



---

**Statement from Wat Phra Dhammakaya**  
**1 March 2017, 9.00 hrs.**

Summary of Key Messages

The Thai military government is blocking entry of Buddhists monks, novices and lay supporters into the Dhammakaya Temple. On top of that, no vehicles transporting food donated by the temple's followers are allowed to enter. The donors are told to leave their food donations with the officers.

At the moment there are about 10,000 Buddhist monks, novices and lay supporters inside the Dhammakaya Temple. However, yesterday (Tue 28 Feb. 2017) the officers only delivered 300 boxes of food for the entire monastic community. Not only that the amount of food is insufficient, all the 300 boxes of food delivered were inedible. All had gone bad.

Even in war times, the United Nations does not prohibit the delivery of food to civilians. Access to food is a basic human right. We Buddhist monks, novices and lay supporters have always lived as free people until the junta's enforcement of Article 44 against the temple. Even during the Syrian civil war, for example, delivery of food was allowed.

We are not having a civil war in Thailand. Yet, we are being treated like prisoners. Even prisoners are provided food three times a day. The monastic community eats only twice a day.

We would like to reiterate that we have no wish to fight or defeat the Thai government, we are simply asking for compassion and respect for our basic human rights that all human beings deserve.

We Buddhists need to defend our right to religious freedom because the Thai government is making life difficult for Buddhists who are the majority of the Thai population.

Any civilized country will agree it is illegal and unethical to block food supplies, vandalize the Buddhist temple's property, and cut off mobile and Internet communication of innocent civilians.

We are begging the Thai government to have compassion for Buddhists, to give we Buddhists a space to live peacefully in our motherland. Please immediately withdraw all the 4,000+ police and military officers from the temple's compound, and revoke Article 44.