



Statement on 2015 Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Report

July 27, 2015

Human trafficking is a complex, global challenge that requires cooperation, partnership, and sustained efforts on the part of all governments to achieve tangible progress and measurable results. The United States will continue to work closely with Thai government officials, law enforcement officers, and civil society actors in a spirit of partnership as Thailand works to combat human trafficking.

The State Department's Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Report was released in Washington on July 27, 2015, and Thailand remains on Tier 3. The 2015 TIP Report covers governments' anti-trafficking efforts from April 1, 2014 through March 31, 2015. Although Thailand took steps to improve trafficking-related laws and coordination between agencies working to combat human trafficking, Thailand did not undertake sufficient action during the reporting period required for tangible progress on its formidable human trafficking problem. TIP report rankings are made based upon a thorough evaluation of the country's anti-trafficking record and is made without consideration of the country's current political context.

We continue to urge Thai government officials to take bold steps to combat trafficking throughout the ongoing 2016 reporting period and beyond. We encourage the Government of Thailand to use its updated legislative framework and whole-of-government approach to expand efforts to proactively and consistently identify and assist labor and sex trafficking victims among vulnerable populations. We also encourage the Thai government to hold officials complicit in trafficking accountable and rigorously investigate and prosecute individuals, including those who commit forced labor abuses on fishing vessels or who commit sex trafficking crimes.

We welcome additional efforts by the Thai government since March 31 to fight trafficking in persons, including efforts to create special units within criminal courts to adjudicate trafficking cases and the arrests of dozens possibly involved in human trafficking crimes and other abuses against migrants in southern Thailand. Actions taken after March 31 will be covered in next year's report.

We also recognize and commend the many committed individuals within the Thai government, law enforcement, and civil society communities who are working hard to reduce and eliminate human trafficking. We look forward to continued dialogue with the Government of Thailand on efforts to implement changes to the 2008 anti-trafficking law, Fisheries Act, and other ministerial regulations that aim to reduce human trafficking and improve working conditions.

Over the next year, we anticipate high-level engagement between U.S. and Thai officials both in Thailand and in international fora on this important issue. We will continue to provide specific technical assistance requested by the Thai government related to anti-trafficking investigations and prosecutions, as well as general support for building the capacity of its law enforcement and rule of law institutions, including joint regional training programs through the International Law Enforcement Academy in Bangkok. As in 2014, we will continue to partner with Thai law enforcement to combat cases of child sex trafficking. We will also continue to support local and international organizations that work with the Thai government and local authorities to combat human trafficking and to assist victims.

As part of our global efforts to combat human trafficking, the U.S. Government remains committed to working with the Royal Thai Government and the people of Thailand to address this significant challenge.

The 2015 Trafficking in Persons Report is available online here: <http://www.state.gov/j/tip/rls/tiprpt/2015/index.htm>
