



POLICY PAPER

Transition to Justice

Policy Recommendations from the Victims of Political
Violence between 2014-2023



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A mass protest on Ratchadamri road, a sign stating 'we want democracy, not monarchy'.

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ABOUT US

Asia Justice and Rights (AJAR) is a regional human rights organisation that works to increase the capacity of local and national actors, in particular victims, victims' groups and local civil society organisations (CSOs) in the fight against entrenched impunity. This work focuses on conflict transformation, human rights documentation, education and the development of strong south-south connections across the Asia-Pacific region.

Cross Cultural Foundation (CrCF) is a human rights organisation established to work on transitional justice and the monitoring and promotion of human rights in Thailand. CrCF works directly with political activists, human rights defenders and marginalised communities advocating for accountability in cases of violent extremism, torture, and enforced disappearances. This includes providing legal assistance, documenting atrocities, conducting research and building capacity in Thailand, in particular in the conflict areas of the Southern Border Provinces or the 'Deep South'.

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Who we are

Cross Cultural Foundation (CrCF) was established with missions to promote and achieve transitional justice, monitor and strengthen the landscape of human rights in Thailand. The Cross Cultural Foundation collaborates directly with human rights defenders, political activists, and underrepresented communities demanding accountability for cases of violence involving torture and enforced disappearances. The Foundation provides legal assistance, pursues strategic cases to ignite changes, documents violence incidents, conducts research, advocates for policy changes and empowers Thais particularly those in the Deep South.

Asia Justice and Rights (AJAR) is a regional human rights organisation that works to increase the capacity of local and national actors, in particular victims, victims' groups and local civil society organisations (CSOs) in the fight against entrenched impunity. This work focuses on conflict transformation, human rights documentation, education and the development of strong south-south connections across the Asia-Pacific region.

Transitional Justice Asia Network (TJAN) a regional hub of transitional justice experts which aims to facilitate learning and knowledge-building on transitional justice and accountability initiatives across Asia and the Pacific. The network was established in February 2017 consisting of member organisations across the region. TJAN works in Bangladesh, Indonesia, Myanmar, the Philippines, South Korea, Timor-Leste and Thailand..

As members of the TJAN network, AJAR and the Cross Cultural Foundation have been working hand in hand to build the capacities of civil society, academics, activists and lawyers. In Thailand, at least 25 members have formed a unit called TJAN-Thailand. Over the years, the existence of TJAN has ensured that transitional justice is part of a broader discussion on the future of Thailand and the peace building process in the southern border provinces. Most recently, TJAN has expanded its efforts into the House of Representatives: members of TJAN-Thailand, Ms. Anchana Heemmina and Mr. Romadaon Panjor, have been appointed to the Southern Border Peace Commission, while Ms. Pornpen Kongkajornkiat, has been appointed as a commission advisor.

List of abbreviations

Abbreviation	Full Name
AJAR	Asia Justice and Rights
CRCF	Cross Cultural Foundation
UN	The United Nations
CDC	Constitution Drafting Commission
PDRC	People's Democratic Reform Committee
ISOC	Internal Security Operations Command
NCPO	National Council for Peace and Order
TRCT	Truth for Reconciliation Commission of Thailand
Royal decree	Royal decree
ASC	Act on Supplementing the Constitution
UDD	United Front for Democracy Against Dictatorship
NRC	National Reform Council

Executive summary

Background and importance of the research

In May 2014, the coupmakers established the “National Council for Peace and Order (NCPO)” led by then Commander-in-Chief of the Royal Thai Army, General Prayut Chan-o-cha, along with military and civilian representatives from the national security department. The NCPO seized power, claiming to restore the national peace and order after a prolonged political crisis following the demonstrations led by the United Front for Democracy against Dictatorship (UDD) in 2010.

The coupmakers and their military-backed government committed mass human rights violations, including suppressing freedom of expression of the public and the media, unlawful arrests, detentions, torture, abductions, enforced disappearances, and persecution of dissidents. These actions undermined a healthy development of a diverse and democratic society and sustainable peace, while simultaneously plunging the Thai society into civil rights violations and a failed democratic process. Under pretext of national security, the military government deprived people of freedom of expression and prevented gatherings that allegedly violated specific laws, including the Computer-related Crime Act, the Emergency Decree, and Article 112 (lèse-majesté), and Article 116 (sedition) of the Criminal Code, all of which limited public participation and negatively impacted human and political rights.

In addition to seizing administrative and legislative power, the NCPO also employed various methods to punish individuals who commented on politics or the coup d'état. These methods included summoning for “attitude adjustment,” detention in military establishments, behaviour monitoring and surveillance, and weaponizing laws through SLAPP lawsuits to ‘silence’ dissidents. Beyond prosecution, government representatives or state officials would negotiate conditions or seek cooperation in organizing political activities, or outright prohibit such activities, severely limiting the rights and freedoms of the people.

Research topic

This study is a qualitative research project, comprising in-depth interviews and focus group discussions with a total of 18 participants who are activists in the fields of human rights and natural resource allocation, relatives of victims of political violence, victims of political violence, and civil society workers. All were involved in political activism between 2014 and 2023, during the government of General Prayut Chan-o-cha. The objective of this research is to gather information on the impact of violence during this period, the experiences of the victims, and suggestions for ending political violence. The Violence Triangle of Johan Galtung, and the principle of Transitional Justice form the conceptual basis of the policy recommendations derived from this study.

Findings

The interviews with the participants revealed that political conflicts had resulted in violence against activists in three levels as delineated by the Violence Triangle Theory:

1. **Direct violence:** Interviewees reported experiencing various forms of direct violence from government officials, ranging from physical and mental abuse during detention or clashes at demonstrations. These incidents included the excessive use of force by government officials against protesters, torture during detention, harassment, and threats. Some interviewees mentioned being followed to their residences. These measures were intended to create fear and insecurity among activists, their families and those close to them.
2. **Structural violence:** This refers to invisible violence embedded within laws or legal measures. Many interviewees expressed a loss of faith in the Thai justice system, doubting the possibility of prosecuting either government officials who committed acts of violence or their commanders.
3. **Cultural violence:** This involves using cultural elements to justify violence, such as the rhetoric of sending government officials to defeat 'bad guys.'

Policy recommendations

The policy recommendations presented in this report are based on the four components of Transitional Justice: truth seeking, reparation, prosecution, and institutional reform. The results are as follows.

1. **Truth seeking:** An independent organization should be established to receive complaints and investigate human rights violations committed by the state and individuals against political activists.

The complaint filing system must be accessible to citizens, efficient, and capable of producing tangible progress. Citizens should have the power to access and submit information and evidence, follow up on cases, and monitor the judiciary's exercise of power. Additionally, citizens should receive assistance with drafting petitions, following up on cases, and filing cases for activists.

In political cases where innocent people are unfairly accused, after the truth is revealed, the government needs to issue an apology, grant amnesty, erase the criminal records of the accused, and promptly clear their names.

The state must enhance the truth-seeking process concerning past political violence, ensuring the process is transparent, verifiable, and victim-centered.

2. **Reparations:** Reparation measures should extend beyond monetary compensation to include psychological support, career training, and education. It is crucial for the state to cease harassment against citizens, such as the information operations (IO) and phone surveillance and issue a public apology.

- 3. Prosecution:** The Thai state must identify, prosecute, and bring to justice government officials, individuals, and perpetrators at all levels involved in human rights violations. Actions must be taken without discrimination to ensure transparent and fair prosecution under the law.

The Thai state must become a member and ratify the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC). This will be an important step in bringing to justice high-ranking government officials or politicians responsible for grave human rights violations and violence against citizens and ensuring that human rights violations do not reoccur

- 4. Institutional reform:** The government of Thailand must revise measures to protect the right to assemble in alignment with international standards and prevent the use of disproportionate violence against demonstrators. Peaceful demonstrations must be protected and facilitated by the state.

The entire judiciary must be reformed to ensure true fairness and transparency. The state must restore confidence in the rule of law and the justice process.

The Thai government must include in nationwide school curriculum the study of political violence and methods for resolving political conflicts from the past to the present.

The Thai government must abolish laws that can be weaponized to violate human rights, such as the Martial Law, the Thai Public Assembly Act 2015 (B.E.2558), the Emergency Decree 2005 (B.E.2548), and Article 112 of the Criminal Code.

The Thai government must eliminate the political role of the military, the role of the military in internal security, and regulate security agencies to ensure transparency and accountability.

The Thai state must decentralize power from the central government to the regional and local governments to reduce delays in problem-solving and increase public participation.

Research objectives

Following the usurpation of power by General Prayut Chan-o-cha, Thailand witnessed widespread and severe human rights violations, particularly the suppression of political opinions and activities, and the prosecution of political dissidents. These actions impeded the creation of a democratic society that respects diversity. The political power exercised by the General Prayut Chan-o-cha's government from 2014-2023, under the pretext of maintaining national security, led to violations of civil liberties and hindered the development of democratic society. Certain regulations and laws, such as the Computer-related Crime Act, the Emergency Decree, and Articles 112 and 116 of the Criminal Code, were weaponized to deter public participation.

This research utilized Transitional Justice and the Violence Triangle as crucial tools to analyze problems and understand the complex historical, political, social and cultural factors influencing the pattern of human rights violations in Thailand. Additionally, these tools inform guidelines and indicators for

evaluating the success or failure of political change. This study compiles opinions, impacts, and recommendations for ending political violence from a group of political victims and activists affected by political turmoil from 2014 to 2023.

