

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

July 23, 2008

Prime Minister Samak Sundaravej
c/o The Embassy of the Kingdom of
Thailand to the United States of America
1024 Wisconsin Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20007

Prime Minister Samak:

We are writing in regards to the pending extradition request for international arms dealer Viktor Bout to stand trial in the United States for conspiring to provide weapons to a terrorist organization. Extradition proceedings in this case are scheduled to begin in your country on July 28, 2008.

As you know, Viktor Bout has fueled many brutal civil wars on the African continent and beyond through the illicit sale of arms. Dubbed the "Merchant of Death," Bout dealt weapons to several sides fighting in the Democratic Republic of Congo and rebels in Angola in the 1990s, breaking international arms embargoes. Former Liberian president Charles Taylor similarly relied on Bout to arm his reign of terror in West Africa, violently suppressing opposition to his corrupt rule in Liberia and arming allies in neighboring Sierra Leone, Guinea, and Cote d'Ivoire. Taylor is currently on trial in The Hague on multiple war crimes and human rights violation charges for his actions in Sierra Leone.

In Afghanistan, Bout simultaneously armed the Taliban and the Northern Alliance. His dealings with international terrorist organizations include Hezbollah and the FARC in Colombia. Indeed, Bout thought he was negotiating a deal to provide the FARC with millions of dollars in arms when he was arrested in Thailand. This deal included 100 advanced Russian-designed shoulder-fired missiles, capable of downing an aircraft. Bout's arrest may have prevented a significant terrorist attack, saving countless lives.

This year marks the 175th anniversary of the Treaty of Amity and Commerce, making Thailand the United States' oldest ally and partner in Asia. In recent years, the security relationship between our two countries has grown, with Thailand being designated as a major non-NATO ally in 2003. Cooperation in law enforcement has also been impressive, with over 100 extraditions to the United States in the past 30 years. Bangkok is also host of one of only four U.S. International Law Enforcement Academies, which provides legal training for officials to combat transnational crime.

We were pleased to see U.S. Attorney General Michael Mukasey recently travel to Thailand and express optimism that Bout will be extradited to the United States. Further, we are encouraged by then Thai Foreign Minister Noppadon Pattama's pledge that there would be "no delay" in the proceedings. We are, however, very concerned by reports

suggesting that the Russian government is attempting to negatively influence this process to prevent Bout's legal extradition to the United States.

As Mr. Bout's actions have threatened the security of many countries and regions and destroyed the lives of thousands of innocent individuals, the United States Congress is following his case closely. As such, we are grateful for the close cooperation between U.S. authorities and the Royal Thai Police in his capture. The preservation of the rule of law and the certain and swift application of justice have long been a hallmark of U.S.-Thai relations.

We thank you for your attention to the extradition proceedings of Viktor Bout so that he may face a fair trial in the United States and look forward to our continued cooperation in this matter.

Sincerely,

Ed Royce

Brad Sherman

Blaine Lott

Howard L. Berman

Ken Calvert

Jim Fortin

Deane E. Watson

Sue Myrick

Joe Wilson

Ed Royce

Franco Scott

George R. Brown

Steve Israel

Robert B. Adelstein

Shirley Pence
Don J. Moore

Ken A. Wegman

Chris Smith

Ellen O'Auseher

Joseph J. Bonny
Bob Dugan

T. M. Latta

Jim Gohmert

Randa J. Scheff

Robert Weyl

Dan Burt

Joe Koolhaas

Miller Jackson Lee

Alan Smith

Loretta Sanchez

Bob Hill

Frank Myrtle

Bob Walker

Bill O'Connell

Frank Stankis

July 23, 2008 -- Letter to Thai Prime Minister Samak re: Viktor Bout

Signatories:

Rep. Ed Royce	Rep. Brad Sherman
Rep. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen	Rep. Howard Berman
Rep. Ken Calvert	Rep. Luis Fortuno
Rep. Diane Watson	Rep. Sue Myrick
Rep. Joe Wilson	Rep. Frank Wolf
Rep. David Scott	Rep. Joe Pitts
Rep. Steve Israel	Rep. Thad McCotter
Rep. Robert Aderholt	Rep. Vic Snyder
Rep. Mike Pence	Rep. Linda Sanchez
Rep. Gwen Moore	Rep. Robert Wexler
Rep. Henry Waxman	Rep. Dan Burton
Rep. Chris Smith	Rep. Joe Knollenberg
Rep. Ellen Tauscher	Rep. Sheila Jackson-Lee
Rep. Joe Crowley	Rep. Adam Smith
Rep. Bob Inglis	Rep. Loretta Sanchez
Rep. Brad Miller	Rep. Don Manzullo
Rep. Jesse Jackson Jr.	Rep. Bill Delahunt
Rep. Trent Franks	