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SUPREME NATIONAL COUNCIL OF KAMPUCHEA-KROM\*

Independence – Freedom – Justice

Office of the President

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February 2, 2012

H.E. Anwar KEMAL  
President,  
Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination  
UNOG-OHCHR  
UN Headquarters, Geneva (Switzerland)

**Subject: Racial Discrimination against the Khmer-Krom People**

His Excellency:

The Supreme National Council of Kampuchea-Krom (SNC-KK) has the honor and privilege to represent the Khmer-Krom people and respectfully submit its formal complaint against the government of the Socialist Republic of Viet-Nam for its Racial Discrimination against our people: Khmer-Krom.

The SNC-KK was founded in August 2005 in order to find a legal and effective way to save our race from the continuous racial “purging”, systematically being carried out by all levels of Vietnamese authorities, aimed at our innocent people. The SNC-KK has been registered with the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs since 2009, and has since attended the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (PFII) and the UN Experts Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (EMRIP).

### **Brief History of Kampuchea-Krom**

French colonialists took over the Kampuchea-Krom territory in 1859. Its name was changed to Cochinchina, and it was made a French colony until 1949. During the French colonial rule, millions of Vietnamese workers were illegally transferred into Cochinchina to sustain the French ruling apparatus and to provide workers for French plantations.

On the 4<sup>th</sup> of June, 1949, the French National Parliament voted to cede Cochinchina to a newly found French ally in Indochina called the Government of Cochinchina. It was later changed to the Republic of South Vietnam after France’s departure in 1955. As a result, the Khmer-Krom people have been placed under Vietnamese colonial rule until present.

In 1954, an exodus of the North Vietnamese took place because of the Vietnamese plan to occupy our territory via a “fait accompli”. This was accomplished by inundating our territory with the Vietnamese population. Presently, there are approximately 4 to 5 million Khmers-Krom people compared to 20 million of the Vietnamese.

During the Vietnam War, hundreds of thousands of Khmer-Krom were drafted and sent by both sides to the front lines of the battlefields so that they could be killed or kill each other for the benefit of their Vietnamese masters. This was the Vietnamese plan to exterminate our race.

In 1975, Vietnamese Communists won the war, and those who joined the Republic of South Vietnam were punished or were sent to re-education camps. Meanwhile, the Vietnamese counterparts received leniency or less jail time than Khmer-Krom. For those Khmer-Krom who used to serve with the Communists, were not treated better either. The Communist always made up something and forced them to confess. Thousands of innocent lives were lost due to this kind of nonsense and evil accusation.

### **Racial Discrimination policy**

1. **Family Name Change:** While under Vietnamese domination before the French colonial arrival, all Khmer-Krom people were forced to take their new assigned family name: Thach, Son, Kien, Kim, Danh, or Chau. All Vietnamese regimes after that still continue to enforce such law. By so doing, we have lost our family roots, and, at the same time, the Vietnamese authorities can easily identify us in all their administrative work, from schooling to applying for job, position in government, judgment, just to name a few. By our last names, we are guilty before receiving judgment. Anything we do will be seen by the Vietnamese government as a subversive act.
2. No Khmers-Krom may hold any important position in the central and provincial government. During the liberation war, many Khmer-Krom people were forced to join the war effort of both sides. Thus, hundreds of thousands of them were killed since both Vietnamese sides made Khmer-Krom go first. Soon, an infamous saying became popular: "Vietnamese died by name, Khmer-Krom died by body". Even so, after the war, no surviving Khmer-Krom cadres were compensated with high positions in the government. On 16 November 1976, after less than 20 months of victory, Khmer-Krom cadres revolted against the Central government for their biased policy and unfair treatment which favored their own people and suppressed other races. Unfortunately, most of these former victors' comrades-in-arm were brutally eliminated and/or locked out for good.
3. No Khmers-Krom may attain the rank of General in the Vietnamese army. There is, however, a Brigadier-General in the police force. He served the Vietnamese well by helping them to kill off his own race in order to improve his own rank. He has been terrifying our people since he has taken this position. His power is above the Vietnamese law, and the Vietnamese authorities have condoned his actions for the sake of so-called "national security".
4. No Khmers-Krom may attend law school, or study political science in college. Currently, there are no Khmer-Krom lawyers or judges. Furthermore, no Khmer-Krom students could pass exams to attend such schools because of their noted family names mentioned above. Many exceptionally smart Khmer-Krom students in other majors faced elimination by drugging, injection, arranged accidents, or poisoning.
5. No Khmers-Krom may travel abroad for higher education while thousands of Vietnamese students are attending schools all around the world. There are virtually no

Khmers-Krom in the U.S. despite there being tens of thousands of Vietnamese students present.

6. No Khmers-Krom students may obtain Ph.D degrees or professorships in the country, unless he/she is a Communist cadre, working for Vietnamese interest against their own race. There may be no such person either!
7. No publications (newspapers, magazines, books) are allowed to be written in Khmer language, except for government political propaganda purposes. Khmer language publications, songs, and videos from Cambodia are strictly prohibited. Possession of such literature is a punishable crime, and can be charged against the individual as being "anti-government".
8. No Khmer-Krom workers are allowed to seek jobs abroad. Thousands of Vietnamese workers are now enjoying such privileges, but not Khmer-Krom workers. That is the evil intention of Vietnam-- to keep Khmer-Krom in the dark forever.
9. No Khmer language is allowed to be used in communication with the government: laws forbid Khmer texts to be used for any official purpose. This created business for certain Vietnamese people.
10. No Khmer-Krom Buddhist temples or Christian churches are immune from police intrusion. Almost all Buddhist and Christian clergy are now forced to work for the government as informants, or they will pay the consequences. They now become the propaganda machine for the government and are no longer spiritual leaders. It won't be long before there will be no one who dares to enter these religious places anymore.
11. Up until now, the Vietnamese government has created no official translation of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples into Vietnamese or any other ethnic languages. Therefore, only very few Khmer-Krom individuals are even aware of the Declaration. Another 53 races, including the Vietnamese themselves, are also poorly informed and unaware of the Declaration as well.
12. In Geneva on July 15, 2010, in a speech in front of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Session of the Experts Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, a Vietnamese government representative declared that there were no indigenous peoples in Vietnam. This clearly shows Vietnam evading responsibility after having endorsed the Declaration on September 13, 2007.
13. Those who dared to protest or who were intimidated by authorities had to take refuge in either Cambodia or Thailand. More than 200 Khmer-Krom refugees have found themselves in Thailand for many years, and only a few have become recognized by the UNHCR as refugees. Others must live in hiding from Thai authorities. Those in Cambodia must face the same from the pro-Vietnamese government. There are grave concerns about the status those individuals detained and forced to return home where they can expect definite retaliation.

We at SNC-KK wish to express our deep gratitude to the Committee on the Elimination of the Racial Discrimination for paying attention to our short list of the typical discrimination exercised by the Vietnamese Government on our poor people. We also wish to confirm our commitment to support any recommendations or measures taken by the United Nations in order to eliminate such gross discrimination.

Again, thank you very much.

Respectfully yours,

Thach, Tan Dara  
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