



Press Release 30 August 2016

**Court to deliver verdict on trafficking of Rohingya case
On 31 August 2016 at the Provincial Court of Pak Phanang, Nakhon Si Thammarat**

On 12 June 2016, the Pak Phanang public prosecutor indicted with the Provincial Court of Pak Phanang, Nakhon Si Thammarat, the case against Mr. Sunon or Ko Mit Saengthong, Mr. Suriya Yodrak, and Mr. Warachai Chadathong in the Black Case no. 768/2558 for collaborating with two persons and upward in the trafficking of person, abetting the trafficking in person, a violation per the Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act B.E 2551 (2008); in the offence related to liberty, for enslavement of people or forcing a person to work as a slave per the Penal Code; for bringing into the Kingdom of Thailand an alien, harboring and providing them a hiding place, an offence against the Immigration Act B.E. 2522 (1979) and for being members of transnational organized crime against the Anti-Participation in Transnational Organized Crime Act B.E. 2556 (2013) with the survivors who are a child aged 15-18 years and those over 18 years.

Some of the survivors have asked for their lawyers to be appointed as co-plaintiffs in this case. As the Migrant Working Group who has observed the case since the beginning, we realize that the survivors need help from lawyers who can give them advice to ensure that the implicating evidence is prepared thoroughly, and an effort has been made to mobilize support from various organizations. The Court has later granted the lawyers to become co-plaintiffs in this case on the offence against the Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act and the Penal Code. Witness examination has commenced since June 2015 including prosecution and defense witness examination from January 2015 until 24 June 2016 at the Provincial Court of Pak Phanang, Nakhon Si Thammarat. The Court has now scheduled to deliver the verdict on **31 August 2016 at 09.00am.**

Background of the case: On 11 January, Pol Col Noppadon Petkhaokiaw, Superintendent of Hua Sai Police Station, Nakhon Si Thammarat, was informed that a group of Rohingya was to be trafficked from Ranong to Songkhla passing through Hua Sai District. He had instructed his officials to set up a checkpoint on Route 408 Nakhon Si Thammarat-Hua Sai and spotted five suspicious vehicles driving together. They were waved to pull over for a search. After the search in two vehicles, the drivers of the three other vehicles had decided to leave their cars and run away. The two other drivers were then held in custody. From the search of the five vehicles, the officials have found 98 Rohingyas (30 men and 26 women, plus 42 minors younger than 15 years). They appeared to be extremely exhausted. Among them, some were found dead from suffocation. The surviving Rohingyas were then screened as victims of trafficking in persons per the Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act by the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security in charge of looking after the injured parties prior to entering the criminal justice process.

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