



For Immediate Release

## **ANFREL to Perform Random Polling Station Checks during 2016 Thailand Constitutional Referendum**

04 August 2016  
Bangkok, Thailand

The Asian Network for Free Elections announced that it plans to perform spot checks of polling stations to observe the conduct of the Thai referendum to be held on 7 August 2016. The referendum is being conducted to determine whether or not voters favor adoption of a new constitution drafted by the Constitutional Drafting Committee appointed by the Thai junta, which operates as the National Council for Peace and Order (NCPO).

The team will be deployed in lieu of a robust mission of long-term observers (LTOs) and electoral experts that ANFREL was unable to deploy due to technical challenges. A pre-polling environment characterized by severe restrictions on free speech figured into ANFREL's decision not to deploy an official international election observation mission, as it has done so many times throughout Asia.

The team will conduct its assessment through desk research and field observation in few key areas in Thailand to observe the preparations and the conduct of the polls on 7 August. Although it is a limited assessment, ANFREL will publicly report actual events or incidents observed during the conduct of the polls and will issue recommendations based on its findings.

ANFREL encourages the ECT to maintain strict neutrality on the ballot questions and to act in accordance with the highest standards of professionalism to ensure that the will of the people is reflected in the poll results. We hope the ECT will also maintain transparency throughout the process in order to protect the sanctity of the ballots. Lastly, we express our best wishes to Thailand and its people as they struggle to institute a better and more lasting democracy.

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