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Mr. Chair, Distinguished Members, and all other Indigenous Peoples.

On behalf of the World Hmong People's Congress, I would like to thank you for the opportunity to speak today.

Because of the time limited, I will be very brief.

Hmong is and ethnic minority in Laos. During the French Colony, Touby LyFoung was a Hmong Leader and he led his people to fight sided by side with the French Government in Laos against the Vietnamese. During the Vietnam War, General Vang Pao, another Hmong Leader led the Hmong people to fight side by side with the United States CIA against the Pathet Lao. The Hmong People have been a great ally to the French and the US Government until today.

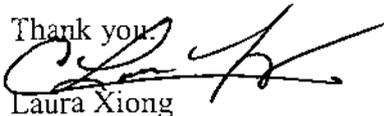
Regardless of the Hmong People's strong relationship with the French and US Governments, there is no chance for us to maintain our own culture, practice our own religion, not to mention about self-determination under the Lao Government Regime.

Evidently, the Hmong had facilitated a Hmong City named, Meung Meo in Xiengkhouang Province, Laos during the French Colony. Shortly after the establishment of the City, the Lao Government had eliminated it completely. During the Vietnam War, the US CIA had assisted the Hmong established another city named, Long Cheng. The Lao Government destroyed it completely by 1975.

In the Early 1960's, a Hmong Scholar by the name of Shongluc Yang had created a written language and formed a religion for the Hmong in Laos. He was murdered, his teaching institutes have been destroyed, and his followers have been persecuted and killed.

In conclusion, Mr. Chair, I strongly believe that as a people of the world, we should be given the rights to maintain our own culture and allow to self-determination.

Thank you.



Laura Xiong