Research methodology

This study is qualitative research, consisting of in-depth interviews and focus group interviews with a total of 18 participants. These include activists in the fields of human rights and natural resource allocation, relatives of victims of political violence, victims of political violence, and civil society workers. All were involved in political activism between 2014 and 2023 during the government of General Prayut Chan-o-cha. The objective of this research is to gather information on the impact of violence occurring in this timeframe, the violence that the victims faced, and recommendations for ending political violence. The participants were aged 17-60 years old and were domiciled in provinces that are centers of political demonstrations and movements in Thailand, such as Bangkok, Chiang Mai and Pattani. Data collection ran from July 2023 to March 2024.

Limitations

The participants are activists involved in different political issues, which are not a factor in selecting research participants. However, the information gathered is based on past events and may contain a certain degree of inaccuracy. Additionally, it is important to note factors related to the personal biases, attitudes, perceptions, and desires of each participant. The interviews were conducted over a limited period and used semi-structured questions to guide the participants to communicate only on research-related issues. Therefore, other information outside the scope of the research might not appear. The participants are all domiciled and politically active in strategic political areas such as Chiang Mai and Bangkok and are not spread over a wider area.

Ethical considerations

This research takes ethical considerations into account by obtaining consent from the research participants to share their personal and collective experiences of violence and conflict. Since research methods deal with sensitive topics and may reopen old wounds, it is important to adhere to research principles that include no harm, informed consent, confidentiality, mutual benefits, nondiscrimination, and consensus on the use of information. These ethical considerations apply to every step of the research process, from planning, data collection, analysis, to the presentation of results. During the interviews, the research team informed the participants of the purpose and asked for their consent, informing them that they could revoke their consent at any time after providing the information.

Chapter I: Background information

2014-2018 – After the coup d'état

In May 2014, the Thai military established the “National Council for Peace and Order (NCPO)” led by General Prayut Chan-o-cha, then Commander-in-Chief. Against the backdrop of the demonstrations against the government of Ms. Yingluck Shinawatra of the Pheu Thai Party¹, the NCPO, consisting of civilian leaders and heads of military and security agencies, staged a coup d'état to seize the power. They claimed this was necessary to restore peace and order and resolve ongoing political conflicts. The NCPO cited corruption under the administration of Pheu Thai Party, particularly the rice pledging scheme and the attempt to pass a blanket amnesty bill for those convicted of inciting violence and expressing political opinions during the large demonstrations² in Bangkok and the subsequent crackdown in 2010.³ The NCPO alleged that the hidden agenda behind the amnesty bill was to grant amnesty to Mr. Thaksin Shinawatra, former prime minister, who faced multiple corruption charges and was living in exile at that time.

The NCPO wielded the power it had seized after the coup d'état to declare the Martial Law and ‘tear apart’ the 2007 Constitution of the Kingdom of Thailand, excluding Section 2 regarding the monarchy, and in the process overthrew the Pheu Thai Party government, dissolved the parliament and many other government agencies under the constitution. The NCPO issued various announcements and orders granting themselves and their officials the power to limit and suppress people’s rights and freedoms, allowing arbitrary arrests and detentions without court warrants. These actions sent detrimental impacts on the human rights, which are fundamental rights guaranteed by international standards and obligations, including the Constitution and supplementary laws.

Post-coup, the NCPO enacted the Interim 2014 Constitution, which appointed General Prayut Chan-o-cha as head of the NCPO with authority according to Article 44. This Article granted the head of the NCPO powers ‘similar to the Martial Law.’⁴ Under Article 44, the NCPO and its officials committed mass violations against human rights and freedoms, contrary to the rule of law.

¹ “Timeline of the attempts of Yingluck Shinawatra’s government to pay off farmers’ debts” 2014, Thai Publica, accessed on April 10, 2024, from <https://thaipublica.org/2014/02/financing-the-rice-pledging-scheme-7/>

² “Looking back on 23 Thai amnesty laws that absolved coupmakers of the past 11 coup d'états”, 2021, iLaw, accessed on April 10, 2024, from <https://www.ilaw.or.th/articles/4873>

³ Yuthaphon Isarachai and Banjerd Singhaneti, n.d., “Coup 2014 (NCPO)”, accessed on April 10, 2024, from [http://wiki.kpi.ac.th/index.php?title=%E0%B8%A3%E0%B8%B1%E0%B8%90%E0%B8%9B%E0%B8%A3%E0%B8%Bo%E0%B8%AB%E0%B8%B2%E0%B8%A3_2557_\(%E0%B8%84%E0%B8%AA%E0%B8%8A.\)](http://wiki.kpi.ac.th/index.php?title=%E0%B8%A3%E0%B8%B1%E0%B8%90%E0%B8%9B%E0%B8%A3%E0%B8%Bo%E0%B8%AB%E0%B8%B2%E0%B8%A3_2557_(%E0%B8%84%E0%B8%AA%E0%B8%8A.))

⁴ Thai Lawyers for Human Rights Center, n.d., “The collapse of the rule of law: report on 4 years under the NCPO, human rights, and the aftermath of the coup on Thai society”, accessed on May 16, 2024, from <https://tlhr2014.com/archives/63676>, page.13

The Martial Law authorized military officials to search, seize, conscript, prohibit, and detain individuals for up to seven days, stipulating that trials must be held in military courts without the right to appeal in accordance with Article 15bis of the Martial Law 1914 (B.E. 2457).⁵ This practice raised significant human rights concerns, which were exacerbated by Article 44 of the 2014 Constitution, which granted the head of the NCPO absolute power, unchecked by administrative, legislative, or judicial bodies. This power led to abuse and impunity with little recourse for victims⁶. Ironically, this ‘most dictatorial’ law was made legal and constitutional.

Violations of human rights and freedom of political expression by the NCPO in 2014-2015 took numerous forms. Initially citing the Martial Law, authorities monitored and placed on watchlists political activists, human rights defenders, or individuals perceived as national security threats. After the Martial Law was lifted, the NCPO invoked Article 44 of the 2014 Interim Constitution, granting officials powers to arrest, search, or criminalize individuals for violating NCPO Order No. 41/2557 (2014). Some targeted individuals chose exile rather than submit to arbitrary authority.

The 2014 Interim Constitution, as described by Mr. Wissanu Krea-ngam, advisor to the National Council for Peace and Order, was intended as “a temporary constitution while the official constitution was being draft, the process that could take approximately one year.”⁷ However, the Interim Constitution remained in effect far longer than any other previous constitutions after past five coup d’états. This Interim Constitution was amended four times, and each amendment was swiftly approved in a day. Compared to official constitutions, the 2014 Interim Constitution was obviously much easier to amend.⁸

The first amendment to the Interim Constitution was made on June 18, 2015, in two areas:

1. **The cancellation of the constitutional referendum** altered the procedural framework established under the 2014 Interim Constitution. Initially, the Constitution Drafting Committee (CDC) was tasked with drafting a constitution and submitting it to the National Reform Council (NRC) for approval. If the NRC approved the draft constitution, the next step would be to hold a constitutional referendum. However, if the NRC disapproved of the draft constitution, the entire draft would be discarded, signalling the end of that drafting process.
2. **Establishment of the Constitution Drafting Committee (CDC)** – After the CDC completed drafting a constitution, the next procedural requirement was to subject the draft to a constitutional referendum. In addition to the topics of cancellation of the constitutional

⁵ Article 15bis of the Martial Law Act 1914 (B.E. 2457) “*In the case where military officials have reasonable grounds to suspect that a person is an enemy or has violated the provisions of this Act or orders from military officials, the officials have the power to detain that person for questioning or for other necessary purposes for no more than 7 days. The person cannot demand indemnities or fines from military officials.*”

⁶ Thai Lawyers for Human Rights, 2015, “Statement on the Enforcement of Article 44 of the 2014 Interim Constitution”, accessed on May 16, 2024, from <https://tlhr2014.com/archives/63700>

⁷ “2 NCPO legal advisors, “Dr. Wissanu Krea-ngam – Dr. Pornpetch Wichitcholchai” beat around the bush in defense of the Intertim Constitution”, Thai Publica, published on July 23, 2014, in “Constitution (Interim)’14 – Four amendments in two years”, 2017, iLaw, accessed on April 16, 2024, from <https://www.ilaw.or.th/articles/2242>

⁸ “Constitution (Interim)’14 – Four amendments in two years”, 2017, iLaw, accessed on April 16, 2024, from <https://www.ilaw.or.th/articles/2242>

referendum and the establishment of the Constitution Drafting Committee (CDC), another significant development was the appointment of the National Reform Steering Assembly (NRSA) to continue the work originally undertaken by the National Reform Council (NRC).

Following amendments to the Interim Constitution, the draft constitution formulated by the CDC led by Mr. Borwornsak Uwanno faced rejection by the NRC. Consequently, both the CDC and NRC committees were disbanded and substituted with new committees. Mr. Meechai Ruchuphan assumed leadership in the subsequent drafting process of the constitution.

The amendments made to the Interim Constitution led to significant issues in the voting process during the constitutional referendum. Initially, those who did not participate in voting were counted as negative votes, potentially leading to the rejection of the draft constitution. Recognizing this flaw, on March 10, 2016, the NCPO instructed the National Legislative Assembly of Thailand to introduce further amendments. These amendments stipulated that “only votes cast by participating voters would be counted,” ensuring that abstentions would not affect the outcome. Moreover, during this amendment process, the NLA was granted the authority to add one additional referendum question. This marked the second amendment to the Interim Constitution. If the majority of participating voters approved the draft constitution, it would proceed to the Prime Minister for presentation to the King for final endorsement.

