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Prime Minister Paetongtarn Shinawatra
Government House
1 Phitsanalok road
Bangkok
Thailand

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Dear Prime Minister,

**It is unconscionable that your government forcibly returned 40 ethnic Uyghur refugees to China on 27 February, in violation of Thailand’s international human rights obligations and of the principle of non-refoulement, which prohibits the transfer of persons to any country or jurisdiction where they would face a real risk of serious human rights violations.** I am concerned for the situation of an additional five Uyghur men imprisoned in Klong Prem Central Prison, Bangkok, who are themselves at risk of forcible re-turn to China.

I am disturbed to learn that prior to deporting them, your government denied the 40 refugees their re-quests to have access to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and have their protection needs assessed. The deported refugees had been held in prolonged arbitrary detention in conditions which amounted to cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment in immigration detention facilities designated for short-term stays, without access to adequate medical care, family, and lawyers.

I am saddened that the Thai government failed to protect these men, despite the recent enactment of domestic law prohibiting refoulement and the adoption of a newly created mechanism to screen individuals in need of international protection**. I therefore urge you to show your commitment to upholding your international human rights obligations and take the following actions:**

* **Ensure the five Uyghur men have access to a full, effective and fair procedure to assess their asylum claims; to adequate and appropriate medical care and lawyer of their choice; and commit to not forcibly returning them to China or to a third country from where they could be returned to China;**
* **Investigate the refoulement of 40 Uyghur men forcibly returned to China and ensure those found responsible are held to account in fair trials;**
* **End arbitrary detention of refugees and migrants and amend legislation and regulations in line with international standards accordingly.**

Yours sincerely,

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**Copie**

Königlich Thailändische Botschaft, Kirchstrasse 56, 3097 Liebefeld

Fax: 031 970 30 35, E-Mail:thaiembassy.BEN@mfa.go.th, Twitter/X: @RTE\_Bern, FB: ThaiEmbBern