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Thailand

Thailand: Resolve the Crisis through Democracy, not Crackdown

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Regional Joint Statement

by
Socialist Party of Malaysia (PSM), Working People Association (PRP) of Indonesia, People's Democratic Party (PRD) of Indonesia, Turn Left Thailand, Socialist Alliance of Australia

We are deeply concerned over the current situation in Thailand where military-backed Prime Minister Abhisit Vejjajiva has declared a state of emergency and started a bloody crackdown amidst escalating protests calling for fresh election.

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The situation is worrying as the Thai government closes down all opposition media and gives sweeping new powers to the security forces to prepare for a violent crackdown on the Red Shirt protesters. Thai troops are using excessive force including tanks and live ammunition, Â against pro-democracy demonstrators in Bangkok.

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The United Front for Democracy Against Dictatorship (UDD) or more well-known as the Red Shirts has re-launched massive protests against the military-installed unelected Abhisit government since last March. This pro-democracy movement comprised of rural and urban poor, who stand up against the military-back oligarchic rule.

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The current crisisÂ unfolded in September 2006, when the military staged a coup against the government of Thaksin Shinawatra, scrapped the 1997 popular Constitution and replaced it with a military-sanctioned constitution. The royalist Yellow Shirts started to organize fascistic demonstrations when the pro-Thaksin party won in the 2007 election. The current Abhisit government was installed by the military after the fascistic mobilizations by the yellow shirts and a coup by the court.

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The government, the army and the Yellow Shirts are afraid to face real democratic elections, as they know that they would lose since the majority of the poorÂ support the Red Shirts. Abhisit and the ruling elite are refusing to call for elections and are trying to buy time and even preparing for a violent crackdown. It is becoming clear that Abhisit and the old elite are bringing the country towards a fascist dictatorship.

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Thailand has entered a new phase of class war. The old ruling elite with the backing of the military are using all means to scrap democracy in Thailand. The pro-democracy Red Shirts comprised of the majority of the working class, peasantry and poor, have shown their real popularity and mobilizing strength which has definitely shaken the royalists and the military. With the broadening of the masses' support for the Red Shirts, it could be a new and important step in the struggle of the ordinary people in Thailand for the restoration of democracy and social justice.

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We call for:

– Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â The immediate resignation of the military-installed Abhisit government and the holding of fresh democratic elections.

– Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â A halt to all forms of violent crackdown against Red Shirt protesters. Respect the right of the people to organize, to protest and to strike.

– Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â A halt to the suppression of democratic rights and clampdown on the media.

– Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â the Thai government to not resort to any military coup.

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The current crisis in Thailand only can be resolved through genuine democracy and people's power. We extend our

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support and solidarity to all workers, peasants and poor in Thailand who struggle against the anti-democratic government and for the restoration of real democracy.Â

10th April 2010