In September 2016, before the annual civil servants’ transfer period, the NCPO submitted a third draft of the Interim Constitution to the National Legislative Assembly (NLA) for review. The sole amendment proposed was to increase the maximum size of the NLA from 220 members to 250 members. Among the 30 newly appointed members were predominantly military personnel who had recently retired or been promoted to significant positions⁹. The rationale behind expanding the NLA was to enhance its capacity to handle numerous pending legislative bills, including supplementary constitutional bills that required timely consideration within specific deadlines. This adjustment aimed to bolster the NLA’s capability by introducing additional expertise to facilitate the legislative process during a critical period timeframe¹⁰.

In January 2017, the 2017 draft constitution successfully passed a referendum and awaited the King’s signature. The period of waiting extended beyond five months, and if the King did not sign it by February, the draft constitution would not come into effect. Concurrently, the NCPO submitted the fourth amendment to the Interim Constitution for approval by the NLA. This amendment focused on two main points: Firstly, it addressed procedures if the King was absent from the Kingdom or unable to fulfill royal duties, he may or may not appoint a Regent. Secondly, it outlined a process where, upon receiving the draft constitution, if the King suggested amendments, the Prime Minister would revise the draft accordingly and present it to the King for a second review. Mr. Wissanu Krea-ngam, advisor

9 “Constitution (Interim)¹⁴ – Four amendments in two years”, 2017, iLaw, accessed on April 16, 2024, from <https://www.ilaw.or.th/articles/2242>

10 Ibid

to the NCPO, asserted that the fourth amendment did not negatively impact rights and liberties, political structure, parliament, cabinet, courts, or independent organizations¹¹.

In addition to consolidating executive and legislative power, the NCPO employed various methods to suppress civilians, particularly political activists. These tactics included summoning dissidents for “attitude adjustment,” detaining them in military camps, and closely monitoring targeted activists. The term “target activists” referred to individuals who had been politically active since prior to the 2014 coup d’état, such as participants in the PDRC and the Red Shirts, as well as those who protested the NCPO’s seizure of power in 2014. These activists came from diverse backgrounds, including students, academics, and ordinary citizens engaged in political campaigns or expressing dissenting views online.

The NCPO employed a dual strategy to suppress dissent against the coup d’état, utilizing both legal and extra-judicial measures. Legally, they employed Strategic Lawsuits Against Public Participation (SLAPPs) to ‘silence’ critics. Through extra-judicial means, state officials engaged in negotiations with organizers of anti-coup political campaigns. They imposed conditions on these activities, often “asking for cooperation” in exchange for permission to proceed. These conditions included directives to exclude certain speakers from seminars, refrain from mentioning the NCPO, or avoid using specific terms such as “dictatorship” or “rebel”¹².

In addition to these coercive measures, plainclothes officers were deployed to physically attack activists, resulting in severe injuries. For instance, after the “Gathering of People who Want to Vote” event on the elevated walkway in front of the Bangkok Art and Culture Center on January 27, 2015, state officials swiftly prosecuted 39 individuals. Summonses were issued within a remarkably short timeframe of 4-6 days, compelling the accused to appear before investigators and face charges¹³.

The case of Mr. Bandit Arneeya provides another example. He expressed his opinions at the end of the seminar titled “Constitution of the Kingdom of Thailand, B.E.?” held at Thammasat University in 2015. As a result, he was detained by police for “attitude adjustment” and forbidden from voicing any political opinions thereafter. Following the coup d’état¹⁴, public political activities faced strict surveillance by plainclothes officials who recorded audio and video during these events. This heightened scrutiny created a sense of insecurity among organizers and participants. Additionally, NCPO Announcement No. 57/2557 obstructed political parties from conducting their activities.

¹¹ Ibid

¹² Thai Lawyers for Human Rights Center, n.d., “The collapse of the rule of law: report on 4 years under the NCPO, human rights, and the aftermath of the coup on Thai society”, accessed on May 16, 2024, from <https://tlhr2014.com/archives/63676>, page.16-18

¹³ Thai Lawyers for Human Rights Center, “Citizens joining the ‘Gathering of People who Want to Vote’ in front of MBK Center were prosecuted (MBK39)”, Rights and Liberties Cases Database, accessed on May 16, 2024, from <https://database.tlhr2014.com/public/case/826/>

¹⁴ Thai Lawyers for Human Rights Center, “Mr. Bandit prosecuted with Article 112 for a second time after the 2014 coup for expressing opinions on the draft constitution”, Rights and Liberties Cases Database, accessed on May 16, 2024 from <https://database.tlhr2014.com/public/case/300/>

Various political activities related to the coup d'état that the NCPO viewed as 'polemic or affecting national security' would be blocked. According to a report by the Thai Lawyers for Human Rights, between 2014-2018, the NCPO blocked and interfered in 264 stances¹⁵ involving the exercise of freedom of expression and assembly. Military personnel frequently pressured university administrators or professors to halt student activities, and they often summoned student activists for meetings.

Through judicial means, under the NCPO announcements and orders, and extra-judicial means, the NCPO wielded its authority to curtail and suppress the rights of freedom of expression and peaceful assembly among perceived opponents. These actions resulted in widespread human rights violations across the country and, in numerous cases, egregious acts such as the death and forced disappearance of Thai refugees in neighboring countries.

2016 – Thailand's 2016 Constitutional Referendum

On August 7, 2016, the NCPO conducted a referendum on the draft 2017 Thai Constitution, with provinces serving as voting constituency. The referendum highlighted divisions between supporters and opponents of the draft constitution, amid efforts by the authorities to restrict freedom of expression through various methods, including the use of NCPO Order No. 3/2558 and the 2016 Constitutional Referendum Act to prosecute those who expressing dissent against the constitutional referendum¹⁶.

Leading up to the referendum, various civil society groups campaigned in parallel with the Election Commission's efforts. Groups like the United Front for Democracy Against Dictatorship (UDD) established "Referendum Rigging Monitoring Centers" in at least 43 provinces across the country to voice their opposition. This initiative was met with crackdowns from the NCPO, involving seizure of campaign materials and arrests. In 2016 alone, at least 80 people across Thailand faced prosecution in connection with the Referendum Rigging Monitoring Centers case¹⁷.

Beyond the UDD, activists, students, academics, and other civil society groups disseminated content or documents opposing the draft constitution or advocating for the "Vote No" campaign. Over 200 individuals were arrested and prosecuted as a result. Among them, 64 faced charges under the 2016 Constitutional Referendum Act, while 131 were accused of defying NCPO Order No. 3/2558 and other

15 Thai Lawyers for Human Rights Center, n.d., "The collapse of the rule of law: report on 4 years under the NCPO, human rights, and the aftermath of the coup on Thai society", accessed on May 16, 2024, from <https://tlhr2014.com/archives/63676>, page.16

16 Thai Lawyers for Human Rights Center, 2016, "Not Free and Fair, a campaign that costs freedom: A compilation rights violations before the constitutional referendum", accessed on March 4, 2024, from <https://database.tlhr2014.com/public/case/300/>

17 Thai Lawyers for Human Rights Center, 2020, "Four years ago on 'Vote No' leaflets distribution cases, and the Bang Sao Thong referendum before the sentencing hearing", accessed on March 4, 2024, from <https://tlhr2014.com/archives/22548>

legal violations¹⁸. Despite these challenges, Thailand officially implemented the 2017 Constitution on April 6, 2017, marking it as the country's 20th constitution.

Constitution of Thailand 2016 (B.E. 2560) – Succession of dictatorial power

Although approved by referendum, the 2017 constitution is widely regarded as the “legacy” or “outcome” of the coup d'état and serves as a tool for the NCPO to sustain its grip on power. This constitution establishes various processes and mechanisms intended to maintain NCPO influence in several significant ways.

Firstly, the 2017 constitution outlines the selection process for 250 senators: 194 are appointed directly by the NCPO, 50 are chosen from professional groups, and 6 are selected from military and police leaders. Many of these appointees have familial or close associations with NCPO members. Additionally, the constitution empowers the Senate to appoint and dismiss members of committees in independent organizations, including judges of the Constitutional Court. Moreover, the Senate shares equal authority with elected members of the House of Representatives to approve the appointment of the Prime Minister and to vote on motions of no confidence.

Secondly, the 2017 Constitution specifies that candidates eligible for the position of Prime Minister must be among the three individuals nominated by political parties prior to the election. Moreover, the nominees must come from a political party with the number of seats in the House of Representatives that constitutes at least 5 percent of the total number of party members.

Under these conditions and given the power of the Senate appointed by the NCPO, after the general election in 2019, General Prayut Chan-o-cha was “invited” to be a Prime Ministerial candidate ‘on the list’ of the Palang Pracharat Party despite the fact that General Prayut Chan-o-cha did not contest for a Member of Parliament position, was not affiliated with the Palang Pracharat Party, and did not participate in the party’s election campaign.

In addition to these mechanisms governing parliamentary seats, Cabinet formation, and Prime Ministerial appointment, the 2017 Constitution introduces the ‘20-year National Strategy 2018-2037.’ This strategy outlines guidelines for the country’s development plan, binding all public agencies to adhere. The National Strategy serves as a blueprint for maintaining authority and implementing long-term policies to ensure the continuation of power.

Regarding the protection of people’s rights and liberties, this constitution introduces nuances to this principle by stipulating that the state has a duty to protect these rights and liberties. However, it also imposes regulations to prohibit the exercise of such rights and liberties when deemed to “undermine the security of the state” or “disrupt public order.” This broad interpretation places nearly all forms of

¹⁸ Ibid

political expression, rights and freedoms, or participation in political activities at risk of being categorized as threats to national security or public order, punishable by law.

