Hello everyone. My name is Pathomporn. I am the Program Lead and Founder of Freedom Bridge, an organization that provides material and psychosocial support to political prisoners and their families, and that monitors prison conditions. I also speak as a family member of a political prisoner myself.

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Freedom Bridge has submitted two UPR reports. Today I will focus on three issues: arbitrary detention, restrictions on prison visits and correspondence, and access to healthcare.

[Slide 3]
[Issue 1]: Arbitrary Detention

Thailand noted four recommendations specifically addressing the issue of arbitrary detention. As of August 2026, there are 52 political prisoners, 35 of them are charged with monarchy-related law. Almost half are held in pre-trial detention. 25 of them are facing sentences of 10 to 50 years.

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Since 2020, the number of political prisoners has risen steadily. This reflects the prosecution of people who joined protests or voiced political opinions, both on the street and online.

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Bail denial rates for political prisoners exceed 90 percent, even when detainees pose no flight risk.

For example, Aukit Santiprasitkul, a law student sentenced in February 2024 to nine years and six months under Article 112. He has had at least ten bail requests denied, despite repeatedly citing the need to sit his final exams. He has now been detained for two years and six months.

Or take the case of Arnon Nampa, a human rights lawyer imprisoned since September 2023. He has submitted 113 bail applications. All have been denied. He has now spent more than one thousand days in Bangkok Remand Prison.

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Furthermore, Ankle shackles are also routinely used on inmates, including political prisoners and pre-trial detainees, and are not removed for court appearances. This causes physical injury and pain, and it undermines the presumption of innocence.

Arnon Nampa, a human rights lawyer, for example, is not permitted to remove his shackles even while performing his duties as a lawyer in court.

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Therefore, we recommended that the Thai government:

1. Release all individuals detained solely for the peaceful exercise of the rights to freedom of expression and freedom of peaceful assembly.
2. Ensure that pre-trial detention is used only as an exceptional measure of last resort, and guarantee the right to bail in line with Articles 9 and 14 of the ICCPR.
3. Amend Section 21 of the Penitentiary Act to bring the use of instruments of restraint into conformity with international human rights obligations, including by prohibiting their use during court appearances and as a disciplinary measure.

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[Issue 2]: Restriction on Prison Visit and Correspondence

In the previous UPR cycle, the government accepted three recommendations on penitentiary reform and prison conditions. Beyond consistent poor hygiene and general conditions, I want to highlight the exercise of discretion by prison authorities beyond what the law provides, particularly around visits and correspondence.

Several prisons refused or restricted visits from lawyers. The prison cited that once their case was concluded, there was no further need for legal consultation. Some lawyers were redirected to visit as family members, and were only allowed 15 minutes of visitation in a non-confidential room.

At least ten prisons across the country restrict general visitation to blood relatives only. This exceeds what the law actually requires. In many of these prisons, the same ten-person list also determines who may deposit money or send and receive letters, which further isolates prisoners from friends, and support networks outside their immediate family.

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Therefore, we recommend that the Thai government

1. Establish and enforce a national standard guaranteeing the right of all prisoners, including those whose cases have concluded, to confidential, unrestricted, and timely access to legal counsel.

2. Ensure prison practice complies with existing regulations that permit non-blood relatives to visit, and issue clear directives to limit the excessive discretion prison officials currently exercise to restrict visitation.

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[Issue 3]: Access to Healthcare in Prison
The lack of timely and emergency healthcare resulted in the death of a human rights activist, Netiporn Sanesangkhom, who had been on a hunger strike while being held in pre-trial detention. She was only 28 years old.

The waiting time for inmates to receive treatment from a doctor can range from 3 days to one month. For example, in the case of one detainee who suffered a stroke, with full left-side paralysis, he had to wait for 8 days before being transferred to the Department of Correction Hospital.

Mental healthcare in prisons was largely limited to the prescription of sedatives and was accessible only for inmates with obvious symptoms. Some prison staff even hand out pills that are already crushed, to prevent inmates from selling them.

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Therefore, we recommended that the Thai government:
1. Ensure that all prisoners, including political prisoners and pre-trial detainees, have timely access to healthcare, including emergency care, mental healthcare, and continuity of treatment for pre-existing conditions, in line with the Nelson Mandela Rules.