



Prime Minister Abhisit Vejjajiva gave the first Talk to Media (18/12/2008)

Mr. Abhisit Vejjajiva, Prime Minister, gave the First Talk to people and media, after receiving His Majesty the King's Command at the Democrat Party's Headquarter.

Let me just say a few words to the foreign media and send this message to the rest of the world. I know that for the past two to three years the pictures and images that you have seen of Thailand has not been positive, but I also know that there are people all over the world who know Thailand better, as friends, as partners, as visitors. I'm sure they recall Thailand as the land of smiles, land of opportunity, and land of the free. It's my every intention to restore the picture of Thailand that friends all over the world used to know. And I will do this through a grand plan of reconciliation based on the rule of law and the democratic process.

I insist that with the will of parliament putting me where I am today. I will use that mandate for all Thais so that we will restore not just peace and order and put an end to the conflicts but also to take Thailand forward, politically and economically. I know that many of you are still concerned about the events in the past, particularly the closure of the airports and I would like to tell you that the Thai people regret that those incidents had to happen but we will make sure that those are the things of the past. They will not happen again and that we welcome all of you as tourists, as visitors, as investors and as partners, and I am very determined to do that as quickly as possible.

In assuming the role of Prime Minister in Thailand, I also assume the role of Chairman of ASEAN. Let me reassure you that we plan to have Thailand ready to host the ASEAN Summit from late January onwards, so that we can all be confident that ASEAN can really move forward after the new ASEAN Charter has come into force.

Let me end by saying once again that I would like to take Thailand forward. I believe in this country and I believe in the people of Thailand. And I will prove that once again Thailand can be the land of the free, the land of opportunities, and the land of smiles.

Thank you very much.