The NCPO's efforts to suppress political expression were also evident through judicial processes, leading to numerous lawsuits related to rights and freedoms. Frequently utilized laws included Article 112 of the Criminal Code on lèse-majesté, Article 116 on sedition, NCPO Order No. 7/2557 prohibiting political gatherings, the Thai Public Assembly Act 2015 (B.E.2558), and provisions in the Civil Procedure Code and Criminal Code concerning contempt of court or violation of court authority. Additionally, other charges under lesser-known laws, such as the Cleanliness Act of 2007 and the Advertising Act of 1950 regarding loudspeaker use permissions, were employed by NCPO officials to restrict freedom of expression.

The NCPO's pursuit of political power resulted in defendants bearing the financial burden, psychological distress, and harm to their careers and education, often due to prolonged and delayed trials. Furthermore, many political prisoners were detained without bail before or during their trials.

2019 – From junta to military-backed party

After the NCPO assumed power, Thailand held a general election in March 2019 under the 2014 Interim Constitution amidst a climate of harassment of dissidents and suppression of freedom of expression. The election concluded with the Palang Pracharat Party, backed by the military¹⁹, winning a majority in the House of Representatives and the selection of General Prayut Chan-o-cha, the coup leader, as prime minister. The election's outcome sparked criticism regarding its legitimacy and triggered a series of political rallies.

In December 2019, the Election Commission filed a petition with the Constitutional Court seeking the dissolution of the Future Forward Party on the grounds that the party had borrowed 19 million baht from its leader, Mr. Thanathorn Junggrungruangkit, which was deemed a violation of Article 72 of the Organic Act on Political Parties 2017 (B.E. 2560). This action by the Election Commission drew widespread criticism. Subsequently, in February 2020, the Constitutional Court ruled to dissolve the Future Forward Party and suspended the political rights of its executives, including the right to run for election, for 10 years. As a result of the court's decision, a total of 16 Future Forward Party executives had their political rights revoked²⁰. In this group, 11 of them were MPs. Consequently, the Future Forward Party retained

19 Boonkiat Karawekphan, 2018, "Palang Pracharat is not the first party in Thai political history to be called "Military Proxy Party"", BBC Thai, accessed on March 17, 2024, from <https://www.bbc.com/thai/features-45781649>

20 Namely Mr. Thanathorn Juangrungruangkit (Party Leader), Ms. Kunthida Rungruengkiat (Deputy Party Leader), Mr. Chamnan Chanruang (Deputy Party Leader), Lt. Gen. Pongsorn Rodchompoo (Deputy Party Leader), Mr. Ronnawit Lortsoonthorn (Deputy Party Leader), Mr. Piyabutr Saengkanokkul (Party Secretary-General), Mr. Sunthorn Bunyod (Party Executive Committee), Ms. Yaowalax Wongpraparatt (Party Executive Committee), Mr. Surachai Srisaracam (Party Executive Committee), Mr. Janevit Kraisin (Party Executive Committee), Mr. Chan Phakdisri (Party Executive Committee), Ms. Jaruwan Sarunyagate (Party Executive Committee), Mr. Niraman Sulaiman (Party Executive Committee), Ms. Pannika Wanich

only 65 seats in the House of Representatives, down from its original 76 seats²¹.

2020 – Future Forward Party’s dissolution by the establishment

Even prior to the Constitutional Court announcing its decision to dissolve the Future Forward Party, there was widespread opposition from people who viewed the situation as an abuse of power to destroy politicians not aligned with the government. The dissolution of the Future Forward Party was perceived as a move by the establishment to eliminate political opponents. This discontentment sparked daily protests. On February 24, 2020, demonstrations commenced at universities and schools nationwide, with flash mobs appearing in various locations. Diverse groups of youth took to the streets daily, calling for social reform²².

2020-2023 – People’s movement

In January 2019, people across the country mobilized in various activities to express dissatisfaction with General Prayut Chan-o-cha’s government, the Election Commission, and the Constitutional Court following the dissolution of the Future Forward Party. Notable actions included the “Wing Lai Loong” (Run to chase away the Uncle) movement, where participants from 30 provinces symbolically aimed to remove General Prayut Chan-o-cha from power, and flash mobs held in public areas such as universities and schools.

In March 2020, the world faced a global health crisis with the outbreak of COVID-19, prompting Prime Minister General Prayut Chan-o-cha to enforce the Emergency Decree 2005 (B.E. 2548) to curb the spread of the virus. This decree included strict measures to prohibit social gatherings, stating that “it is forbidden to hold assemblies, activities, or gatherings in crowded places, or to engage in acts that incite disorder.”²³

Despite the state of emergency, political demonstrations persisted²⁴, primarily led by youth from various groups. This youth movement continued from March to May despite the restrictions imposed by the emergency decree.

On June 4, 2020, Wanchalearm Satsaksit, an advocate for human rights, democracy, and HIV prevention, disappeared under suspicious circumstances from his condominium in Phnom Penh, Cambodia. His

21 “Future Forward: Constitutional Court resolution ordering party dissolution, banning party executive committee for 10 years”, 2020, BBC Thai, accessed on March 16, 2024, from <https://www.bbc.com/thai/thailand-51582581>

22 Rungrit Phetcharat, 2023, “February 21, third anniversary of Future Forward dissolution – the beginning of the 2020 political uprising”, Thairath Online, accessed on May 1, 2024 from <https://plus.thairath.co.th/topic/politics&society/102808>

23 “COVID-19: No gatherings, social mingling, activities throughout the country to curb the outbreak”, 2021, BBC Thai, accessed on March 16, 2024, from <https://www.bbc.com/thai/thailand-57862837>

24 Rungrit Phetcharat, 2021, “Timeline of 2020-2021 demonstrations: Liberation in the name of the people”, Thairath Online, accessed on April 10, 2024, from <https://plus.thairath.co.th/topic/politics&society/100117>

sister, Sitanan Satsaksit, recounted that she was speaking with Wanchalearm via the Line application when she heard a commotion, including loud noises and Wanchalearm repeatedly saying, “I can’t breathe.” She also heard male voices speaking in Khmer for about 16 minutes before the communication abruptly ended²⁵. Despite numerous attempts, she was unable to contact him again. This incident is categorized as an enforced disappearance, a grave violation under international law.²⁶

Prior to this tragic event, after the 2014 coup d’état in Thailand, Wanchalearm was summoned by authorities under an order from the National Council for Peace and Order (NCPO), which later issued an arrest warrant against him. Fearing persecution, he sought refuge in Cambodia. Wanchalearm’s case is not isolated; according to reports from the Thai Lawyers for Human Rights, since the 2014 coup, at least 104 individuals²⁷ fled Thailand due to political conflicts and crackdowns by the NCPO. Some left to avoid compliance with NCPO directives or because they faced charges under Article 112 of the Thai Criminal Code²⁸. Among these refugees, Human Rights Watch documented cases of nine individuals²⁹ who faced enforced disappearances in neighboring countries such as Laos, Vietnam, and Cambodia, with two of them later found deceased. Thailand and the countries where these incidents occurred have shown limited willingness or capability to investigate and hold accountable those responsible for these human rights violations³⁰.

Following the incidents of enforced disappearance and amid growing public discontent demanding the truth of the disappearances of activists and political refugees following the NCPO coup d’état in July 2020, political demonstrations resurged in Thailand. In July 2020, the youth-led group “Free Youth” articulated three main demands³¹ during a political rally: 1) dissolve parliament to pave the way for a

25 “Sitanan Satsaksit, sister of Wanchalearm Satsaksit: From a year of sadness to a year of standing up political refugees”, 2021, BBC Thai, accessed on March 16, 2024, from <https://www.bbc.com/thai/thailand-55473720>

26 Ibid

27 Thai Lawyers for Human Rights Center, 2020, “As if the NCPO hasn’t gone anywhere: 6 years after the coup, rights violations still exist”, accessed on September 7, 2023, from <https://tlhr2014.com/archives/17788>

28 “Wanchalearm: Retracing the steps of the refugees. Who else has been “forced to disappear” after the 2014 coup?”, 2020, BBC Thai, accessed on March 16, 2024, from <https://www.bbc.com/thai/thailand-52946342>

29 Human Rights Watch 2567, “We Thought We Were Safe: Repression and Forced Return of Refugees in Thailand,” accessed May 16, 2024, from <https://www.hrw.org/content/388041>

30 Mr. Siam Teerawut, activist and political refugee living in Vietnam was arrested by Vietnamese police in May 2019 before disappearing. Mr. Surachai Danwattananusorn, Mr. Chatchan Bupphawan (Comrade Phuchan), and Mr. Kraidet Luelert (Comrade Kasalong), activists and refugees living in Laos went missing on December 12, 2018, before the bodies of Mr. Chatchan and Mr. Kraidet were found floating on the Mekong River. Mr. Surachai is still missing. Mr. Itthiphon Sukpaen (DJ Sunho), an activist and political refugee living in Laos, disappeared on June 22, 2016. It was reported that he was detained by Thai officials, but the state later denied that report. There are reports of other similar cases in other Southeast Asian countries. Mr. Odd Chaiyawong, former member of the “Free Laos” group, human rights defender and Lao refugee living in Thailand, disappeared in August 2019 after meeting with a UN Special Rapporteur. Mr. Truong Duy Nhat, a human rights defender and Vietnamese journalist, arrested by the Thai authorities before being returned to Vietnamese authorities in 2019, has been since then held in a prison in Vietnam. Mr. Osman Karaca, a businessman holding Mexican and Turkish citizenships, was arrested by Cambodian authorities in November 2018 before being forcibly disappeared for several days before it was reported that he had been deported to Turkey.

31 “Free Youth: The Prime Minister to receive the three demands through parliament process, ensuring there will be no interference.”, 2020, the Bangkok Insight, accessed on February 11, 2024, from <https://www.thebangkokinsight.com/news/politics-general/politics/399313/>

new general election, 2) cease prosecution and harassment of protesters and government critics, and 3) draft a new constitution.

