



คณะกรรมการสิทธิมนุษยชนแห่งชาติ
National Human Rights Commission of Thailand

KNOWING
NATIONAL
HUMAN RIGHTS
COMMISSION
OF THAILAND
(NHRCT)



About the NHRCT

The National Human Rights Commission of Thailand (NHRCT) is an independent organization with specific mandate to promote and protect the rights for all of us as set out in the Constitution and in accordance with the country's international human rights obligations. It was established by the 1997 Constitution, which was also known as *"the People's Constitution"* for the full participation of people in its drafting process. Following the enactment of the National Human Rights Commission Act in 1999, the NHRCT came into existence and started functioning in July 2001.

Commissioners

The NHRCT is composed of one chairperson and six members who come to office through a selection process provided for in the 2007 Constitution. A selection committee, comprising the presidents of the Supreme Court of Justice, the Constitutional Court, the Supreme Administrative Court, and the House of Representatives, the



opposition leader in the Parliament, and two other persons selected at general meetings of the Supreme Court and the Supreme Administrative Court, will propose a list of qualified persons to the Senate for approval. Each Commissioner can serve only one single term of six years.

Mandates

Under the 1999 National Human Rights Commission Act, the NHRCT shall function with independence and impartiality and has wide-ranging mandates. Among others, major responsibilities include:

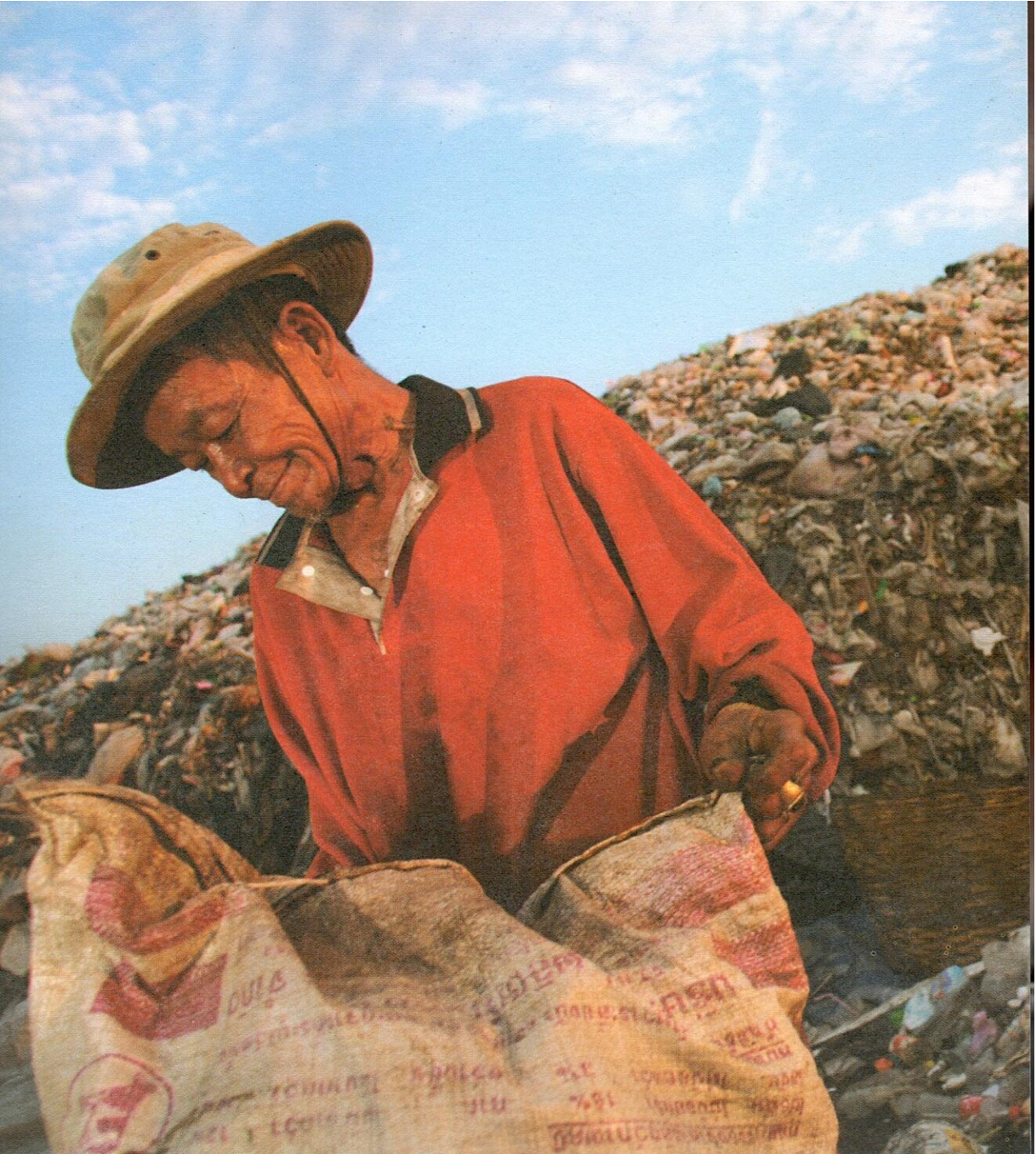
- to promote the respect for human rights domestically and internationally;
- to examine acts of human rights violation or those which do not comply with the country's international human rights obligations and propose remedial measures to individuals or organizations concerned;
- to submit an annual report on the country's human rights situation to the Parliament and the government;



