

5th Session of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues
New York, United Nations Headquarters, 15-26 May 2006

COLLECTIVE STATEMENT

Item 4 b)

Human Rights, with special emphasis on an interactive dialogue with the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on the situation of the human rights and fundamental freedoms of indigenous people

Madame Chairperson,

We wish to come directly to our recommendations, as time is valuable for all participants here today.

Mr. Rudolfo Stavenhagen, we thank you for your previous efforts and concerns for our people in Laos, the Hmong Lao, enduring genocide by Vietnamese and Laotian military, hiding in a Special Zone, created by Laos, where our peoples are trapped, attacked, starved and massacred.

Mr. Rudolfo Stavenhagen:

- We urge you to put your full attention to visit as soon as possible the conflict area in Laos, to write a full report on the situation of our people in hiding.
- We urge you to request as soon as possible an invitation to visit Laos by Laos, who denies any armed conflict, or the existence of the Special Zone.

We, the US based Hmong Lao Organizations, refugees from Laos, will fully assist you to implement your work for our peoples in despair.

- We further hope that you will allow us during this Session a special meeting with our Hmong Lao delegation and to advise and help us to understand and direct us where else we could go to have this problem effectively addressed.

We hereby submit to you a FULL REPORT of 135 pages, on the situation of the Hmong Lao in the armed conflict area, and the refugees in Thailand, from the conflict area.

We request to the Permanent Forum:

- To include into your final report your concerns about the genocide conducted by Laos, and Vietnam.
- To implement in Laos the same work method as previously for the Chittagong Hills Tract, Bangladesh, where you worked in partnership with the UN team UNDP on the ground.

In Laos you will find, as in Bangladesh, the UNDP country team, and we hope you will contact them as soon as possible to start this important work.

We submitted last week to all PFI members and the secretariat a FULL REPORT on the situation and claims of the Hmong from the armed conflict areas.

We request to the United States:

- To acknowledge your duties, because of us helping you during the Vietnam conflict - our people left behind are in this unresolved conflict situation.
- To therefore raise your effort to have the attacks in Laos stopped.
- To consider financial help to Thailand and order that the refugees are allowed to merge into Thai's Hmong villages with programs designed for them to establish a prosperous new life.
- To open a resettlement program to allow the refugees in Thailand to join us here, in our well established community of over 500 000 Hmong Lao.

We urge Member States:

- To help us by putting pressure on the Laotian and Vietnamese governments to stop eliminating Hmong Lao families-in-hiding in the remote jungles.
- To help with a permanent solution, the refugees need a new home, please consider to welcome them in your countries.
- To help Thailand with financial support to ensure that the current refugees are allowed to stay in Thailand and are given special assistance to integrate, and to receive homes and land.

We request to the Lao PDR:

- To stop the military aggressions and genocide on our people back home
- Stop denying that the planned elimination of our people exist in Laos
- To welcome our Hmong Lao people who come out of the jungle and allow them a free and peaceful life without intimidation.
- To stop the forced relocation of our people, they do not want to be forced out of their environment and land, the highland belongs to their way of life and identity.
- To give our people the tools they need to become productive members of the society by free will, and allow them the dignity they deserve.

You would see that it would benefit your country's interest to have Hmong Lao citizens by free will and in trust to you, you can start today towards a walk in beauty. Instead of murder and terror.

We request to Thailand :

- To stop denying the UN system access to the over 6000 Hmong people in the refugee camp in Petchabun , and therefore to allow the UNHCR access into the refugee camps so that the refugees can be pre screened and receive due process and can be granted refugee status
- To help with food assistance, the refugees are hungry
- To allow those who wish to remain in Thailand to do so, so that they can merge into the well established Hmong Thai villages where they would be very welcomed (we are all relatives).
- To ratify the UN refugee Convention and Statute,

We urge the UN system:

- That the UNHCR implements its mandate, and enter the refugee camp in Petchabun after one year of denial, and start due process to evaluate and determine who is in need of protection and refugee status
- To all other special Rapporteurs to consider our peoples situation
- To UNICEF, WHO, UNIFEM, ILO, UNDP and all other UN agencies to heighten your efforts and help address our peoples sufferings, in Laos, in the conflict areas in the refugee camps.

Thank you Madame Chairperson.

Collective statement by:

United Lao Council for Peace, Freedom, and Reconstruction; Hmong Americans Mutual Assistance; Lao Human Rights Council; United Hmong International; Lao Movement for Democracy; Hmong International New Year Foundation; Earth Peoples, Society for Threatened Peoples International with consultative status to the ECOSOC.