Initially scattered and unstructured, these protests gained momentum by October 2020, evolving into organized large-scale rallies held almost daily nationwide. Central to these protests was the “People’s Party,” a coalition comprising various citizen, student, and youth movements including the Free Youth Group, Dao Din Group, Thammasat Alliance Group, and Democracy Restoration Group. These groups intensified their calls for governmental adherence to the principles of constitutional monarchy. Notably, discussions about reforming the monarchy, a traditionally sensitive topic in Thai society, became openly debated—a significant and unprecedented departure from previous norms³².

In response, Prime Minister General Prayut Chan-o-cha’s government escalated its crackdown on demonstrators using increasingly aggressive tactics. Throughout October and November 2020, authorities employed violent measures including charges against protesters and the deployment of weapons and crowd control equipment to disperse demonstrations³³. In particular, during a gathering announced by the People’s Party 2020³⁴ at Ratchaprasong Intersection before relocating to Pathumwan intersection in October 2020, the government used high-pressure water cannons mixed with a blue chemical substance and tear gas to disperse protesters. These weapons were used to allow for the advancement of police officers holding shields and batons while the protesters were retreating and trying to make barricades to prevent the authorities from taking over the area. High-pressure water cannons and chemical spray were used again in November to disperse the #Rasadonsan and #17November protests.³⁵

In 2021, kinetic impact projectiles or rubber bullets were deployed to suppress protests for the first time in over a decade, since the dispersal of the Red Shirt protests in 2010. The initial incident occurred on February 28, 2021, in front of the 1st Infantry Regiment Military Base³⁶. Following this, crowd control police subsequently used rubber bullets on multiple occasions without prior notification to protesters, a practice violating international principles. Between August and October 2021, non-violent protesters were struck by rubber bullets in sensitive areas such as the upper body, temple, forehead, and back. Rubber bullets were fired at residents within protest areas or passing vehicles. Additionally, police officials fired rubber bullets at protesters at close range, resulting in injuries to several journalists³⁷.

32 “From student flash mobs to the large gathering of the “People’s Party 2020”, chronology of political gatherings in 2020”, 2020, BBC Thai, accessed on March 16, 2024, from <https://www.bbc.com/thai/thailand-52946342>

33 “Realtime update on the dispersing of “People’s Party” demonstration at Pathumwan Intersection”, 2020, BBC Thai, accessed on January 4, 2024, from <https://www.bbc.com/thai/live/thailand-54508182>

34 “October 16, 2020 – Police disperses the People’s Party protest at Pathumwan Intersection”, 2021, The Standard, accessed on March 14, 2024, from <https://thestandard.co/onthisday-16102563/>

35 Amnesty International, 2021, “As if my face were burning”: Thai police’s unlawful use of force during peaceful demonstrations”, first edition, p. 20-24

36 “Covid measures used 60 times as pretext to disperse protests and using rubber bullets, violating international principles throughout the year 2021”, 2021, iLaw, accessed on May 10, 2024, from <https://www.ilaw.or.th/articles/9984>

37 Ibid

As protests persisted throughout 2020-2021, demonstrators faced repression, charges, prosecutions, arrests, and disproportionate use of force by state officials that contradicted international human rights guidelines³⁸, particularly outlined in the United Nations Human Rights Guidelines on Less-Lethal Weapons in Law Enforcement. These guidelines specify protocols for using various non-lethal weapons, including chemical irritants, water cannons, tear gas, rubber bullets, and batons. The guidelines emphasize that law enforcement officials should exhaust non-violent methods before resorting to force or firearms³⁹. Force should only be used when other methods are impracticable or ineffective, strictly necessary, and in the lawful performance of their duties⁴⁰.

The “Basic Principles of the Use of Force and Firearms by Law Enforcement Officials” ensures that everyone has the right to participate in lawful and peaceful assemblies. If the use of force becomes unavoidable, officials must adhere to specific guidelines: 1) in the dispersal of assemblies that are unlawful but non-violent, law enforcement officials shall avoid the use of force or, where that is not practicable, shall restrict such force to the minimum extent necessary, and 2) In the dispersal of violent assemblies, law enforcement officials may use firearms only when less dangerous means are not practicable.

The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)⁴¹ stipulates that the right of peaceful assembly shall be recognized. No restrictions may be placed on the exercise of this right other than those imposed in conformity with the law and which are necessary in a democratic society in the interests of national security or public safety, public order, the protection of public health or morals or the protection of the rights and freedoms of others. This is to safeguard the political and civil rights of the people in determining their own future.

The Code of Conduct for Law Enforcement Officials outlines that officials must uphold human dignity, protect human rights, and use force only when strictly necessary and proportionate to their duties. However, during the crackdowns and dispersals of protests from 2020 to 2023, crowd control officers frequently utilized non-lethal weapons and tactics, including arresting and herding protesters, which sparked widespread public and civil society criticism. This response portrayed the government as the party escalating the violence⁴².

38 “International Principles” for organizing demonstrations and dispersing them”, 2020, iLaw, accessed on March 14, 2024, from <https://www.ilaw.or.th/articles/4427>

39 Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), 2020, “Guidance on Less-Lethal Weapons in Law Enforcement”, Page 4-7

40 Ibid

41 International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights: ICCPR) Article 21 *“The right of peaceful assembly shall be recognized. No restrictions may be placed on the exercise of this right other than those imposed in conformity with the law and which are necessary in a democratic society in the interests of national security or public safety, public order (ordre public), the protection of public health or morals or the protection of the rights and freedoms of others.”*

42 “Cross-Cultural Foundation on one year after the dispersing of October 16 demonstration from Pathumwan to Talugaz, pointing out that the state played a part in ‘escalating the violence’”, 2021, Matichon Online, accessed on October 18, 2023 from https://www.matichon.co.th/politics/news_2994618

Calls for justice and compensation for those affected by the dispersal of demonstrations intensified amidst these events. Concurrently, images surfaced from the “Good Police Get Reward” award ceremony, where crowd control officers injured during their duties in dispersing the “People Stop APEC2022” protest were honored. The ceremony also acknowledged officers for arresting protesters involved in significant offenses during the APEC meeting in Thailand on November 18, 2022⁴³.

According to the Thai Lawyers for Human Rights, from the onset of the youth protests in July 2020 until March 31, 2023, at least 1,898 individuals in 1,187 cases faced prosecution for participating in protests and expressing their political views. Among them were 284 children and youths under the age of 18 who were prosecuted across 211 cases. Notably, 41 children were under 15 years old, while 243 youths were between 15 and 18 years old⁴⁴. The charges predominantly mirrored those seen since 2014, including lèse-majesté, sedition, violating the Emergency Decree, breaching the Thai Public Assembly Act, and contravening the Computer-related Crime Act.

In addition to obstructing and monitoring demonstrations and targeted groups, efforts were made to suppress freedom of expression. Content produced by the public, activists, and artist groups in various forms and media was censored under vague criteria, often relating to its perceived connection to the coup d'état or its alleged ‘unsuitability for the public’ without clear definition. Political opinions expressed through online platforms were also subjected to surveillance. For instance, “Prathet Ku Mee,” a rap song released by Rap Against Dictatorship on YouTube on October 23, 2018, which addresses “people’s rights” and structural issues in the country, was banned. The Deputy Commissioner of the Royal Thai Police instructed the Technology Crime Suppression Division to investigate whether the song intended to “incite disorder or defy NCPO directives.”⁴⁵ These actions were aimed at stifling creativity and public engagement in political discourse, fundamental elements of democracy.

Meanwhile, a survey conducted by Boonlert Wisetpreecha and Uchen Chiangsen titled “Nonviolent Movement in the Views of the People of Bangkok”⁴⁶ gathered responses from 500 residents to gauge opinions on nonviolent actions. The survey focused on three aspects: 1) defining nonviolence, 2) what qualifies as nonviolent, and 3) the role of nonviolence in resolving conflicts within Thai society.

In terms of defining nonviolence, the survey revealed that different age groups held varying interpretations of “nonviolence” or “peaceful action,” influencing their acceptance of such movements’ legitimacy. The largest group, comprising 44.2 percent, considered nonviolent strategies as political actions that do not breach the law. Interestingly, the movement with the lowest acceptance rate was

43 “Crowd control police officers awarded after being injured at the ‘People Stop APEC2022’ rally”, 2022, Prachatai, accessed on May 2, 2024, from <https://www.ilaw.or.th/articles/4427>

44 Thai Lawyers for Human Rights Center, 2020, “March 2023: Total number of people prosecuted in political cases is 1,898 from 1,187 cases”, accessed on March 4, 2024, from <https://tlhr2014.com/archives/55037>

45 “‘Sriwara’ orders to investigate song lyrics ‘Prathet Ku Mee’” 2018, Thai PBS, accessed on April 10, 2024, from <https://www.thaipbs.or.th/news/content/275330>

46 Boonlert Wisetpreecha and Uchen Chiangsen, 2023, “Survey Report on Non-violent Movement in the view of Bangkok residents”, accessed on May 5, 2024, from https://docs.google.com/document/d/1lyQjfCoxGjzn4rt4Ch_yH8oW1osGUpJH/edit?usp=sharing&oid=100515228535713209972&rtpof=true&sd=true

monarchy reform, endorsed by only 48.8 percent. There was a notable correlation between age and attitudes toward monarchy reform. Specifically, 88.2 percent of Generation Z believed in the peaceful advocacy for monarchy reform, contrasting with 51.5 percent of Generation Y, 36.9 percent of Generation X, and 36.8 percent of Baby Boomers.

