



# សហគមន៍ខ្មែរកម្ពុជាក្រាម - ទ្វីបអាមេរិកខាងជើង

**KHMER KAMPUCHEA KROM COMMUNITY-NORTH AMERICA  
LA COMMUNAUTÉ DU KHMER KAMPUCHEA KROM- L'AMÉRIQUE DU NORD**

The Honorable Condoleezza Rice  
Secretary of State  
U.S. Department of State  
2201 C Street NW  
Washington, DC 20520

**Dear Secretary Condoleezza Rice,**

Firstly, I wish, on behalf of our members and supporters and on my own behalf, to express our deepest gratitude to you, and U.S. embassies in Cambodia and Vietnam for your continued support and taking measures to improve the human and religious rights in Vietnam and Cambodia. Fundamental human and religious rights of the indigenous Khmers in Kampuchea Krom (Mekong Delta or South Vietnam) mostly are not respected by the ruling Vietnamese authorities.

I would like to bring to your attention of the recent development in the Kingdom of Cambodia. On June 30, 2007 Chief Abbot Tim Sakhorn, Buddhist monk of Wat Phnom Den North, Phsa village, Phnom Den commune, Kirivong district, Takeo province, was invited to attend a meeting held at the provincial Buddhist office. His Venerable Tim Sakhorn was forcibly defrocked (disrobed) or leave monkhood against his will and the Buddhist teaching. On the same day, he was abducted by a group of people and transported swiftly to Vietnam (according to the Cambodian Ministry of Interior).

The Cambodian Supreme Buddhist leaders, the highest religious institution in the country, Vens. Tep Vong and Non Nget issued a directive to defrock Ven. Tim Sakhorn for his alleged action to dilute (destroy) the friendship of Cambodia-Vietnam.

The directive is unconstitutional and against the Buddhist rule. The procedure to disrobe a monk is also illegal. It is a blatant human right violation and contrary to the UN Charter and Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

According to the Cambodian Constitution, Khmers of Kampuchea Krom (Buddhist monks and lay people), who arrived in Cambodia are automatically Khmer citizens.

The safety, security and health of His Venerable Tim Sakhorn remain unknown.

My colleagues, members, and supporters in the United States, Canada, worldwide, especially in Cambodia are very concerned.

We wish to urgently request, Your Honorable, to intervene according to laws of Kingdom of Cambodia, Vietnam, and the United Nations to secure the release of His Ven. Tim Sakhorn.

We wish to see the safe return of His Venerable Tim Sakhorn from Vietnam to Cambodia, the involved authorities re-ordain the monk, and restore his status as Chief Abbot of his temple.

We wish to see the Cambodian Ministry of Cult and Religious Affairs' Minister Khun Haing and the highest Buddhist institution rescind their dated June 8, 2007 6-point directive prohibiting Buddhist monks from participating in strike, rally, demonstration and Dharma Walk or March for Peace.

We wish to see the Cambodian national Buddhist institution ceases all threats and intimidations of further illegal defrocking and kidnapping upon the Buddhist monks against their will and Buddhist practice, especially the 11 Khmer Kampuchea Krom Buddhist leaders and non-governmental organizations' leaders and human right activists.

I wish to thank you, Honorable, for your assistance in this matter.

Please accept my highest regard.

Lowell, United States

July 6, 2007



Sakal M.P. Kim  
Executive Director

Cc: -The Great Supreme Buddhist Patriarch Tep Vong, Cambodia  
-The Supreme Buddhist Patriarch Non Nget, Cambodia  
-The Most Venerable Dhammathero Sao Khon, President of the Community of Khmer Buddhist Monks of United States  
-The Most Venerable Dr. Hok Savann, Canada  
-His Majesty Norodom Sihanouk, Retired King of Cambodia  
-His Majesty The King of Cambodia Norodom Sihamoni  
-Royal Government of Cambodia  
-U.S. House of Representatives and Senate  
-The Parliament and Senate of Cambodia  
-United Nations  
-Foreign Embassies in Cambodia  
-Royal Embassy of Cambodia in Washington, D.C.  
-Embassy of Vietnam in Washington, D.C.  
-Buddhist temples  
-The Transnational Radical Party  
-Political parties  
-Khmer Kampuchea Krom non-governmental organizations  
-Human Rights Watch  
-Press  
-Archive



Chief Abbot Tim Sakhorn  
Wat Phnom Den North (near VN border)  
Phsa village, Phnom Den commune  
Kirivong district, Takeo province, Kingdom of Cambodia

Photo: KI Media