



World Theravāda Buddhist Sangha Council

May 30, 2016

H.E. General Prayut Chan-O-Cha
Prime Minister of Thailand

Excellency,

Wat Phra Dhammakaya, one of the largest Buddhist temples in Thailand, is in an extremely dire situation. The temple's abbot, Most Venerable Dhammajayo or Phrathepyanmahamuni, is being unjustly persecuted and defamed by Thailand's Department of Special Investigation (DSI) and Thai news outlets. The background to this is a controversial criminal suit against the abbot in which we strongly believe he is being wrongfully accused.

DSI has performed grossly unlawful acts throughout the case, including issuing an arrest warrant to the abbot for not appearing to hear charges, despite a request by the temple's legal team for DSI to simply question Ven. Dhammajayo at the temple due to his medical conditions that is confirmed by a panel of doctors. The temple also insisted for DSI to send its own physicians to verify the abbot's health condition. DSI suspiciously refused and instead sought an arrest warrant in gross violation of patient's rights for reasonable accommodation.

DSI has threatened to use armed force of 2,200 personnel to arrest a 72-year-old ailing monk. He has dedicated his life to promote peace and Buddhism. We cannot comprehend how this action can happen in Thailand, where as 95% of population is Buddhist. DSI's attitude and actions are unjust and excessive. This will demoralize any organization whose work is to promote peace and ethical values in the future.

We request for H.E. Gen. Prayuth Chan-O-Cha, the Prime Minister of Thailand, to look into this matter and ensure that peaceful approach will be taken to resolve the issue of DSI against Wat Phra Dhammakaya. We believe that you would understand the sensitivity of this issue and act toward a buddhist monk with compassion.

Yours Truly,

Ven. Mugunuwela Anurudhha Thero
President