



BUDDHIST THERAVADA SANCTUARY

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Tuesday 31st May, 2016 (2559 B.E.)

His Excellency Prime Minister General Prayut Chan-o-cha

We, the undersigned religious and community leaders, South African Theravada Buddhist Centre draw the attention of Prime Minister General Prayut Chan-o-cha. Through our years of service to Buddhism, we recognize the many accomplishments and contributions of the Kingdom of Thailand to Buddhism around the world. It can be said that Thailand and the Thai people have been stalwart guardians of the Buddhist faith. Thailand has an important role to play in the future of Buddhism.

In our collective years of monkhood, teaching, and learning of Buddhism, we have been fortunate to collaborate with many religious leaders and institutions from the Kingdom of Thailand, including the Most Venerable Phrathepyanmahamuni (Luang Por Dhammajayo) of Dhammakaya Temple. We can be witness to Phrathepyanmahamuni's tireless work and commitment to Buddhism and its teachings. He is a much beloved and respectable monk to us and many like-minded Buddhist organizations around the world.

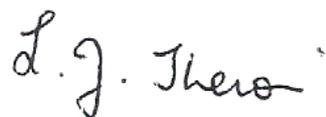
We understand that allegations towards Phrathepyanmahamuni are being investigated through a legal procedure. While this is a matter Thailand must resolve on its own, the case of Phrathepyanmahamuni will affect Buddhist faith around the world. We hope that Thai government will handle this case with a special care and sensitivity.

We are concerned with the investigator's disregard for the physical health and well-being of Phrathepyanmahamuni. Despite receiving unequivocal medical evidence that Phrathepyanmahamuni suffers from chronic diabetes and its serious complications that have led to his frail and ill-health, the investigators continue to pressure him to travel, indirectly threatening his life.

Buddhism in Thailand and the world will be tested. In times of adversity, we believe that respect, tolerance, and understanding are crucial in resolving these issues. Thailand has a long and respectable Buddhist tradition. When it chooses not to exercise leniency to a senior and widely respected member of the Buddhist community, Thailand's commitment to Buddhist teachings and the validity of the investigation is put into question.

Therefore, we hereby request Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha, take into serious consideration the manner of this investigation and the consequences it will bear on the Kingdom of Thailand's place in the Buddhist community and, most importantly, the Buddhist faith in the international community.

Lionel John Theron

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "L. J. Theron".

(South African Theravada Buddhist Scholar)