

Statement of Religions for Peace - Interreligious Council of Thailand No. 1/2020

On peaceful conflict resolution for Thailand's current political conflict

Since the middle of July 2020 Thai society has experienced once again a serious conflict among those of diverse social and political views. The conflict has spread out to various parts of the country and manifested in various forms such as street protests, verbally attacks and defamations of one another and some other symbolic expressions both face-to-face and via social media platforms. This is likely to lead to the escalation of the conflict and greater social division.

Religions for Peace – Interreligious Council of Thailand has been following the situation with grave concern. We view that this is a deeply rooted political conflict which is embedded in the difference in terms of political ideology, approach, belief and standpoint and it cannot be solved by violent means both physically and verbally.

We believe that empathy, compromise, and tolerance—key principles found in all religions—are the basis for the conflict transformation. We would like to urge all parties involving in the conflict to come together and listen to one another with their open hearts and minds, with sincerity, love, and compassion. Thai government as the one holding the ruling power could start by providing spaces and platforms for sharing and exchanging among Thais of all groups, generations in all units of the society. These spaces and platforms should be guided by the principles of dialogue and respect towards one another.

Religions for Peace – Interreligious Council of Thailand is of the opinion that all forms of conflict—be they political, social or ones found in families and communities—are not always constructive; it can increase social division and a sense of hostility among the people. We would like to urge all members of religious communities to assert their will to abstain from using violent means to another, to help promoting mutual understanding, and to turn to one another for a better and constructive relationship. These actions will surely contribute to the goal of peaceful coexistence in the future.