

The Washington Post

[Letter to the Editor](#)

The Thai referendum allowed the people to speak

August 10, 2016

Regarding the August 6 by Editorial Board “[Thailand’s Potemkin referendum](#)”:

In Sunday’s referendum on the draft constitution, [about 29 million](#) Thais exercised their voting rights in a transparent and peaceful manner, as many Thai and foreign observers attested. The draft constitution may not be perfect, but Thai voters supported it because they want to rectify flaws in Thai democracy that have led to broken politics, abuse of power, rampant corruption, a dysfunctional parliament, government shutdowns, street violence and chaos. People want good governance and respect for the rule of law. Most important, they want peace and stability.

Thai citizens made their wishes known with more than 60 percent voting in support of the charter. The government also will recognize the concerns of those who were not in favor of the draft.

All major political parties have voiced respect for the outcome of the referendum and expressed their desire to move forward. This spirit should be welcomed, as it shows how far Thailand has come from where it was a few years ago. All parties concerned should find a way to work together and move the country forward for the benefit of all Thais. Organic laws to facilitate political parties and elections will be enacted, paving the way for elections in 2017.

We hope our friends in the United States who may disagree with certain parts of the charter will at least respect the decision and the will of the Thai people.

Pisan Manawapat, Washington

The writer is Thailand’s ambassador to the United States.