

Sixth Session of Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples
 Item 4: Follow-up to thematic studies and advice
 Khmers Kampuchea-Krom Federation
 Speaker: Thivanada Julie Kim

Dear Mr. Chair,

Thank you for giving me an opportunity to speak at this forum. I would like to congratulate the second election of Wilton Littlechild as the chair of the Expert mechanism. On this item I would like to discuss the studies about the rights to education, the rights of identity and on the right to participate in decision-making with a focus on extractive industries in the context of implementation in our indigenous homeland of Kampuchea Krom.

On behalf of the Khmers Kampuchea-Krom Federation and the voiceless Khmer-Krom in Vietnam, I would like to suggest the following recommendations to promote the follow-up to thematic studies and advice :

1. We would like that the government of Vietnam provide a financial assistance to Khmer-Krom students to help them to stay at school until finishing high school, or at least middle school. And also we look forward for the government to waive tuition for Khmer-Krom students in colleges and universities for students who want to pursue their studies. Because with the recent increases in tuition it's even harder for the Khmer-Krom students to get an access to get into high level studies.
2. We urge the government of Vietnam to take in consideration our request that we've done during the past 8 years. We asked the government to provide education which would be culturally appropriate for the Khmer-Krom children. Yet our requests have consistently been ignored and this lack of action and motivation of the Vietnamese government is often the result of discrimination attitudes towards the indigenous Khmer-Krom.
3. We believe Free, Prior and Informed Consent must be at the core of the process to protect the rights and of indigenous peoples. We are concerned for Indigenous Peoples such as Khmer-Krom peoples, where the government does not recognize the indigenous identity on their own homelands. We recommend that the Expert mechanism on the rights of Indigenous peoples offers a solution for indigenous peoples who are not officially recognized by their governments as indigenous.
4. As indigenous peoples whose indigenous identity is not recognised by the government, we are often ignored in the international meetings. The Khmers Kampuchea-Krom Federation will be active partners and share first-hand information from the front lines on the protection of human rights as equal partners.
5. As most of the rice that Vietnam export is from Mekong delta, we want to make a fair and equal agreement between the indigenous people who are living in this area and the state. In that way they will be able to develop themselves into rice marketing because the indigenous Khmer-Krom people are originally farmers.

There is one case study under agenda item 4 that exemplifies the positive practices of indigenous peoples to realize the rights in the study and also the challenges created by state practice. We are aware that all rights are interrelated. One example of one monk and one

temple exemplify the interconnectedness of rights in the UN DRIP and the studies authored by EMRIP. Venerable monk Ly Chanh Da had listened to the people in his village. There was a deep desire to self-identify as Khmer Krom and to practice their culture and language. Ven. Ly Chanh Da did create a language program at the Wat Prey Chab. The language class brought enthusiasm for the children and parents to see their culture come alive. Unfortunately, on 16 May his temple was surrounded and he was arrested. We hope Vietnam will work with us in the future to realize the recommendations in the EMRIP studies.

In conclusion, the indigenous Khmer Krom people would like to thank you to have listened to our recommendations and they hope that they will be heard and that action will be taken in the upcoming years.