

**Statement by Latvia on Thailand  
25<sup>th</sup> Session of the UPR Working Group  
May 2015**

Mr. President,

Latvia warmly welcomes HE the Minister of Justice and his delegation to this UPR and thanks it for the presentation of the national report. We appreciate the efforts made by Thailand to implement the recommendations of the previous cycle, and in particular its decision to extend a standing invitation to all Special Procedure mandate holders as we believe that their valuable expertise can serve the country in addressing its human rights challenges. We encourage Thailand to honour its commitment by enabling all Special Procedures who have requested to visit the country, to do so without delay. Latvia notes with concern that since the 2014 coup, there have been continued restrictions on freedom of expression. We agree with the Special Rapporteur that freedom of expression and independent journalism are essential for building inclusive societies and democracies and include the right to express criticism of public authorities. We therefore urge the government of Thailand to abide by its international obligations under the ICCPR. In conclusion, we wish Thailand success with its UPR and have the following two recommendations:

1. To amend the "lese majeste" law to bring it in line with international human rights standards, allow media to function independently and free of prior censorship or interference by law enforcement agencies and release all those who have been jailed for exercising their right to freedom of expression.
2. To ratify the Rome Statute of the ICC.

Thank you.