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United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues
New York, April 21 to May 2nd, 2008

JOINT STATEMENT,
OF,
LAO HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL, SOCIETY FOR THE THREATENED PEOPLES
INTERNATIONAL, (ECOSOC STATUS), THE UNITED NATION NGO'S COMMITTEE,
(ECOSOC STATUS) AND EARTH PEOPLE.

Madam Chair, members of the Permanent Forum, representatives of the
Indigenous Peoples, UN agencies, and NGO's.

We do not support radical movements calling for independence, nor do we
support any movement to overthrow the Lao government. We are here to
call your attention for the Hmong Lao crisis and obtain access to the
international community in providing humanitarian assistance to the Hmong
people hiding in the jungles of Laos.

For years, you have heard our statements and recommendations regarding
the genocide against the internally displaced Hmong people hiding in the
remote jungles of Laos and the refugees that have escaped to Thailand.

You have received reports from respected agencies like Amnesty
International and other credible sources. Yet, absolutely nothing has been
done by this forum to assist us, even to help set up appointments in bringing
key leaders to a roundtable discussion.

Instead, you supported the censorship requested by Vietnam and cancelled
our side event—banning our film, "Hunted like Animals" from UN
premises.

You have done the same with our brothers and sisters, the Khmer Khrom.

Your actions last year contributed to the suffering of five hundred more
people, mostly women and children, in the jungles of Laos that were
ambushed, chased, and killed by the Lao and Vietnamese military.

Those fortunate enough to escape to Thailand have already been repatriated
back to Laos, or, is threatened with forced deportation – accused of being
economic migrants.

Tom Rainey-Smith wrote in the Asia Pacific Journal that "*western nations have already indicated they will resettle these refugees, but the Lao and Thai governments continue to push for repatriation.*" Last year 153 Hmong Lao refugees, screened by UNHCR and accepted by western countries for resettlement, were blocked by the Thai government for further processing.

Just recently, Radio Free Asia also reported the Lao government ordered all Hmong in the jungles of Laos be annihilated with reward of \$600.00 per head.

Richard Fernandez wrote in the Belmont Club that "*the reported object is to eliminate and exterminate some 15,000 Hmong Lao in hiding. Hmong in Laos are bracing for these new anticipated attacks by Laos and Vietnam, which are expected to be massive and ruthless.*"

Therefore, Madam Chair, we are recommending that the Permanent Forum must consider the following:

Please engage a dialogue with the Lao government, along with the international community, to gain access to crisis zones, provide humanitarian assistance and monitoring to resolve these crises peacefully.

Please engage a dialogue with the Thai government to allow the rest of the Hmong Lao refugees in Thailand for proper screening by the UNHCR.

Thank you, Madam Chair and the members of the Permanent Forum.