

**Khmers Kampuchea-Krom Federation (KKF)  
(Speech by Mr. Thach Vien, KKF Chairman)  
(Thursday, September 14, 2017)**

**Distinguished Delegations, Guests and Friends :**

**It's my honor and my pleasure today to have opportunity to talk to you about the situation of the Khmer Krom Therava Buddhism in Kampuchea Krom (South Vietnam). Buddhism is not only a religion for us, but it is a special philosophy ingrained deeply in our culture and our tradition since centuries ago. So if something hurt to our Theravada Buddhism, it hurt as well to our heart.**

**I think the World Organizations and Institutions make effort every day to improve the human expectation for better life through the conscience parallel with the development of technologies and sciences. UN through multiple laws and conventions with the participation of several willing State members and Civil Society look for this effectiveness to avoid the social conflict. But a number of Member States remain deaf ears and continue to violate the United Nations principal and recommendations. As an example, at the end of 2016 more than 60 HR organizations including HRW, Amnesty International, KKF, etc ... made a petition recommending the President of Vietnamese National Assembly to reexamine several articles of the project laws for Religion and Belief which violate the UN Convention, but the later remains deaf ears.**

**And then, through this mocking gesture even against the Vietnamese Constitution, art 24.2 stipulate that : *The State respects and protects freedom of belief and of religion*" the government of Vietnam continue to betray their conscience by mistreating the Khmer Krom as follow :**

- Considering the limit time of this intervention, the previous reports on the awful persecutions such as killing of our Senior Therava Buddhism in prison, torture to death or injection of poison or drag since 1975 to 2006 are not enumerated below.**
- On February 6th 2007, more than a dozen of spiritual Monks leaders have been defrocked without ceremony or dignity for participating in a peaceful demonstration demanding religious freedom. Five of them were defrocked, tortured and were serving 2-4 years prison for organizing the protest.**
- on 27 February 2007, after participating in a peaceful demonstration in front of the Vietnamese embassy in Phnom Penh, Venerable Eang Sok Thoeun, was killed cruelly by throat slitting in his room at Tronom Chroeng pagoda, Boeng Thom commune, Ang Snuol district, Kandal province, under mysterious circumstances.**
- Venerable Tim Sakhorn, Cambodian citizen of Khmer Krom descendent was arrested, defrocked and deported by Cambodia authorities to Vietnam on June 30, 2007. On November 8, 2007, Venerable Tim Sakhorn was condemned to one year imprisonment under Article 87 of Vietnam's penal code on the charges of "Undermining National Unity".**

- On 17 December 2007, approximately 50 Khmer-Krom Buddhist monks in Phnom Penh, Cambodia marched peacefully to Vietnamese Embassy to hand up a petition. The petition called on the VC government to release Venerable Tim Sakhorn and five other Khmer-Krom Buddhist monks currently imprisoned in Khleang province. The Vietnam Embassy refused to take the petition and ordered the Cambodian police to disperse the monks.
- In May 2013.- Venerable Liv Ny who is the head of the Khmer Krom Serey Tasek Buddhist Temple was locked up in jail for four years from May 2013 to May 2017.

His only crime was his refusal to defrock Venerable Thach Thuol (one of the members of the monks in his temple) who resisted the order from the Vietnamese government authorities to stop his teaching the Khmer language, the Khmer history, geography to the Khmer Krom students in his temple and at the homes of the Khmer Krom population in his village.

Later on, Venerable Liv Ny was released from the prison after serving his four years sentences. Two years after his imprisonment, his father passed away due to his sadness and depression about the imprisonment of his son.

Venerable Liv Ny, while he was in jail, swore to God that he will re-ordain as the Buddhist monk again, according to the Khmer Krom Buddhist tradition, to pay his respect and appreciation to his dead father.

He kept his promise, after his release from the prison, and being re-ordained in a large Buddhist traditional ceremony in his home village. Unfortunately, the Vietnamese government authority did not allow him to become a Buddhist monk again.

Liv Ny insisted on doing that. Finally, during that re-ordain ceremony, the Vietnamese government officials and the police came to stop the ceremony suddenly and threatened to imprison Liv Ny again.

- Venerable Thach Thuol is still locked up inside the prison in Vietnam for six years from May 2013 until May 2019.
- Wat “Sra Laung” Buddhist Temple in Khet “Khleang” (Soc Trang Province) in the Mekong Delta of Southern Vietnam:  
The Vietnamese used the compound in that Khmer Krom Buddhist Temple as the Flea Market to sell merchandises, live animals such as fishes, chickens, ducks, alcohol beverages, etc.... which is completely against the rule of Khmer Krom Pagoda.

The Khmer Kroms and the Buddhist monks peacefully protested and requested the Vietnamese government authorities to close that illegal market. But, there were no successes at all regarding these efforts.

- Wat “Me Peang” Buddhist Temple in Khet “Preah Tra Peang” (Tra Vinh Province) in the Mekong Delta of Southern Vietnam:

The Khmer Krom people greatly considered the Khmer Krom Buddhist Temples as their most respected and sacred lands and public properties. Unfortunately,

**the Vietnamese people near the compound of “Wat Me Peang” Buddhist Temple grabbed these pieces of lands to build their own homes.**

**Previously, a large chunk of this temple’s lands was chopped off by the Vietnamese government to build the public school and the road already.**

**When the Khmer Krom Buddhist monks protested and asked them to move away, these Vietnamese families, with the collaborations and corruptions from the Vietnamese police and the Vietnamese court system, insisted that these Vietnamese people have the rights to own these large chunk of the Buddhist temple lands.**

**They threatened to beat and to arrest the Khmer Krom Buddhist monks and other Khmer Krom populations who were supporting this temple.**

**This is the summary of the Khmer Krom suffering on their Buddhism belief from the Republic Socialist of Vietnam and that continue to last every day.**

**Thank you for your attention**