The survey results above underscore that the call for reform of the monarchy remains a highly sensitive issue in the Thai society. The monarchy holds deep historical and cultural significance, making discussions about related issues such as Article 112 or reform inherently contentious and unacceptable to certain segments of society due to differing understandings, ideologies, experiences, and perceptions. This environment has significantly restricted the space for open dialogue on the monarchy and has justified the use of legal measures to prosecute those advocating for reform.

The repression and curtailment of rights and freedoms by the NCPO from 2014 to 2023 have profoundly impacted Thailand. Through administrative policies, legislative control, and the prosecution of dissenters—particularly critics of the political landscape post-2014 coup d'état—the NCPO has perpetuated political violence that has inflicted wounds and scars on its victims. It is imperative to uncover, analyze, and comprehend this political violence so that all sectors of Thai society can collectively envision a future amidst this prolonged political crisis and divergent viewpoints.

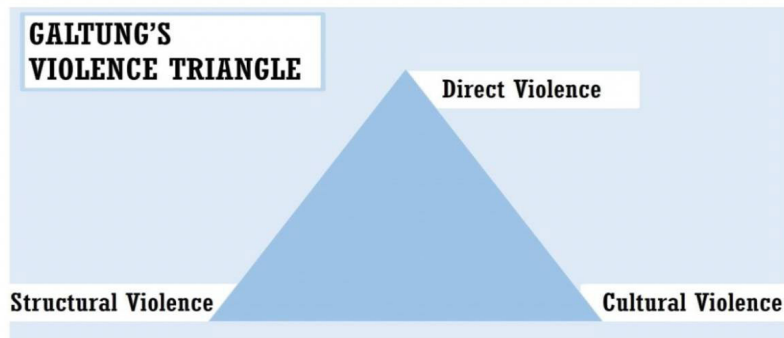
Chapter II: Relevant Theories

To comprehend the phenomenon of political violence in the Thai society, this study employs Johan Galtung's Violence Triangle. This framework helps elucidate the impacts stemming from the misuse of state power and the violence that the state either perpetrates or allows to occur. Additionally, the concept of Transitional Justice is integrated into the analysis, aiming to formulate policy recommendations based on inputs from victims, with the ultimate goal of ending political violence in Thailand.

The objectives of this study are threefold:

1. Develop policy recommendations centered around the needs of people affected by political violence.
2. Illuminate instances of political violence in Thailand to foster awareness and understanding.
3. Establish preventive measures to ensure that such violence does not recur.

Galtung's Violence Triangle



Political violence in Thailand, historically and currently, emerges from the attitudes of those in power, a culture of impunity, and laws that sanction the excessive use of force, leading to various forms of state violence. This study utilizes the Violence Triangle Theory of Johan Galtung, a sociologist specializing in peace and violence, to elucidate human rights violations. Galtung's theory emphasizes that violence extends beyond visible acts to include structural and cultural forms that pervade society.

The primary aim of this study is to comprehend the phenomenon of political violence in Thailand using the frameworks of the Violence Triangle and Transitional Justice. It seeks to demonstrate that the impacts of violence transcend mere physical and psychological harm inflicted on victims.

Galtung defined "violence" as "that which increases the distance between the potential and the actual, and that which impedes the decrease of this distance."⁴⁷ In other words, violence is something that hinders individuals from reaching their full potential despite possessing the capability to do so. A human being with his body, mind, and potential, can achieve a certain goal, but there is something that prevents him from achieving that goal even though he has the potential that allows him to. What gets in the way is violence.

Furthermore, Galtung explained that violence is anything that insults basic human needs – survival, quality of life, freedom and identity – and that can be avoided or prevented.

Galtung categorizes violence into three types: Direct Violence, Indirect Violence (also known as Structural Violence), and Cultural Violence.

1. Direct Violence is violence according to the general understanding. This type of violence is the most recognizable and visible form. It directly affects individuals physically or mentally. Examples include physical abuse, murder, torture, harassment, and acts of terror.

47 Johan Galtung, 1969, "Violence, Peace, and Peace Research", *Journal of Peace Research* Vol. 6, No. 3 (1969), pp. 167-191, Accessed 11 April 2024 from <https://www.galtung-institut.de/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/Cultural-Violence-Galtung.pdf>

2. Indirect Violence is violence that arises from social structures which negatively impact humans, preventing them from achieving what is feasible. It is often difficult to pinpoint the perpetrator of indirect violence or structural violence as they are disguised in the legal system and the justice system, or a government administration, to exemplify.
3. Structural violence arises from power dynamics in society, which results in unequal access to resources, such as education, healthcare, and income, and economic disparities that disadvantage marginalized groups. Unlike direct violence, the perpetrators of structural violence are often not identifiable individuals but rather societal structures that perpetuate inequality.
4. Cultural Violence manifests through cultural norms, beliefs, values, traditions, and practices that justify and perpetuate violence⁴⁸. This type of violence is more deeply rooted than structural violence. In other words, it is integrated into mindsets, beliefs and traditions. Structural and cultural violence support and reinforce each other and promote direct violence. An example of cultural violence is patriarchal ideologies that justify subordination of women, believing that males are superior to females from birth, and that cascades to every other aspect of life, contributing to a system that gives power to men through various institutions in society such as education, family, media, religion, culture, tradition, law, etc. and eventually results in direct violence.

Chapter III: Transitional Justice

Transitional Justice is a framework and practice essential for societies recovering from mass human rights violations or political crises caused by authoritarian regimes. It involves confronting past violence to achieve accountability and reparations for affected individuals, thereby preventing the recurrence of historical atrocities. As dictatorships fall, it becomes crucial to uncover the truth behind state-sponsored violence and hold perpetrators accountable for human rights abuses, thereby restoring justice for victims. The United Nations recognizes Transitional Justice as pivotal for societies to address past injustices, strengthen accountability, deliver justice, heal societal wounds, and uphold the rule of law⁴⁹.

In many countries, addressing past human rights violations is challenging due to flawed political structures, weak monitoring mechanisms, limited resources, or governmental reluctance to investigate abuses fearing destabilization. Nevertheless, confronting these violations is vital to restoring justice, fostering social harmony, and ensuring accountability, which are essential in preventing future violence. Without accountability and effective mechanisms for criminal prosecution, the protection of people's rights and freedoms remains compromised, especially when legal or institutional frameworks are inadequate to address crimes and punish perpetrators.

48 Johan Galtung, 1990, "Cultural Violence", *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 27, No. 3. (Aug. 1990), pp. 291-305, accessed 11 April 2024 from <https://www.galtung-institut.de/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/Cultural-Violence-Galtung.pdf>

49 United Nations Secretary General. (2010). *Guidance Note of the Secretary General*. United Nations. In *Asia Justice and Rights*, 2023, "Transitional Justice Handbook", First Edition

Historically, Transitional Justice has played a crucial role in societies transitioning from authoritarian rule, as seen in countries like Argentina, Chile, and Timor-Leste. It facilitates reconciliation among communities, addresses conflict legacies, supports the return of refugees and victims to normalcy, and promotes societal healing. The forms of Transitional Justice can vary depending on societal contexts but share common objectives: uncovering the truth about past violence, understanding its impact on victims, and restoring justice through reparative measures and systemic reforms.⁵⁰ The four pillars of Transitional Justice are 1) truth seeking, 2) prosecutions, 3) reparations, and 4) institutional reform.

1. Truth Seeking

Truth seeking involves gathering comprehensive information and evidence to construct a complete narrative of past human rights violations. This includes details about victims, their families, and communities, the impacts of the violence, the perpetrators and their leaders, as well as the underlying economic, cultural, and political factors that contributed to the violence. The process aims to illuminate events that have been hidden or obscured, providing society with a clear understanding of historical injustices. When the public is aware of the truth, they will be able to lay the basis for reconciliation, a strong and sustainable democracy, and the rule of law.

Access to truth is fundamental for victims and their relatives, enabling them to heal, find closure, and reclaim their dignity. International human rights law imposes an obligation on states to uncover the truth about human rights violations, violence, and torture⁵¹ and to present this truth to victims and society at large.

Unlike criminal prosecutions, which focus narrowly on establishing guilt or innocence, truth seeking pursues a broader goal of understanding the full scope and systemic causes of human rights abuses. Criminal proceedings can be limited by burdens of proof and production, are often time-consuming, and may not address the larger context or root causes of violations. Court decisions do not become part of legal standards but are relevant only on a case-by-case basis.

Truth seeking encompasses various approaches beyond criminal justice, creating databases of facts about violations to inform reparative policies and reform of laws and social institutions, such as education, culture, and religion, to reduce hate, discrimination, and economic inequality. The truth-seeking process begins by forming a truth commission to serve as a neutral, non-judicial body to collect testimonies and evidence of systematic abuses like enforced disappearances, torture, or genocide and war crimes. Examples include South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission addressing apartheid-era abuses, Timor-Leste's commission on civil war atrocities, and Myanmar's Independent Investigative Mechanism for Myanmar (IIMM) established by the UN Human Rights Council in 2018

⁵⁰ Asia Justice and Rights, 2023, "Transitional Justice Handbook", First Edition, Page 12

⁵¹ Ibid, Page 50

to investigate grave international crimes committed in Myanmar since 2011, and to prepare case documents to share with national, regional or international courts to prosecute offenders⁵².

