

Eighth Session of Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

Item 8: United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

Khmers Kampuchea-Krom Federation

Speaker : Licia Tran

Mr Chairman,

We appreciate the opportunity to be present and participate in the Eighth session of EMRIP. Vietnam was amongst the countries who supported the UNDRIP in 2007, we the Khmer Krom People were encouraged by this step taken by this country. Unfortunately, we were disappointed of the lack of change and improvement for a better life toward the Indigenous peoples and particularly our peoples. Like many IPs present, the words on paper remain all we have. We require real rights in our lives.

The first step toward rights realization is raising awareness of the UN DRIP. We would like to distribute it in our homeland in our mother tongue. This would be essential to move beyond promises on paper. Also, our situation has only severely worsened since the adoption with disparaging discrimination, unfair imprisonment, torture and even deaths.

Furthermore, Vietnam states there are 54 ethnic minorities but really only consider the Qin are the only recognized Indigenous. Our right to self-identify must be respected and our rights are indigenous peoples protected.

On behalf of Khmer Kampuchea-Krom Federation, and the voiceless Khmer Krom in Vietnam, we would like to suggest the following recommendations to the forum:

- Urge Vietnam to recognize the Indigenous peoples who self-determined themselves (Article 4) of the UNDRIP in the country, especially the Khmer Krom people who have lived along the Mekong Delta since time immemorial.
- Urge Vietnam to allow the khmer krom youth, to have access to the UNDRIP for youth to be translated in Khmer their indigenous language.

- Urge Vietnam to permit the Khmer Krom people to participate in local and state decision-making and engage in genuine partnership at the annual EMRIP and PFII sessions
- Urge Vietnam to emphasize our culture, tradition and language and to respect Article 8.(1 of the UNDRIP.
- Urge Vietnam to permit us to stay on our ancestral land and not being forced to move by the state through land grabbing as written in the article 10 of the UNDRIP.
- Urge Vietnam to implement Article 12 of the UNDRIP to allow the Khmer-Krom to freely practice their religion. The Khmer-Krom people should be allowed to form their independence religious organization without interference.

Thank you mister chair,