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

Today marks the 16th day of human rights violations at Wat Phra Dhammakaya (WPD).

**1. Facts regarding the death of Ms. Patana Chiangraeng**

1.1 Ven. Maha Noppol contacted DSI officials at 13.31 hours, which is after Ms. Chiangraeng died, and was the last group to enter the home of the deceased.

1.2 The deceased was able to send messages through the LINE app asking for an asthma inhaler because she lives approximately 1.5 km behind the temple where there was cell phone reception in some areas. It is very hard, however, to communicate from inside the temple where there is mostly no reception at all.

1.3 Paramedics (1669) were contacted after the medics servicing the Wat Phra Dhammakaya area could not pass the security checkpoints blocked off by police and soldiers.

1.4 We can confirm that the residence of the deceased is outside of temple grounds, but still within the area in which Article 44 is in effect.

1.5 We can confirm that the deceased is a medical professional who knows her condition very well. She specifically asked for an asthma inhaler from her friend who is a nurse working as a first responder servicing the areas of Wat Phra Dhammakaya, so that she can treat her acute onset of asthma. Emergency crews wasted precious time trying to negotiate entry through 5 different blockades, which were set up under Article 44. Coupled with the blockage of cell phone signals, also done under Article 44, both led to her death.

**2. Facts regarding the Klongchan Credit Union Cooperative (KCUC)**

2.1 Most Ven. Dhammajayo was accused along with Mr. Supachai because Mr. Supachai donated the credit union's money to him. Mr. Supachai's case, however, is still in court, and judges have not reached a verdict. Ven. Dhammajayo was issued an arrest warrant because he could not make the summons due to a chronic illness.

2.2 WPD devotees started a fund to help people who were affected by this case and have raised a total of 1.057 billion baht. KCUC has not received money from any other organization that Mr. Supachai has donated to. To make matters worse, DSI seized 3.8 billion baht from the

credit union. At this time KCUC is threatening to sue the government if the money is not returned.

2.3 The government has promised to pay 10 billion baht, but at this time KCUC has not received any money from the government.

2.4 When the credit union received the funds from temple devotees, any damages done to the credit union by Mr. Supachai's donations to Ven. Dhammajayo ceased to exist. Therefore, the credit union withdrew the civil lawsuit filed against the temple. Therefore, this case has no plaintiff.

2.5 The government has spent at least 48 million baht (approximately 3 million per day) on troops deployed to arrest Ven. Dhammajayo, citing the damage done to the members of the credit union, which no longer pertains to Ven. Dhammajayo. There is speculation that the government may have a different agenda. The question to the government is: do you have a hidden agenda or not?

2.6 Why didn't they direct the 48 million baht to the credit union as aid to struggling members, which would have benefited the credit union tremendously? What are they hiding?

2.7 Police officers and soldiers have the duty to protect the nation and its citizens. However, a large number of them are here to seal the perimeter of WPD rather than protect the public. Their presence, instead, has hindered an ambulance from being able to easily reach an ailing lady residing within the specially controlled zone, ultimately leading to her death.

### **3. Recent activities by international organizations**

3.1 World Buddhist organizations convened for a meeting in Busan, South Korea. Although WPD was not a planned topic for their meeting, it became a topic of discussion nonetheless. Attendees were given a comprehensive explanation of the crisis and the severe violations of human rights against WPD.

3.2 England's Foreign and Commonwealth Office has acknowledged the current situation experienced by WPD and will present this case to Her Majesty's Ambassador to the Kingdom of Thailand. Mr. Alok Sharma MP, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, will then arrange for a discussion on topics of human rights and freedom of religion with Prime Minister Payuth Chan O-cha.

3.3 European Buddhist Association confirms that they submitted a letter appealing to the United Nations for assistance in addressing the violations of human rights from the Thai Junta's implementation of Article 44 against WPD.

#### **4. Wat Phra Dhammakaya and its devotees have been mistreated by state officials.**

4.1 DSI have concluded their search warrant, but instead of leaving, they have stayed on temple grounds. This is a behavior that worries the temple monks, novices, and devotees. This is the behavior of someone who has ill intentions. They have trespassed and wandered into the temple grounds at night without permission, cutting signal cables, as well as disassembling our CCTV cameras which was put up for security reasons. They also have detained our security guards without reason. The following properties have been damaged:

1. CCTV for Gate 8 (exits to Klong Song)
2. CCTV for Gate 7 (main entrance along Klong Luang)
3. CCTV overlooking the fence next to Gate 1 (leading to the Main Chapel)
4. CCTV for Gate 1 overlooking Klong Sam
5. CCTV in the building used to cast Buddha statues in the 100 rai area, and satellite dish across from Gate 4 (exits to Klong Sam). These items have been donated by devotees to be used for Buddhism, but instead they are destroyed without reason.

4.2 Soldiers have ordered temple staff to vacate their residence in the 150 rai area, but the temple refused, so the temple staff moved to the meditation room, an area previously blocked off.

4.3 Today, more than 60 local street vendors in the Muangkaew Manee arcade, and the food court area for Muangkaew Manee residence, which sits outside the temple walls, but controlled under Article 44, pleaded with the governor of Pathum Thani to let them do business again. Today marks the 16th day they have been prohibited from conducting business.

#### **5. Public announcement**

Under Article 44, WPD has been designated a specially controlled zone where entry and exit points at the temple are blocked. The team that organizes events related to the 323 temples in the southernmost part of Thailand will be postponing its next ceremony to send aid for the month of March 2017 in Narathiwat Province. This would have been the 126th event organized in the last 13 years. WPD will continue support soldiers, police, teachers, students and Buddhists in their unwavering efforts to protect Buddhism in the four southern provinces of Thailand.