In Thailand, the Truth for Reconciliation Commission of Thailand (TRCT), active from 2008 to 2011, investigated violence during the Red Shirt demonstrations in 2010 and subsequent crackdowns. Since the TRCT was not tasked to identify perpetrators and prosecute them in court, the TRCT report was met with vitriolic criticisms and used as a political tool by both sides of the conflict

There are also unofficial truth-seeking mechanisms, which are often implemented by civil society to collect and disseminate facts to the public, creating understanding of violence, and restoring human dignity to victims trying to overcome the trauma of human rights violations. For example, The People's Information Center on April-May 2010 Crackdowns (PIC) published a report titled "Truth for Justice: Events and Impacts of the Dispersal of Demonstrators, April-May 2010."⁵³

2. Reparations

Victims of violence deserve reparations in various forms such as compensation, relief, rehabilitation, and more. This effort seeks accountability for victims, aims to stabilize their lives, and restore them to their pre-atrocity state. Financial compensation is a primary aspect of Transitional Justice, providing tangible redress for victims. Reparations can also include formal public apologies to acknowledge the harm caused. Reparations are a cornerstone of Transitional Justice because they provide the most concrete remedy for victims.

Moreover, reparations are not limited to individual victims and their families. In cases where widespread human rights violations affect groups like ethnic or religious communities, collective reparations are equally crucial. These may involve monetary compensation, programs to restore dignity and health, recognition of the violence suffered, access to education, healthcare, or other benefits, depending on the context. Symbolic measures like raising public awareness, correcting misconceptions, and preserving memories through museums and monuments are also meaningful.

Fundamentally, states have a duty to protect citizens from harm. When states themselves commit or fail to prevent violence against their citizens, reparations are a means to acknowledge these failures and restore trust. States are obliged to repair and restore the lives of the victims to what they were before the violation occurred. This process not only apologizes for the state's shortcomings in protecting citizens but also reassures that the state is not a threat to its people.

⁵² United Nations, "Independent Investigative Mechanism for Myanmar", accessed February 3, 2024, from <https://iimm.un.org/#:~:text=The%20Independent%20Investigative%20Mechanism%20for,Myanmar%20and%20holding%20perpetrators%20accountable>

⁵³ The People's Information Center on April-May 2010 Crackdowns (PIC), 2012, <https://www.pic2010.org/>, accessed on April 10, 2024

The right to reparations for victims is enshrined in international instruments such as the Convention Against Torture (CAT) and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR). The International Criminal Court (ICC) has also established principles for reparations to victims of crimes within the jurisdiction of the state.

In Asia, demands for compensation often go unmet by governments that violate citizens' rights and freedoms, highlighting a lack of understanding of their obligations. Reparations remain a theoretical concept⁵⁴ rather than a guaranteed right for victims in many cases, reflecting ongoing challenges in acknowledging past injustices and addressing them effectively.

However, in Thailand, there have been instances where the state has taken steps to provide rehabilitation, compensation, and relief to victims of serious human rights violations, such as the incidents of October 14, 1973, and May 1992. In these cases, victims were compensated with financial support and other benefits. Monuments and memorials were also erected to honor victims, and the state organized funerals and annual commemorations. Yet, there are instances where the state has been reluctant to provide any redress, such as in the October 6, 1976 incident and the crackdown on the Red Shirt demonstrations in 2010, as well as other human rights violations linked to the NCPO's assumption of power.

3. Prosecutions

This refers to the criminal prosecution or legal proceedings against those involved in committing violence and human rights violations, especially state violence that inflicts injuries on life and property. Those negatively affected by the violence must enter the process as victims. Criminal prosecution of government officials, however, is challenging because victims may face obstacles and pressure from political officials. Legal prosecution serves to restore victims' dignity and rebuild trust between the government and the public by establishing clear societal norms of acceptable behavior. When victims seek justice, it represents both a symbolic assertion of their rights and a practical demand for criminal accountability.

However, human rights litigation is heavily influenced by the political environment and requires a concerted effort to foster a supportive social context that facilitates human rights protection. Key considerations include protocols for protecting victims and witnesses, procedural rules, jurisdictional issues, and public oversight of government actions. In some cases, domestic criminal proceedings may not efficiently deliver justice due to lengthy trials or public mistrust in the judicial system. To address these challenges, stakeholders may explore international mechanisms or seek recourse through international courts as mediators to ensure fairness and accountability⁵⁵.

Furthermore, in the case of serious human rights violations such as torture and enforced disappearance, and grave offenses like crimes against humanity, genocide, and war crimes, the national jus-

54 Asia Justice and Rights, Ibid, Page 112

55 Asia Justice and Rights, Ibid, Page 87

tice system may be insufficient to prosecute perpetrators effectively. This inadequacy can stem from limitations such as the absence of laws to prosecute certain crimes, the statute of limitations, or the state's unwillingness or failure to prosecute. In such scenarios, international justice mechanisms must be utilized to hold perpetrators accountable, particularly those in positions of power.

4. Institutional Reform

This means reforming systems and structures that facilitated violence in the past. These reforms aim to break the cycle of violence. One approach is to amend legal provisions to prevent human rights violations, such as incorporating protections for rights and freedoms in the constitution and laws or guaranteeing the right to disseminate the truth about past violent incidents in educational institutions and through mass media. This helps create immunity and political and historical awareness for citizens to ensure that the past does not repeat itself.

After an episode of authoritarian power or state violence that suppressed citizens' rights and freedoms, transitioning societies must face the challenge of revamping social structures and institutions to be more responsive to democracy in all aspects. Structural reform seeks to resolve conflicts within society and political institutions, aligning them with democratic principles and the rule of law. These sweeping changes include reviewing the constitution, military power, police, judiciary, parliament, education system, mass media, and the allocation of natural resources.

Ultimately, there is no magic formula for addressing past violence and transitioning from conflict to a more just and democratic society. The concept of Transitional Justice must be integrated with the state's traditional justice to create formal legal mechanisms and measures supported by the necessary social context. Therefore, it is crucial for the public sector and civil society to be active, involved, and collaborative to overcome conflict and build a new society.

Chapter IV: Result

From interviews with research participants, it was found that political conflicts have translated into various forms of violence against activists in Thailand. This study classifies violence into three categories according to Galtung's Triangle as follows:

1. Direct Violence

All interviewees reported facing various forms of direct violence, ranging from physical violence resulting from the use of excessive force by government officials during detention and demonstrations.

“It was out of proportion. People were assaulted, shot. From what I witnessed, the officials went too far. Someone was dragged and stomped. I saw rubber bullets being fired, and people were injured. This incident was hard for me emotionally.” – Interviewee No. 08

“I was punched by a plainclothes officer. I was assaulted when participating in a gathering in front of the Bangkok Art and Culture Center. They pushed, shoved and dragged people at the gathering. When I reached the meeting point, I saw my friends being arrested. I never thought that we would be attacked since all we intended to do was to gather together, express ourselves, and leave, but instead there was chaos and siege. During the chaos, I was punched in the head. I was angry and disappointed. A friend was dragged and stomped until he was almost blinded.” – Interviewee No. 16

The most common form of direct violence experienced by the interviewees was being threatened to stop their political activism. State officials would follow the interviewees to their residences, taking photographs of the locations that the interviewees frequented on a daily basis. This resulted in great discomfort and a sense of insecurity, not only to the interviewees but also to their families and close friends. They did not feel safe even in their own homes.

“There were ISOC officials following me to the factory where I worked. The factory owner did not like it.” – Interviewee No. 02

“(Someone told me that) my name was on the watch list of a government or security agency. I felt unsafe because I was being targeted. Government officials should protect the people. Administrative agencies should someone we can run to for help and advice, but it’s the other way around. The state uses these agencies to monitor citizens, and their private lives. I had to change my phone number. When communicating with friends, it felt like my phone was tapped because the signal was unstable. Up until now, I have changed my phone number three times already.” – Interviewee No. 15

In the southern border provinces, threats and harassment are more severe than elsewhere because of special laws enforced in the area, such as the Martial Law, the Emergency Decree, etc. The Internal Security Act gives more power to government officials. Activists who are monitored by authorities may suffer from a negative image, suspicion and stigmatization from their communities.

“Police officers visited our home and talked to my family, telling them to make me stop what I was doing. If this were in Bangkok, the police wouldn’t be armed. But in the three southern border provinces, the officers accompanying us were not police, but soldiers armed with war weapons. Imagine this: villagers see armed soldiers coming down from armored vehicles went straight to our home... After that, this incident became the talk of the village.” – Interviewee No. 15

These acts of violence have a psychological effect on both the activists themselves and those around them, such as family and friends. In addition, to pressure the activists, the state also threatens their family members to send warnings to the activists that the state already knows where their families live and where they can be reached. This is a strategy to instill fear and insecurity.

“I believe that freedom of expression is basic human rights as an active citizen, but it turns out that I have become a bad guy and lost everything in my life: friends, family, education.” – Interviewee No. 13

2. Structural Violence

The direct violence described above is facilitated by structural factors that empower and legitimize the state's use of violence. However, these structural factors also produce a more subtle and often invisible form of violence: the use of laws as weapons to prosecute individuals involved in political activities. These laws include Articles 112 and 116 of the Criminal Code, the Emergency Decree, the Cleanliness Act, the Advertisement by Using Sound Amplifiers Control Act, the Computer-related Crime Act, and other legislation that curtails freedom of expression and the right to participation.

“The challenge is that we face not only the dictatorship but also the laws it uses against us. There have been amendments to many aspects of the laws that limit the right to freedom of expression and criticism. Therefore, there is definitely a problem when we exercise our freedom of expression, the right to assembly and to participation in political movement. The totalitarian state passes laws without regard for the people. These laws are products of dictatorship.” – Interviewee No. 03

When both government officials and demonstrators are injured due to direct violence, the authorities often swiftly identify and prosecute offenders among the demonstrators. However, when demonstrators are harmed by government officials, the process of identifying the perpetrators is typically slow. Meanwhile, many activists face disproportionate and unjust legal punishment and harassment.