- to propose to the Parliament and the government revision of laws, rules or regulations, and policy recommendations for the purpose of promoting and protecting human rights;
- to disseminate information and promote education and research in human rights;
- to cooperate and coordinate with government agencies, NGOs and other human rights organizations.

The 2007 Constitution has entrusted the NHRCT with increasing mandates:

- to submit cases together with opinions to the Constitutional Court or the Administrative Court as the case may be where any provision of laws, rules, regulations or administrative acts is detrimental to human rights and begs the question of constitutionality and legality for the purpose of promoting the respect for human rights; and
- to file a lawsuit on behalf of a complainant for the purpose of redressing the problem of human rights violation in general.

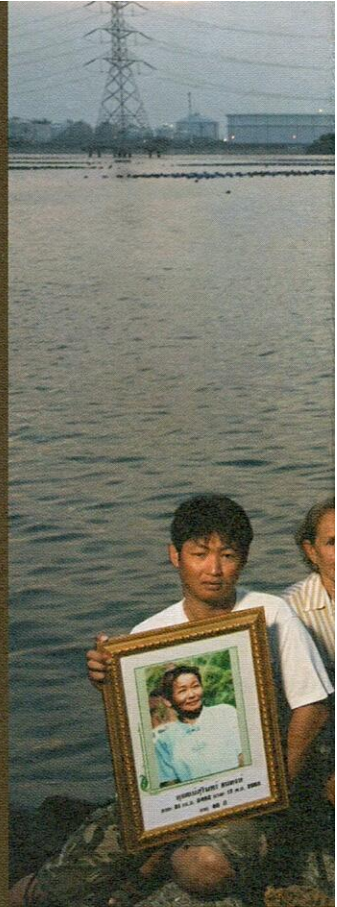


Complaint Procedure

The NHRCT may investigate alleged cases of human rights violation on its own or upon receiving complaints should such cases are not being taken up in the Court of Law or given final court rulings. A person whose rights are violated may submit a complaint in various ways as follows:

- in person at the NHRCT Office;
- by written communication sent to the NHRCT Office by mail, facsimile or electronic mail;
- through human rights NGOs accredited with the NHRCT.

Villagers close to Map Ta Phut Industrial Estate with pictures of their deceased family members and relatives who died of illness related to chemicals-contaminated water and soil



The NHRCT will acknowledge the receipt of a complaint within three days. The matters that fall within its jurisdiction with reasonable grounds for a human rights violation will be investigated. The NHRCT can summon individuals, public or private organizations concerned to provide information or give testimony. It can also request for a Court order to allow its officials to collect evidence.



If it is proved that a human rights violation is committed, the NHRCT will propose remedial measures to individuals or organizations responsible for such act. It may mediate between concerned parties as deemed appropriate. It may also file a lawsuit on behalf of a complainant, with his or her consent, if it deems that such action will redress the situation of human rights violation in general.



Current Commission and the Executive

The current NHRCT chairperson is *Prof. Amara Pongsapich* and the other six Commissioners are:

