

Thailand - Low risk

The risk of atrocity crimes in Thailand has fallen from moderate to low as a result of the easing of tensions in Bangkok and reduction of violence in the country's south. Challenges remain, however. Thailand remains in a transitional state and its government claims that it is on track for a return to civilian rule in 2018, a move initially scheduled for 2017. The military-led government has curbed political and civil rights, especially rights of association and rights to protect, but has pledged that these rights will be restored once democratic and civilian government resumes following national elections. Furthermore, little has been done to establish accountability for the killing of up to 90 protestors by security forces in 2010, whilst legal proceedings have been employed to intimidate and silence witnesses.¹

There also remain signs that the Islamic insurgency in the country's south could escalate. It is now thought that the 'Islamic State' group has fighters inside Thailand. There was an upsurge of violence and terrorist style attacks in June-July but the situation has calmed since then. Meanwhile, the oppositionist *Barisan Revolusi Nasional* (BRN) continues to reject peace talks and refuses to cooperate with the MARA Patani group in conducting negotiations with the government. Since then, the situation has stabilized. However, reports persist of the use of torture and other abuses by security forces against prisoners suspected of being members of non-state armed groups.

Recommendations.

1. The government should appoint a senior official as National R2P Focal Point to coordinate national and international efforts to implement R2P.
2. Progress should be made on the transition to civilian and democratic government continues in full consultation with all the relevant parties.
3. The security forces should ensure that their counter-terrorism actions are consistent with domestic law and Thailand's international legal obligations, especially human rights obligations. Those responsible for violations of human rights should be held accountable.
4. The government should explore options for negotiations with the Patani insurgents. Non-state armed groups must refrain from targeting civilians and should be prepared to enter negotiations in good faith.
5. All those responsible for violent crimes against civilians, including during the 2010 crackdown in Bangkok, must be held accountable before the law.

¹ Human Rights Watch, 'Silencing a Witness to Thailand's Deadly 2010 Crackdown', 23 July 2018, at <https://www.hrw.org/news/2018/07/23/silencing-witness-thailands-deadly-2010-crackdown>