“They barged into our house even though we didn't do anything wrong. We asked to see the search warrant, but they pointed to a high-ranking officer and said that this person was a warrant and had the authority to search our house.” – Interviewee No. 07

“I was thinking of suing [government officials for physical assault] as well, but a high-rank police officer asked us not to, and in return they would not prosecute me either. But if I insisted on pressing charge, they would do the same to me. And because of that, I didn't sue them.” – Interviewee number 14

Many interviewees admitted that they had lost faith in the Thai justice system, doubting the possibility of holding accountable government officials and their commanders who committed acts of violence. This indicates a significant level of distrust in the government, especially regarding the protection of citizens' rights and freedoms. Moreover, it reveals a submissive attitude toward the culture of impunity that is deeply rooted in Thai social institutions.

“I don't have any expectation from the justice system anymore because it has been twisted those in power can go unpunished.” – Interviewee No. 09

“I may ask for too little, but I don’t expect the perpetrators to be punished. I only want them to apologize.”

– Interviewee No. 01

When threatened or faced with violence from government officials, victims lacking legal knowledge often do not realize they can file a complaint. However, even those who are aware of their legal rights frequently believe that filing complaints is futile, as they anticipate that the case will not progress or yield any concrete results. Consequently, when threatened, victims feel helpless and are compelled to endure their suffering alone, without support from any organizations or institutions.

“I don’t know what to do and where to go to press charge. I find the whole process extremely difficult and intimidating.” – Interviewee No. 04

“An independent organization must be truly independent and do more than merely accepting complaints or coordination. From what I see, these organizations only ask government agencies for clarifications about the accusations that they harassed youth activists. Once the government agencies in question provided clarification documents, they would be found not guilty. Case closed! But the problem is still there. These independent organizations sent me letters saying they tried to help, but there was only so much they could do. It’s painful.” – Interviewee No. 04

3. Cultural Violence

Values, culture, and beliefs in Thai society are often used to justify state violence. When citizens employ protest tactics such as splashing paint, shooting off fireworks, burning pictures or objects, or other forms of provocation leading to clashes with government officials, society tends to perceive this violence differently from state violence. The state’s use of violence is often seen as legitimate, with state officials perceived as having the authority and duty to crack down on ‘bad guys’ who commit crimes, especially on sensitive issues like discussing reform of the monarchy.

The monarchy, viewed as an untouchable and irreproachable institution, is deeply ingrained in Thai culture. However, the space for discussing the monarchy has diminished, turning it into an arena for cultural violence. For some interviewees, the monarchy is used as a tool to justify state violence against dissenters. This cultural context fosters an environment where hate is a serious issue, with people seeing those with differing views as enemies and sometimes resorting to violence to solve problems. As a result, activists face intimidation and feel their lives are in danger.

“I received death threats from fellow citizens because I was vocal about sensitive issues. This shows that violence can come from citizens too. Everyone must learn to be tolerate what they don’t like. The state should apologize for being the source of the violence.” – Interviewee No. 18

“Wrongdoers must be punished. Nothing is complicated about that. What’s complicated is the fact that they haven’t been punished yet. People can go unpunished if they know how to use the status of the

monarchy and the power of the state to their benefits. If you claim that the person you murdered was not loyal to the monarchy, you can go unpunished. It doesn't matter who you are, a soldier, a police officer or a civilian, this tactic will grant you impunity and justify the use of violence to destroy opponents and citizens. Wrongdoers must be punished to uphold the rule of law and return justice to the victims. What is unusual is that no action has been taken against those people. This abnormality in our society justifies violence.” – Interviewee No. 03

“Today, the state can use violence knowing that society will turn a blind eye. They may use tear gas and rubber bullets against protesters. But if protesters shoot off fireworks, society will not stand that. Do you see? So don't tell us to stop violence when the state has always been the one using violence.” – Interviewee No. 03

Chapter V: Policy recommendations from the victims

From the interviews regarding recommendations for ending and preventing political violence, we categorized the opinions and suggestions from the interviewees into four components according to the concept of Transitional Justice as follows:

1. Truth Seeking

- It is necessary to establish an independent organization responsible for receiving complaints, seeking the truth, and coordinating with victims and complainants to ensure their participation in the truth-seeking process.
- The complaint system must be accessible to the public. The process should be fast and efficient in producing concrete results that victims and the public can access.
- In political cases where citizens are wrongly accused and later proven to be innocent, the state must issue an official public apology and erase the criminal record of the victims and drop those charges immediately without waiting for the court's final decision. Consult Article 21 of the Public Prosecution Act to immediately withdraw those charges or end cases.

“Public apologies are enough...An apology shows that the state has admitted its mistake and is willing to tell society that we are innocent, that what it accused us of all along is not true. This will clear up misunderstandings in society. For innocent people who have been wrongly accused, seeing the truth come to light is the best form of healing.” – Interviewee No. 01

- The state must put in place a new, transparent, victim-centered process for uncovering the truth about past political violence. The process and people carrying out the process must be transpar-

ent, open to scrutiny, and accepted by society.

“First of all, history must be revised and corrected. The greatest pain is not being imprisoned but being remembered for what I am not. Therefore, the truth must come out.”— Interviewee No. 10

2. Reparations

- Reparations must go beyond monetary compensation, but also include mental support and career development so that victims can return to their lives that are as same as possible to before the violence occurred.

“If violence is to be prevented, it is necessary to promote humanity. Victims of violence must receive financial and emotional compensation. Justice is a matter of human dignity. We must prevent violence from happening again.”— Interviewee No. 16

- The state must arrange for the victims to return to the education system if they wish, including providing scholarships for the children and dependents of victims of state violence.
- The state must arrange for the victims who were prosecuted while being students to return to school and resume their education as before the lawsuit.
- When talking about ending harassment against citizens, the interviewees also mentioned ending harassment as a form of reparation so that those affected will not have to face danger or threat from government officials anymore and can live their lives without fear. The government must stop following citizens to their residences, abolish information operations (IO) and phone tapping (including using Pegasus and seizing victims' phones upon arrest). Ending state harassment is the key and first step toward reparations.
- The state must issue a formal public apology for the use of violence. There are cases in which government officials or agencies privately apologized to victims of political violence, such as in cases of disproportionate use of force by state officials. While apologies are a decent first step in healing those affected, the state must establish new standards of conduct and issue formal public apologies to admit their wrongdoing and establish a new norm that this behavior will not happen again in the future.

3) Prosecutions

- The Thai government must identify perpetrators of human rights violations at all levels and prosecute under a free and fair legal system.
- End and correct the culture of impunity that is deeply rooted in the Thai society.
- The Thai state must become a member state and ratify to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC). This will be an important step in bringing wrongdoers to justice and ensuring that future human rights violations do not occur.

“The Thai state should accept the procedures of the International Criminal Court (ICC), but it is not brave enough to do put the Thai court in the context of the [ICC’s] principles instead of enforcing its rules arbitrarily as it is today” – Interviewee Number 10

4) Institution Reforms

- The Thai state must improve measures to suppress and disperse protests and ensure that they are in line with international practices to prevent disproportionate use of violence.
- Reform the entire justice system to ensure true justice and transparency.
- Include political violence from the past to the present in the educational curriculum.

“We often read in textbooks the many successes accomplished by the state. It would be better if the wrongdoings committed by the state are included in the lessons too so that history is remembered in one than one aspect, and people are aware of that fact. We need history in textbooks” – Interviewee No. 09

- The Thai government must abolish laws that facilitate human rights violations and political persecution, such as the Martial Law, the Thai Public Assembly Act, the Emergency Decree, as well as Article 112 and Article 116 with draconian penalties.

“Abolish all instruments of violence such as the Martial Law, the Thai Public Assembly, the Emergency Decrees, any laws that are suppressive in nature. They are instruments of human rights violation, tools of violence. The first thing that needs to be done is to cancel these laws to guarantee people’s rights and freedoms.” – Interviewee No. 03

- Reduce the role of the military and make security agencies transparent and accountable.
- The Thai state must decentralize power from the central government to the regional and local administrations so that they can directly address community problems and alleviate conflict zones in Bangkok where power is centralized.

“Violence will occur less frequently if power is decentralized to local areas. This is the first step that may ease the current conflict.” – Interviewee No. 08

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Appendix

Interview questions

Question guide

Part 1 : Background and relevant human rights issues

1. Why did you decide to become a political activist (motivation and background of the movement)? What are the goals of the movement?
2. How has your daily life changed after joining political activism? How does it affect your life? (Impacts on different areas of life: yourself, friends, family, body, mind, education, work, finances)
3. Have you ever been harassed, spied on, or harmed for taking part in political activism? How?
4. Have you ever complained about this problem to any organizations?
5. Did you receive help from those organizations? And how?
 - 5.1. (If yes) What were the results?

Part 2 : Opinions and analysis of the past violence

6. When talking about political violence, what comes to your mind?
7. What perpetuates the existing political violence? What is the cause?
8. Who uses violence?
9. What is the process of bringing the wrongdoers to justice and what is the justice process like at this time?

Part 3 : Comments and Suggestions

10. From the past violence, who do you think should be hold accountable?
11. How should the government help those affected?
12. To prevent past political violence from repeating itself, what must society do?

Consent form



Name : _____
Age : _____
Gender : _____
Current address : _____

I participate in this research and agree to the following conditions (circle one choice):

1. My real name will not be disclosed.
2. In campaign materials, I agree to have my (real name / alias) disclosed.
3. My personal information, such as gender and age, (can / cannot) be disclosed for research and campaigning purposes.
4. My quotes and stories shared during conversations (can / cannot) be published.
5. If my voice and/or videos are recorded, they (can / cannot) be published.

I give my consent to participate in this interview

Date :

Signature / voice signature : _____