

Geneva 28 January 2013

To Ms. Yingluck Shinawatra
Prime Minister of Thailand
By fax to +66 2 288 4016

IndustriALL Condemns Conviction of Somyot Prueksakasemsuk in Thailand

Dear Prime Minister,

I am writing to you on behalf of [IndustriALL Global Union](http://www.industriall-union.org), which represents more than 50 million workers in mining, energy and manufacturing industries in some 140 countries, to condemn the extremely harsh conviction and sentencing of trade unionist, social activist and a journalist Somyot Prueksakasemsuk, and to urge your administration to release Somyot immediately, as he simply exercised his right to freedom of opinion and expression.

We are deeply concerned by the Thai's criminal court decision that found Somyot guilty of 'lese majeste' offences for publishing two articles, which were critical of the monarchy, in his *Voice of Takshin*, the magazine he edited. He was sentenced to an 11 year-jail term including five-year jail terms for each article and cancellation of suspension of 1 year jail sentence issued 3 years before.

Somyot was arrested in April 2011 and has undergone prolonged pre-trial detention as his bail plea was denied by the courts 12 times. He was presented in court on several occasions wearing shackles as if he were a dreaded criminal. Trade unionists, human rights and civil society activists across the world including the European Union, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and Amnesty International have also strongly condemned the conviction and severe punishment of Somyot.

We believe that the government has in recent years used legislation, including the 'lese majeste' law, to silence peaceful dissent, which is in clear violation, inter alia, of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. Undoubtedly, this kind of behavior runs counter to the image of Thailand as a free and democratic state.

IndustriALL Global Union joins the European Union, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and Amnesty International in calling for the immediate release of Somyot.

With best regards,



Jyrki Raina,
General Secretary
IndustriALL Global Union