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## **PRESS RELEASE**

*For Immediate release*

### **Thai Union Group Statement in Response to US Trafficking in Persons Report as Thailand Downgraded to Tier 3**

**Bangkok, 23 June 2014:** Thai Union Frozen Products Public Company Limited (TUF), world's leading processor and exporter of canned and frozen seafood products, released the following statement in response to the announcement of Trafficking in Persons Report 2014.

In light of this announcement, Mr. Thiraphong Chansiri, President and CEO of Thai Union Group said, "We are disappointed that the US Department of State has deemed Thailand's efforts over the last years insufficient. We had hoped that the continued concerted effort by the Thai fishing industry and relevant Government units to eradicate illegal and unethical labor practices would retain or move Thailand up from tier 2 watch list."

"We appreciate the US concern on human rights issues pertaining to labor and, apparently, this verdict indicates that the Thailand is seen as not doing enough to solve the issues despite the increased efforts of the Thai fishing industry to work rigorously with its Thai and international partners to take meaningful and visible steps to promote human rights and well-being of the people in all its business network."

In 2013, Thai Food Processors Association (TFPA), Thai Frozen Food Association (TFFA), Thai Ministry of Labor, Ministry of Agriculture and many other relevant parties in Thailand's seafood supply chains, formed a partnership across the industry, encouraging proactive dialogues and addressing problems to eliminate child labor, forced labor and human trafficking by establishing the Good Labor Practice (GLP) program with the International Labor Organization (ILO).

Thai Union Group, as a member of United Nations Global Compact (UNGC) and the GLP program with the ILO, is committed to improving the working conditions in the seafood processing industry in Thailand. We have been subject to external verifications by third-party certified bodies in compliance to promoting standard labor practices such as Ethical Trade Initiatives (ETI), Business Social Compliance Initiative (BSCI), Supplier Ethical Data Exchange (Sedex) and numerous customers' specific codes of conduct.

Even before these commitments were signed with international organizations, TUF's Code of Conduct pertaining to labor practices explicitly prohibits child and forced labor, forbids any discriminatory acts, respects freedom of association and collective bargaining, and promotes decent working conditions and occupational health and safety.

Thai Union Group has made it very clear to our suppliers that any misconduct in relation to human trafficking will result in immediate termination of trade relationships with no compromise. We value people and the respectful, ethical and responsible treatment of employees as our highest priority. We hold these values higher than pure maximization of profits. It is our firm believe that conducting business in a socially responsible manner is the very foundation of success and these values cannot be compromised. We feel compassion to workers who have been mistreated and will do all we can to put an end to human suffering.



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“Thai Union Group is committed to full compliance with our Code of Conduct, Good Labor Practices and every labor agreement we have signed – any less would be moving backwards - we are absolutely determined to move forward sustainably as one of the world’s seafood leaders and as an exemplary responsible global corporate citizen.”

“We take the result of the Trafficking in Persons Report very seriously. We must now sit together with all key stakeholders and develop concrete and tangible solutions to quell this chapter of degradation as soon as possible.”

“We appeal to the current Thai administration and the upcoming interim government to swiftly construct a forceful action plan to rigidly enforce all applicable laws to freeing victims, preventing trafficking and bringing traffickers to justice and serve the way forward in supporting industries, organizations and NGOs in order to rectify Thailand’s human rights violations and labor malpractices of any kind. We will give – as we have been giving - our utmost support to contribute to a long term sustainably growing economy,” concluded Mr. Chansiri.

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For further information, please visit: [www.thaiuniongroup.com](http://www.thaiuniongroup.com).  
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