

### Update #3: Improvement in Political Situation and Registration Information

Dear All,

I write to provide an update on the status of the conference and the political situation.

First, in terms of the political situation, I think matters are proceeding well. The military junta has obviously thought carefully about the situation and is trying to promote a return to normal life. First, many caches of weapons of war have been uncovered, as well as groups hired to cause disturbances by the fugitive former prime minister Thaksin Shinawatra, who was convicted of corruption. Second, is that, while minor gatherings of former government supporters have occurred, the army is very careful not to use violent methods of suppression, unlike the time of the last civilian government, where police were firing teargas canisters at protesters. Thirdly, while many people have been asked to report to the army, they have been released, although a few have been charged and will face court proceedings. Fourth, there is a real attempt at reconciliation, and the opposing “red-shirt” groups are being encouraged to be involved in the process.

In terms of running the country and restoring the economy and governance, the junta has appointed 10 advisors to assist with: a) security; b) economy and finance; c) science and technology; d) justice and law. The Protein Society of Thailand (PST) is pleased to note that the advisor for science and technology is Professor Yongyuth Yuthavong, who is an Honorary Member of our society (PST), whom we honored for his outstanding research in malaria drug development and his role as a former Minister of Science and Technology. Other committees dealing with specific issues in the four areas are being appointed, such as on trade and investment.

The return to normalcy will undoubtedly take time, given that Thaksin Shinawatra has spent 15 years building up a power structure for corruption and political control. However, we believe that our 7<sup>th</sup> AOHUPO/ 9<sup>th</sup> PST Conference can safely proceed according to plan. Due to past uncertainties, the Deadline for Early Registration and Abstract Submission has been extended to 15 June, 2014. Presently, as of 7 June 2014, we have 301 registrations (with 214 local and 61 overseas participants, plus, 15 Invited Lecturers and 11 PST executive members).

So I would like to encourage all invited speakers, who have not yet registered, to proceed with their free registrations and all interested participants to take advantage of the early registration fees and submit their abstracts, some of which will be selected for oral presentation.

We hope that you will understand the situation and look forward to seeing you in August!

Yours sincerely,



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