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Your Excellency,

**CONCERNING THE COURT DECISION ON THE KHLONG SAI PATTANA FARMING COMMUNITY'S
RIGHT TO STAY ON THEIR LAND, 15 July 2016**

We respectfully write again to express our deepest concern for the life, livelihoods and rights of members of the Southern Peasant Federation of Thailand (SPFT) who continue to face murder, eviction and destitution. The SPFT is largely led and sustained by women farmers. In particular we are concerned about the Khlong Sai Pattana, one of six collective farming communities in the SPFT, which is awaiting the verdict of the Krabi Provincial Court tomorrow, 15 July. If evicted from the land they have farmed collectively for the past eight years, they will lose their homes and livelihoods.

As you will know, the SPFT's case against eviction was heard by the court on 3-4 May 2016, and we presented you with a letter in support of their rights at that time. Of gravest concern then and now is that four SPFT members, two women and two men one of whom was a member of Khlong Sai Pattana community, have been murdered and another shot but not killed, to intimidate the farmers into leaving.

Successive governments have confirmed the SPFT entitlement to community land titles, overriding the land grab by the palm-oil company which has been illegally occupying the same land. The company was ruled a trespasser and ordered to leave. But in a perverse interpretation of the ruling aimed at clearing the land for re-distribution, the Khlong Sai Pattana farmers and their families were deemed 'dependents' of the company and told to leave.

We respectfully draw to your attention the following developments since the court hearing.

In May 2016 the SPFT presented compelling evidence to the UN Human Rights Council Universal Periodic Review (UPR) of Thailand in Geneva, including a photo exhibition, [For Those Who Died Trying](#), by Protection International which was on display during the UPR. The exhibition highlights 37 women and men human rights defenders, including the four SPFT members, who were murdered for defending their communities from eviction and environmental devastation, and exposing corruption and other injustices. Both [BBC World News](#) and the [Guardian \(World Environment Day\)](#) have reported on it.

At the UPR many member states expressed serious concerns about the situation of Human Rights Defenders in Thailand and the disregard for basic human rights. Some of their recommendations are reported in the attached press release. Delegates and Human Rights Defenders from countries around the world welcomed the acknowledgement by the Minister for Justice leading the Thailand delegation that it is their "... *duty that human rights defenders and lawyers can carry out their work in a safe and enabling environment.*"

We also heard in Geneva that our letter of 3 May to Your Excellency would be answered, but to date have not had a reply.

The SPFT speaks for subsistence farmers worldwide whose survival is threatened by profit-driven multinational which are destroying livelihoods, sustainable communities and the environment. It is for this

reason that the SPFT is attracting growing international support from a wide range of organizations and individual human rights defenders as evidenced by the list of supporters below.

On 1 July, the Prime Minister's Office of Thailand sent a delegation of officials from several national authorities to visit the Khlong Sai Pattana farming community. We are concerned that after the visit the community does not yet have the assurances their case deserve.

We therefore urge again that the Thai court and other authorities:

- uphold the right of the Khlong Sai Pattana community's struggles to communal land management, livelihoods, and safety;
- reject any use of Section 44 to evict the farmers;
- condemn the killings and attempted killing of its members, and ensure these are fully investigated, the perpetrators arrested and tried, and the victims' loved ones and communities are kept fully informed;
- recognize women's leading contributions as farmers, mothers, defenders of their communities and pursuers of justice for loved ones who have been detained, disappeared or murdered;
- in line with commitments and recommendations made in Geneva, ensure no reprisals against human rights defenders who are members of or advocates for SPFT and its communities, their families and colleagues.

Many have commented that Thailand is a tourist destination for millions of people every year, an industry worth \$35 billion a year. They are shocked when they learn that farmers and other human rights defenders are being murdered and threatened with eviction, and have told us this changes their view of Thailand as a desirable destination if such injustices are allowed to continue.

Yours sincerely,

Nina Lopez and Lori Nairne, **Legal Action for Women**, UK & USA

Selma James and Phoebe Jones, **Global Women's Strike (GWS)**, UK & USA

Sara Callaway and Margaret Prescod, **Women of Colour / GWS**, UK & USA

Kay Adshead, **Mama Quilla Theatre Company**, UK

Beverly Bell, **Other Worlds**

Saranel Benjamin, International Programmes Director, **War on Want**, UK

M. Jahi Chappell, **Institute for Agriculture and trade Policy**, USA

Chiapas Support Committee, USA

Luke Daniels, President, **Caribbean Labour Solidarity**, UK

Heather Day, **Community Alliance for Global Justice**, USA

Lisa Griffith, **National Family Farm Coalition**, USA

Karen Hansen-Kuhn, Director, Trade and Global Governance, **Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy**, USA

Leonor Hurtado, Senior Advisor, **Food First**, USA

Andrew Kang Bartlett, **Sustainable Agriculture of Louisville**, USA

Dean Kendall, **Payday men's network**, UK & USA

Ralph Ibbott, author, UK

Pierre Labossiere, **Haiti Action Committee**, USA

Dr Bonita Lawrence, Canada

Cari Mitchell, **International Women Count Network**, UK

Tirso Moreno, General Coordinator, **Farmworker Association of Florida**, USA

John E. Peck, Executive Director, **Family Farm Defenders**, USA

Julia Perkins, **Coalition of Immokalee Workers**, USA

Maggie Ronayne, Lecturer, **National University of Ireland**, Galway

Tanya Selig, **Guerrilla Food Not Bombs**, USA

Tahrir Swift Tathamum, **Iraqi Women's Organisation**, UK

Crimson Tazvinzwa, **Spotted Issues Blog on human dignity, rights and freedom**, UK

Frank Tamborello, **Hunger Action Los Angeles**, USA

Alexia Tsouni, **To Mov**, Greece

Derek Wall, International Coordinator, **Green Party of England and Wales**

Rachel West, **International Prostitutes Collective**, UK & USA

As well as the following:

Paul Barbara (UK), Celina Dority, Barbara Ellis (UK), Justine Fernandes, Sylvia Gentile, Teacher, UCLA Lab School (USA), Isabelle Graillet (UK), Fe Haslam (UK), Marcia Ishii-Eiteman (USA), Robin Mallison Alpern (USA), Tammy Murphy, M.A., LL.M., Angela Qasir (UK), Beverley Robertson, Lesley Stevas (UK), John Tymon (Ireland), Len Ziefert (USA)