

Q&A

**During the Briefing by General Sonthi Boonyaratglin, Head of the
Council for Democratic Reform under Constitutional Monarchy,
to the Diplomatic Corps
20 September 2006, at 14.20 hrs
Royal Thai Army Headquarters**

1. **Q (UK):** In the spirit of frankness and as a good friend of Thailand, I would like to know what made you change your mind and decided to undertake this mission, providing your earlier public announcement that you would not intervene in politics and also the fact that the general elections were going to be held within the next 8 and a half weeks?

A: We have tried our best to uphold our duties as professional army officers but, judging from the way things were going, we felt compelled to undertake this mission in order to bring about substantive democratic elements to Thailand. We want real and concrete democracy for the people, not only in abstract terms.

2. **Q (Finland):** When is Thailand going to become a fully democratic nation? Would it be safe for our people to visit Thailand?

A: I would like to reaffirm that Thailand remains – as always – a democratic state but it simply needs a reform to bring about more substantive democratic elements. As far as tourism in Thailand is concerned, we can assure you that it is completely safe here and we welcome all tourists.

3. **Q (Australia):** You have mentioned that there had been numerous requests for the Council to undertake this mission. Could you please elaborate from whom these requests have been made and why? Also, why do you feel necessary to take action now since it seems to me that the political impasse was already solved with the appointment of the new Election Commission (EC)?

A: As already mentioned, the majority of the Thai people expressed their full support for our mission as this will bring about real democracy which should, after all, be that of the people, by the people and for the people. As for the recent appointment of the new EC, this, I believe, is a separate issue.

4. **Q (Japan):** What will be your course of actions with regards to the caretaker Prime Minister Thaksin?

A: All Thais can live freely in this country under the existing laws.

5. **Q (UK):** From your earlier briefing, you stated that the caretaker Prime Minister Thaksin made a number of serious mistakes, would he be held responsible for these mistakes?

A: He will not face any specific charges, unless evidences proven otherwise. All actions must be carried out in accordance with the Thai laws.

6. **Q (Austria):** When will the interim government be appointed?

A: Within the next two weeks, after the provisional Constitution has been drafted.

7. **Q (Philippines):** How do we address you? Who are the members of this Council?

A: The Council for Democratic Reform under the Constitutional Monarchy. The key members of this Council include the Council Head, Deputy Head, the Chair of the Advisory Board, the Advisor and our secretariat.
