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**Item 4: Implementation of the recommendations on the six mandated areas of
the Permanent Forum and on the Millennium Development Goals:**

(f) Human rights

**Collective Statement by the Khmers Kampuchea-Krom Federation and the Montagnard
Foundation**

Speaker: Romy THACH

Madam Chair,

Today Vietnam proudly tells the International community of its preoccupation of the ethnic minorities' situations. Unfortunately, the recent human rights violations have been committed by the Vietnamese authorities toward the Indigenous Khmer Krom and Montagnard peoples raised serious concerns to the conscience of the world.

As this is the 60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, it is important to grade its adoption and implementation. Unfortunately Vietnam is failing miserably. We will begin with the most recent heinous crime and human rights abuses.

Recently, the district Svay Tong (Renamed An Giang in Vietnamese) ^{in the Province of Mouat Chrouk} has been the scene of acts of terror. The source for Radio Free Asia reported that on April 8 this month, at around 2: 20 in the ^{morning} ~~afternoon~~, 10 police cars have burst into the town of Chau Laing. Some gunshots were fired by the police directly hitting 6 people. Among those injured were M. Chau Hen, and his wife, Mrs. Neang Phon. They were hit in the legs and have been refused medical care. The children of Mr. Chau Hen were found unconscious after a gas of unknown substance has been launched in their home. Mr. Chau Hen is part of a group of farmers-Khmer Krom who gathered to ask the Vietnamese authorities the reason why they pushed them to burn an important bridge used by farmers to reach their rice fields.

At around 2:00PM, on April 11 2008, about fifty Montagnard Christian believers held a peaceful and non-violent demonstration in the local Office of Ia Chia, a demonstration that has been repressed violently by the local police force. The popular protest pleaded the liberation of 3 Christian brothers Puih H'Bats, Kson Sims, and Rahlon Don, that had been jailed simply for sustaining their faith while refusing to join the Vietnamese government sanctioned church. Following this demonstration two more believers Kson Ien and Rahlan have been thrown in jail. This has lead to a chain reaction of protest throughout the central Highlands of Vietnam.

Madam Chair, there are millions of the Indigenous Khmer Krom and the Montagnard people in Vietnam and we are already over halfway toward the deadline of the Millennium Development Goals. Unfortunately, the human rights situation and poverty of Khmer Krom and the Montagnard people has become worse. To achieve the development goals, Vietnam must recognize that the

implementation of the Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples is imperative.

From a broader perspective, the recognition of indigenous peoples by governments around the world is a fundamental step forward. To organize and to cross this stage is a matter of utmost importance that requires the greatest attention and greatest efforts.

We recommend in consequence to the Permanent Instance to lead a collaborative work with the states members sanctioned by exact deadlines with benchmarks in order to set recognition of indigenous peoples such as Khmer Krom and Montagnard.

Ask the UNPFII and respected members of PFII to insist Vietnam, as a member of a non-permanent members of the Security Council, to cooperate more fully with the United Nations' Human Rights mechanisms and special rapporteurs. It is unfortunate that none of them has received an invitation since 1998. The Vietnam should issue special invitations to the United Nations Special Rapporteurs on issues of religious intolerance, torture, indigenous peoples, and arbitrary detention.

To conclude, remember that last month, during the 7th session of the board of Human Rights in Geneva, Vietnam declared to be ready for a dialogue on the question of Human Rights. The Permanent Forum isn't it an ideal opportunity to demonstrate this intent? Let's begin now. We are ready and willing to share wisdom and work together for a future of human rights in the Asia region.