public hearing, the right to legal counsel and representation, as well as the right to bail. The judicial process under the military court is transparent, as the defendants' relatives, civil societies, human rights organizations, diplomatic representatives and the media can and did attend several of such trials;
3. The August 7th referendum on the draft Constitution was conducted in a free, fair and transparent manner, in accordance with internationally accepted practices and standards as well as internal legislative requirements. The Constitution drafting and referendum processes are inclusive of all sectors as demonstrated through various seminars, televised debates and public discussions at the national and provincial levels. In the period leading up to the referendum, the citizens were free to express opinions regarding the draft in good faith and in accordance with the laws. In fact, many prominent politicians, 43 civil societies, as well as several media outlets had

