

June 20, 2014

The Honorable John F. Kerry
Secretary of State
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20520

Re: Thailand's designation in the 2014 Trafficking in Persons Report

Dear Secretary Kerry:

We write today to applaud the U.S. State Department's decision to downgrade Thailand to Tier 3 in the *2014 Global Trafficking in Persons Report*. This decision is justified and an important step in international efforts to persuade the Royal Thai Government to begin making the difficult, but necessary, changes needed to bring themselves into compliance with the minimum standards of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act.

We also believe the Tier 3 ranking, as well as the research and recommendations contained in the report, will be an important informational tool for international and Thai institutions, companies and investors that continue to press Thai authorities to move beyond their current approach. It comes at an opportune time. In the last year, reports from, [CNN](#), [BBC](#), [Reuters](#), [The Associated Press](#) and [The Guardian](#) have drawn unprecedented attention to the issue. To truly make sufficient progress in addressing human trafficking, the Thai Government should implement reforms in the areas highlighted both in the 2013 TIP Report and our [last letter to you](#). These reforms have been repeatedly recommended by the U.S. State Department, other governments, NGOs, trade unions, and international bodies: improving victim identification and protection; fighting corruption; reforming immigration policies; and revising labor laws.

Given these priorities, we believe the United States should also emphasize to Thailand the importance of ratifying the International Labour Organization's new legally-binding protocol to Convention 29 on Forced Labor in its upcoming discussions with the Thai Government. If Thailand were to ratify the protocol and bring its laws into compliance, it would help address many of the issues above, and be an important tool for those on the ground working to bring justice to victims of human trafficking. The United States should also press Thailand to amend the Labor Relations Act of 1975 to allow non-Thai nationals to organize and lead labor unions, and participate in collective bargaining, so that migrant workers would be in a better position to defend themselves against exploitative employers, and ratify ILO Conventions 87 (Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organize) and 98 (Right to Organize and Collective Bargaining).

We thank you for your efforts at combating human trafficking, as well as the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor; the Ambassador at Large and Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons; the East Asian and Pacific Affairs, and the U.S. Embassy in Bangkok for your ongoing efforts to

raise these issues with your counterparts and bring about the change needed on the ground to prevent human trafficking in Thailand.

Sincerely,



American Federation of Labor and Congress of
Industrial Organizations



Anti-Slavery International



The Child Labor Coalition



Environmental Justice Foundation



Fairfood International



Fair World Project



Food Chain Workers Alliance



Human Rights Watch



Green America



Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility



International Labor Rights Forum



National Consumers League



Slave Free Seas



Uniting Church in Australia
SYNOD OF VICTORIA AND TASMANIA

Synod of Victoria and Tasmania
Uniting Church in Australia

cc: Thomas E. Perez, Secretary of Labor

William J. Burns, Deputy Secretary of State

Daniel Russel, Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs

Tom Malinowski, Assistant Secretary for Democracy, Human Rights and Labor

Kristie A. Kenney, United States Ambassador to the Kingdom of Thailand

Luis CdeBaca, Ambassador-at-Large, Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons