

## INTERVENTION

**By Mr. Nguyen Duy Thanh, Second Secretary  
Permanent Mission of Viet Nam to the United Nations  
at the 14<sup>th</sup> Session of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues**

*Agenda Item 8*

*Madam Chair,*

Allow me first of all to extend our sincerest condolences to the delegation of Nepal for the immense losses that the Nepalese people suffered caused by the recent earthquake.

*Madam Chair,*

Viet Nam appreciates the work of the Forum and support efforts to promote the rights, livelihood and well-being of indigenous peoples where they reside. We believe that these efforts should take into full account the particular circumstances of each individual country, as recognized in the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

*Madam Chair,*

My delegation is obliged to respond to the statement made earlier by the so-called Khmer Kampuchea Krom Federation (KKF). This is a foreign based organization that does not in any way represent the ethnic Khmer people in Viet Nam. This organization has carried out many politically motivated acts and aim for the separation of the territory of Viet Nam. The participation at this Forum of KKF, which is not even recognized as an indigenous peoples organization by fellow organizations, only goes against the interest of indigenous people, create distraction and waste the precious time of the Forum that could have been offered, instead, to many other organizations genuinely representing indigenous people around the world, to the distinguished members of the Forum and to other participants. This is in our view a serious matter for the Forum to consider as it discusses its future work.

*Madam Chair,*

Let me take this opportunity to briefly share with you some information about my country Viet Nam. Viet Nam is a country of 54 ethnic peoples living together for generations in one whole territory in unity and mutual assistance in the cause of national construction and defense. The Government of Viet Nam consistently pursues the policy of equality, solidarity, mutual respect and mutual assistance for shared progress among the ethnic groups. This is clearly stipulated in our Constitution, all legal documents and policies, and ensured in practice.

We have been implementing *The Socio-Economic Development Program for the Most Vulnerable Communes in Ethnic Minority and Mountainous Areas* and related programs such as the National Targeted Program for Poverty Reduction, the National Targeted Program for Rural Water Supply and Sanitation, the National Targeted Program for Vocational Training with an investment of over 2.5 billion USD over the last 8 years, and

have indeed yielded good results and contributed to the promotion and protection the rights of ethnic minorities. For example: poverty rate in the area with large ethnic minorities is reduced from 32.6% in 2009 to 24.3% in 2013; the net primary school enrolment rate is 98% average in the whole country, including 95% of children in ethnic minorities; by the end of 2012, there were over 2,600 ethnic minority language classes with nearly 137,000 students; 92% of ethnic minorities have access to radio and 85% have access to television with many channels in ethnic languages, such as H'mong, Thai, Ede, Cham, Khmer; 99% of ethnic communes have healthcare centers; every province and city, including in ethnic and mountainous areas, has free legal assistance center.

The ethnic minorities in Viet Nam enjoy enabling conditions to participate in the political system, social governance, and state governance; the political representation of ethnic minorities is increasing. An example is that in 4 recent terms of the National Assembly, the ratio of deputies of from ethnic minorities account for 15.6 to 17.3%, while the ethnic minorities only make up 14.3% of the overall population.

In Viet Nam, all development projects are done in close consultation with local communities to ensure their voices are heard and interests taken into account. Efforts are also made to minimize any potential impacts on the local community.

To conclude, Madam Chair, Viet Nam reaffirms its commitment to working closely with other participants, in the spirit of constructive dialogue and sincere cooperation.

I thank you./.