



Khmers Kampuchea-Krom Federation

Asia – Australia – Europe – North America

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United Nations
Health
Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues
Third Session
May 10-21, 2004

Statement of Khmers Kampuchea-Krom Federation
AGENDA ITEM 4(C): Health
Speaker: Kha Diep

Mr. Chairman and distinguished delegates:

The Khmers-Kampuchea Krom Federation is most concern about the lost of sight for the 3,000 Khmer krom people in the Vinh Chau province alone, not including thousands of others across the 21 Kampuchea-Krom's provinces. There are virtually no health care facilities, such as clinics and hospitals in the villages and rural areas to help the blind or any other health issues. The most primitive sanitary conditions do not exist in the villages and rural areas of the Khmer Krom. There is no public water system, sewer system, or plumbing. A river serves the triple purpose of water supply, laundry, and human waste disposal.

To make matter worse the rivers have been dammed in such a way as to inhibit their natural flow, making the pollution even worse. The use of pesticides, herbicides, and fertilizers by Vietnamese agribusinesses damages the environment and endangers the health of the Khmer Krom. Also, polluting industries are placed in villages and rural areas further damaging the environment and endangering the health of the Khmer Krom population.

The Vietnamese government had known about the Khmer Krom's deadly health issues but still did not provide any kind of healthcare or financial aids, nor program to investigate the deadly disease.

With the effort to help the Khmer Krom peoples that are dying every day, I would respectfully like to suggest the following solutions to these problems:

1. We ask that the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues to request the UN Security Council, the Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights, and the Special Rapporteur to immediately investigate the situation.
2. Request UNDP/WIPO to immediately provide funds to help cure the blindness disease.

3. The establishment of health a clinic in each of the 21 Kampuchea Krom provinces and staff by the World Health Organization (WHO), international volunteers such as the Peace Corps or other altruistic organizations.
4. The staff of these clinics would train the Khmer Krom in health care practices so that they can become self-sufficient.
5. The establishment of a public health service in each village that would see that children are vaccinated against contagious diseases and taught hygienic practices to ward off diseases.
6. Each clinic would have a lying in facility for pregnant women for childbirth.
7. An exploration of the *feasibility of establishing an independent nursing and medical school under the auspices of some altruistic organization.*
8. A project by international volunteers to help the Khmer Krom establish public water and sewage systems in the provinces.

Mr. Chairman,

The Khmer krom peoples stand no chance the alarming rate on increasing deadly disease, and starvation. It is urgent that the United Nations and the world community at large to take immediate action to correct the atrocious violations of the human rights of the Khmer Krom and to ensure the *survival of this indigenous people and their culture.* Otherwise, the Khmer Krom people and their culture will be forever lost from the family of mankind.

Thank you Mr. Chairman and *distinguished delegates.*