

# 30 Days for Freedom

4 April - 3 May 2014

#FreethePress

WAN-IFRA [www.worldpressfreedomday.org](http://www.worldpressfreedomday.org)

HE Ms Yingluck Shinawatra  
Prime Minister of Thailand  
Grand Palace, Na Phra Lan Rd,  
Phra Nakhon, Bangkok  
10200

@PouYingluck

13 April 2014

Your Excellency,

We are writing as part of the global online campaign '30 Days for Freedom' to call for the release of editor Somyot Prueksakasemsuk.

Mr. Prueksakasemsuk is an outspoken activist and magazine editor who was sentenced in January 2013 to 11 years in prison on charges of defaming Thailand's monarchy. A Bangkok criminal court convicted him for two articles published in his magazine, *Voice of Taksin*, that the royal family deemed insulting.

Observers have suggested that Mr. Prueksakasemsuk was not targeted for his words, but rather for trying to reform the country's strict *lèse-majesté* laws that are designed to protect Thailand's royal family.

Your Excellency, we are deeply concerned by the effects of Thailand's *lèse-majesté* and criminal defamation laws, which can stifle the development of a free and prosperous society by promoting self-censorship amongst those critical of members of the royal family and others in positions of authority. These laws are often deployed for political reasons and have increasingly come under the international spotlight.

At the time of his arrest, Mr. Prueksakasemsuk was intent on decreasing the maximum penalty for the century-old law from 15 years to three, and scrapping the minimum sentence, which currently stands at three years, all together.

Your Excellency, we respectfully call on your government to do its utmost to repeal the *lèse-majesté* laws and those of criminal defamation, and to immediately release Mr. Prueksakasemsuk and all others imprisoned on charges of 'insult'.

Sincerely,

**#FreethePress**  
**The 30 Days for Freedom campaign**

Organised by the World Association of Newspapers and News Publishers (WAN-IFRA) and the World Editors Forum, the '30 Days for Freedom' campaign aims to highlight the plight of imprisoned journalists worldwide in the 30 days leading up to 3 May, World Press Freedom Day.

[www.wan-ifra.org](http://www.wan-ifra.org) / [www.worldpressfreedomday.org](http://www.worldpressfreedomday.org)