Mr. Tairjing Siriphanich

Mr. Parinya Sirisarakarn

Pol. Gen. Wanchai Srinualnad

Mr. Nirun Phitakwatchara

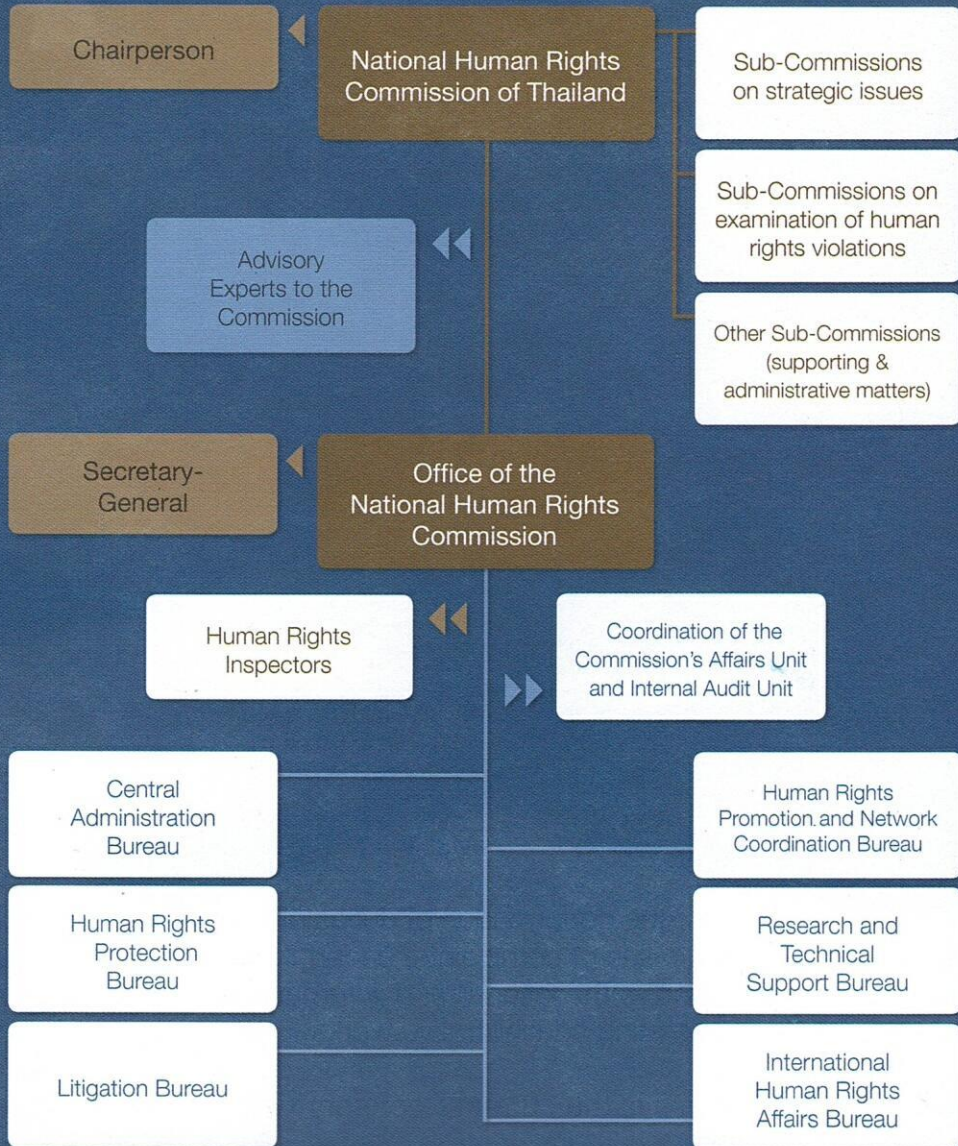
Mr. Paiboon Varahapaitoon

Ms. Visa Benjamano

The Office is responsible for the performance of duties of the Commission including receiving and investigating cases of complaints, undertaking human rights research and education, coordinating with national and international networks, providing technical supports, and operating administrative works.

Mr. Choochai Supawongse is the current Secretary-General who oversees the Office with nearly 200 staff.

The NHRCT Structure



Vision and Goals

The NHRCT's vision is to be *“an independent institution that contributes to foster a society that respects human rights, value and dignity of human beings”*.

In its six-year strategic plan (2011-2016), the NHRCT will work towards

- enhancing people's access to their rights by increasing awareness through human rights promotion and monitoring situations and places at risks of human rights violation;
- mobilizing the efforts of all stakeholders to build up a rights-based society;
- developing policy recommendations and proposals on revision of laws and effective law enforcement to guarantee protection of human rights; and
- strengthening the organization through capacity building of all aspects to ensure effective and professional operation.

During the current plan period, the NHRCT will focus on 5 priority issues and one specific area, which are:

- human rights in the administration of justice;
- community's rights and sustainable access to local natural resources;
- human rights of vulnerable groups;
- human rights and business;
- human rights and tolerance in differences;
- human rights in the southern border provinces.

Contact us

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cover photo - A Karen ethnic woman loosing her eyesight as Klity Creek of the village in Kanchanaburi contaminated by lead mines