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KHMER KAMPUCHEA KROM COMMUNITY
LA COMMUNAUTÉ DU KHMER KAMPUCHEA KROM

Welcome

The Honorable Marco Pannella

Member of the European Parliament

President of the Transnational Radical Party

May I pay my highest homage to your venerable Buddhist clergy,
Honorable Marco Pannella, Member of the European Parliament, President of the
Transnational Radical Party, and his Honorable's Delegation Members,
Honorable Guests and Compatriots,
Ladies and Gentlemen,
Greetings and Salutations,

In the name of the citizens of the Khmer Kampuchea Krom and on my own behalf, I would like to welcome, wholeheartedly, the Honorable Marco Pannella, Member of the European Parliament, President of the Transnational Radical Party, and members of his Honorable's delegation team, for your precious times in visiting our non-governmental organizations and associations. This is the fourth time that we are honored in welcoming Honorable Marco Pannella and delegation members.

In clear moral support of justice, promotion of human rights, defense of the weak from powerful people from violating their rights, and lending moral supports to us in an ideal struggle for human rights, right of religion and belief, and importantly the protection of indigenous identity in Kampuchea Krom, presently in southern region of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam as well.

We are informed that in his capacity as the President of the Transnational Radical Party and Member of the European Parliament, his Honorable sacrificed greatly in assisting different citizens and peoples around the globe in their quest for independence, autonomy, and the rights of the indigenous. Just to name a few.

Recently on October 22, 2008, the members of the European Parliament voted for the landmark European Parliament resolution on the new EU-Vietnam Partnership and Cooperation Agreement and Human Rights stresses that the Government of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam fully respects her own people's human rights in accordance to the international standard, especially the Khmer Kampuchea Krom people.

The EU resolution provides hope to the people of the Khmer Kampuchea Krom that has never existed in [our] own history since Kampuchea Krom fell under the control of imperial Vietnam;

there has never been an international organization that paid any attention to the sufferings of the people of the Khmer Kampuchea Krom.

On this excellent opportune occasion, we, in the name of the citizens of the Khmer Kampuchea Krom, would like to profoundly express our gratitude to Your Honorable President, Vice President, and Members of the European Parliament, for the important resolution in providing hope to the more than 13,000,000 (Thirteen millions) Khmer Kampuchea Krom people that one day we will live in peace, which we can enjoy complete human rights and freedom on our own [ancestral] land. We are prepared to cooperate with you, when needed, in order for this resolution to realize.

Mr. President and Delegation Members,

Kampuchea Krom is composed of 68,965 square kilometers, more than 13 million [Khmer] people residing in all 21 provinces and municipalities, 567 Theravada Buddhist pagodas. The most populated Khmer regions are: Preah Trapeang province (in Vietnamese Tra Vinh), Khleang province (Soc Trang), Mort Chrouk province (Chau Doc), Prek Russey province (Can Tho), Me Sor province (Me Tho), Pol Leav province (Bac Lieu), Tuk Khmau province (Ca Mau), Long Hor province (Vinh Long), Peam (Ha Tien), Peam Barach (Rach Gia), Raung Domrei province (Tay Ninh). The Khmer people live in poverty; the fundamental human rights are limited. To salvage the citizens of the Khmer Kampuchea Krom from the systematic elimination of ethnic identity and obtain their human rights, we would like to request Your Honorable and the European Parliament with some pressing issues in order to find solutions for the Khmer Kampuchea Krom people as followed:

1. Unconditionally release the 5 Khmer Buddhist monks, who remain behind bar in Khleang provincial prison: 1) Ven. Danh Toan, 2) Ven. Kim Moeun, 3) Ven. Thach Thoeung, 4) Ven. Ly Hoang, and 5) Ven. Ly Son.
2. Repatriate Venerable Tim Sakhorn to the Kingdom of Cambodia so that he could be reunited with his family.
3. Allow Khmer Buddhism in Kampuchea Krom to be independent from the control of the Communist Party of Vietnam and the state-controlled Buddhist institution of Vietnam.
4. Cease the systematic 'change' of Khmer citizenship to Kinh (or Vietnamese) without their consents or systematically force the Khmer citizens to take up the Vietnamese on their birth paper.
5. Cease identifying or calling officially Khmer Kampuchea Krom as 'Khmer Nambo.' The use of original name as Khmer Krom or Khmer Kampuchea Krom should be kept.
6. Cease the banning of media access, use of internet, foreign radio services, and publication of news in Khmer literature and language.
7. Cease banning of assembly to express political opinions and right to demonstration.
8. Cease all threats, intimidations and harassments upon the Khmer Kampuchea Krom in all forms of profiling.
9. Cease confiscating lands from the Khmer Kampuchea Krom.
10. Allow Khmer schools to reopen without monitoring and investigating by the Vietnamese authorities.
11. Allow the establishment of civic, human rights and religious associations for the interest of the Khmer Kampuchea Krom community.

12. Allow the United Nations and the European Union to establish human rights offices in the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, especially in the regions of the Khmer Kampuchea Krom.

We have high confidence that following the European Parliament's adoption of resolution on democracy, human rights, and the new EU-Vietnam Partnership and Cooperation Agreement and Human Rights on October 22, 2008 and following his Honorable and delegation team completed their visits to the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, the situation of human rights will lead to tangible improvements.

Once again we renew our deep gratitude to your Honorable and members of the delegation for your honorable presence and lending your moral supports with sympathy toward the Khmer Kampuchea Krom people. Through your Honorable, also, we renew our utmost gratitude to the members of the European Parliament for adopting an important resolution on protecting the human rights of the Khmer Kampuchea Krom community in [Kampuchea Krom] the Socialist Republic of Vietnam. We will remember in our heart always of this great gesture.

In the seasons of Christmas and universal New Year of 2009, we would like to wish your Honorable and delegation members and your family with happiness, and may your mission prevail in protecting justice and uphold and promote human rights for all mankind in this world.

May your Honorable and members accept our highest regards.

Phnom Penh, December 21, 2008
Representative of the NGOs and Associations
of the Khmer Kampuchea Krom
[Signed & Sealed]

Thach Setha
Former Senator of Cambodia
President of the Khmer Kampuchea Krom Community