

Khmer Krom Buddhist Association

Item 4: Human Rights

Speaker: Venerable Liv Pov

We would like to recommend the following on behalf of thousands of Buddhist monks in Kampuchea Krom:

- The Vietnamese government needs to respect the rights of Buddhist monks to practise their religion and community events in accordance to their traditional time frame rather than at the convenient of the State.
- All decisions or changes to ceremony dates should be done in full consultation with Buddhist monks with respect to our theme of free, prior and informed consent of indigenous peoples.
- We encourage the Vietnamese government to have an open door policy which allows for invitation of Special Rapporteurs on Freedom of religion or belief and other related UN Special Rapporteurs to verify and investigate reported human right violations and allow for constructive follow up.
- Sufficient and long term funding needs to be allocated to Khmer Krom Buddhist monks and temple to aid and promote the teaching of the Khmer language, preservation of the temples and cultural events.

Madam Chair, Vietnam has committed itself to the improving the lives of its people including its indigenous peoples by signing 7 of the 13 treaties available. These treaties need to be translated in the indigenous peoples language, consulted with indigenous Buddhist monks and their people through creation of forums to increase

their awareness and participation.

Lastly, we would like to have a parallel session in which the Khmer Krom Buddhist monks and the Vietnamese government work together on a panel to discuss the treaties and its implication for practises of Buddhist monks and other cultural related activities. Policies have and continue to be written without prior consent of Buddhist monks. Now is the time to change this. The interests of indigenous Buddhists will only be represented when there is a recognition and respect for their spirituals role in the community unity and cultural identity preservation.