

## Intervention

Thank you Mr. Chairperson

I am Arida Awaekachi speaking on behalf of Malay Muslims.

I come from the area that we call Southern Border Provinces of Thailand. This includes 3 Provinces, Narathiwat, Yala and Pattani province and some part of Song khla Province. Our minority, Malay Muslims, represents just 3 percent of the 60 million Thailand population.

Our province is suffering from a humanitarian crisis, however this has not been officially recognized making it difficult to apply laws that relate to situations of humanitarian crisis.

The Latest statistics of the Deep South Watch organization, show us that during the last 12 years, from January 2004 up to now, incidents of violence were extremely high, up to 18,000 incidents with about 6000 deaths and 12000 injuries. 40 percent of those who died and 62 percent of those injured were from the Malay Muslim community. In addition about 400 individuals were detained and 100 percent of detainees are Malay Muslims.

For the draft recommendations, I welcome number 24. However, based on our experience in the deep south we witness the case of 3 human rights defenders who reported incidents of torture to a UN mechanism and later had criminal defamation charges brought against them by The Internal Security Operations Command (ISOC) this year. This experience suggests that recommendation 24 would be better if it said:

*National human rights institutions should engage in monitoring and reporting **independently and transparently** and exercise any other function or authority, to ensure protection and non-discrimination for minorities **and human rights defender who defend minority rights** in situations of crisis, should be **sensitive to security issues**, and to prevent disproportionate impact of the crisis on minorities.*

Based on our case I fully agree with recommendation number 27, because in our experience there has been continuing violence for 12 years, and people want to be part of the solution to this crisis.

Now is time for all the stakeholders in the Thai state to acknowledge the people's voice from the ground by recognizing minority rights and the open participation of the minority community in the ongoing peace process to help determine their future with full respect from the state.

Finally, I realize as a Thai citizen that National security is a high priority but the way to stop violence is by fulfilling the rights of minorities. Treating people with the right policy is the best way to maintain national security and can also protect our country from continuing unrest. I believe we as CSOs and the minority community, will appreciate having dialogue to find a peaceful future together with the *Thailand government*

Thank you for your attention