

10th Session of Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples
Item 5: Interactive Dialogue with national human rights institutions, regional human rights institutions and
similar mechanisms
Khmers Kampuchea-Krom Federation
Speaker: Conduct Hang

Mr. Chairperson,

We are very honored to be present here at this historical moment as we move forward with the mandate of the EMRIP. Resolution 33/25 has laid out a foundation that allows the EMRIP to promote the UNDRIP when providing information of indigenous peoples to the HRC.

It is great to discuss the potential of a Paris principle based National Human Rights Institution. We believe it would be helpful for Vietnam to work with IPOs and larger civil society organizations dedicated to human rights and the new UN Sustainable Development Goals.

Let us provide one example of how a NHRI in our homeland could assist with conflicts and protect human rights. Religion is central to our existence as Indigenous Peoples. Our monks are our spiritual leaders and are consistently targeted for only practicing their right to religion. We believe a NHRI could be a valuable tool to ensure our voice and values are respected.

As an IPO, we work our immediate families in the Mekong Delta. In our continuous struggle to be recognized as IPs, the most recent case of a human rights violation that we were notified of is that Venerable Lieu Ny from Wat Traset had requested to the Vietnamese local authority to be re-ordained as a monk July 3, 2017. The local police then threatened him from being re-ordained while at the temple. Our Khmer Krom communities have struggled with protecting our basic religious rights; however, continue to be seen as a threat with no rationale. The right to practice religion should not be a privilege granted by the government.

We ask how mechanisms can be effective when member states do not promote the UNDRIP, thus do not support the new mandate of the EMRIP.

Thank you again for this new format of an interactive dialogue and we will make sure to build bridge with the government to achieve the ends of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

Thank you.