



## **Report on the Press Conference**

on

### **“Listening to the Voices of the Victims by the Border Conflict between Cambodia and Thailand”**

### **Introduction**

This report presents about the summary result of the press conference on “**Listening to the Voices of the Victims by the Border Conflict between Cambodia and Thailand**” which was held on 13 September 2010 in Bangkok. The event was co-organized and co-facilitated by BKSN (based in Cambodia) and PEF (based in Thailand). The Cambodian team was financed by AFSC.

The objective of the press conference was to enable the victims of the border conflict, especially those who have been treated violently by Thai armed forces, together with Cambodian and Thai activists to make a joint appeal to the Thai government for justice and to appeal to both Cambodian and Thai governments to address the conflict in a peaceful manner and ensure harmony along the border for the mutual benefit of the two peoples.

For the detail of the program of the event, please see **Attachment 3: Tentative Plan.**

### **Achievements**

Cambodian and Thai border victims were given opportunities to voice out their problems, suggested solutions and express their needs on the border conflict in Bangkok through different channels.

One of the Cambodian victims and 3 of the Thai victims who live along the Khmer and Thai border which is being under military confrontation were supported to voice their problems, recommendations and their needs for harmony and development along the border between Cambodia and Thailand. Those victims as follow:

1. Cambodian: Mr. Saing Yon (Cambodian), lives in Kroch Sakhon village, Kroch Sakhon commune, Samrong district, Banteay Meanchey, borders Sorin province of Thailand. He is the father of Saing Rith, 16 year, boy, was shot to injury and burned while he still alive by Thai black shirt soldier along the border; and
2. Thais: Ms. Chit Panpop, Ms. Pranom Baoton, and Mr. Viset Duangkeaw, from Phum Sarol (Srol) village, Sisaket province borders Preahvihear province of Cambodia. Their income generating activities are related to services for tourists who come to visit Preah Vihear Temple.

The activity was facilitated by BKSN which was led by Ubasak Sotha Ros, and PEF which was led by Ms. Chalida Tajarosuk; who are the key members of the Khmer-Thai People Reconciliation (KTPR).

The voiced concerns of the victims' representatives were they have lost incomes almost zero since there has been the military confrontation at the border that affected to many things to their lives mainly security, food and other basic needs, education of their children; and their social relationship between the Khmers-Thais who live along the border, used to be like brothers and sisters have been very difficult. They strongly wanted the situation to come back to normal and live together as brother and sisterhood.

Mr. Saing Yon wanted Thai government to provide justice to his son as he said that he is a child; he knew nothing about the border, he just looked for food by following adult people. He asked both governments to stop violent actions against human being and to address it legally. He also requested for harmony and border development between the two peoples. He also said that the life along the border is difficult economically and socially. *For more information about their messages, please read an Article of the Prachatai (Thai local news) at **Attachment 2. Article of the Prachatai.***

As first activity, the representatives of the victims participated in a press conference at FCCT: Foreign Correspondent's Club of Thailand. There were several journalists participated in the conference such as Bangkok Post, GUEVARA New York: Creative Media Agency, Prachatai (Thai local news), an Australian news, etc. Before the start of the Press Conference, the audience was shown about the brief video of the KTPR in June 2010. The conference was held on 13 September 2010; started at 8 pm and ended at 10pm.



Speakers: Representatives of the Border Victims



Saing Yon gave interviews: Bangkok Post News, right photo & Creative Media, left photo



Saing Yon with Repr. of Southeast Asia Regional Cooperation in Human Development (left) & Ms. Chalida (PEF) right



Thai victims with Bangkok Post



Sotha Ros, BKSN Representative with Bangkok Post (right photo) Post & Prachatai News (left photo)



Cambodian (center) and Thai victims after the conference



Moderators: Chalida (left) and Sotha

After the press conference, all of the victims were coordinated by PEF & BKSN to meet with Dr. Amara, Chairman of the National Human Rights Commission of Thailand in order to submit the report of human right violations at the border prepared by ADHOC and to seek for just assistance. The meeting was held on 14 September 2010 from 11-12pm.



Photos of the meeting with the Chairman of the National Human Rights Commission of Thailand



The Representatives of the visited victims filled in the complain Forms at the National HR Commission of Thailand

After the meeting with Dr. Amara, the whole team participated in an interview program of the Voice TV of Thailand in Bangkok. The key points that the people talked were suffering of the people along the border by the border conflict and suggested solutions and needs to the border conflict.



Session in the Voice TV Studio

After the Voice TV, Mr. Sotha Ros talked in the ASEAN Talks of an International TV called MCOT that broadcasts in 10 ASEAN countries. The topic of the talk was What and Why Khmer-Thai People Reconciliation (KTPR).



The both Khmer and Thai teams were separated back home safely on 14 September 2010.

## **Conclusion:**

The press conference was achieved more than the plan. We was successfully organized the press conference to enable the representatives of the victims of the border conflict, who never had a chance to voice their voices, to voice to the governments and the public. Besides, we were able to initiate and send them to meet with the Chairman of the National Human Right High Commission of Thailand and joined talking in two national and international TVs based in Bangkok. However, we still need to follow up the impact of the activity, especially how the governments have been received their messages.

Besides from financial support from AFSC, BKSN has achieved this through the efficient cooperation pre-works of PEF which was led by Ms. Chalida.

Reported by Ubasak Sotha Ros,  
BKSN Representative & on Behalf of PEF  
30 September 2010

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'Ubasak Sotha Ros', written in a cursive style.

## Attachment 1: Financial Report



**Financial Report**  
**Budget Variance**  
**Press Conference in Bangkok**  
**Date: 10-12/9/2010**

Nº	Description	Unit	Qunt	Unit Price	Budgeted	Expense	Variance	Note
<b>I</b>	<b>Transportation</b>							
1	Victims from Odomeanchey to Poi Pet/Poipet	Way	1	\$ 20.00	\$ 20.00			
2	ADHOC staff from Odormeachey/Poi Pet	Way	2	\$ 20.00	\$ 40.00			
3	Bus PP/Poipet for the BKSN & 1 media	Way	3	\$ 10.00	\$ 30.00			
4	Tranvel of the vitims: Odomeancheay/PP to issue passports	Way	1	\$ 20.00	\$ 20.00			
5			2	\$ 93.75	\$ 187.50			
6	Transport in the town				\$ 60.00			
	<b>Sub Total</b>				\$ 357.50	417.74	\$ (60.24)	
<b>II</b>	<b>Meal/Accommodations/Others</b>							
1	Meal/ammodations of 5 Khmer participants in BK	Person	5	\$ 60.00	\$ 300.00			
2	Meal for the victims in during traveling & staying in Phnom Penh to issue the passports	Day	2.5	\$ 10.00	\$ 25.00			
	<b>Sub Total</b>				\$ 325.00	71.36	\$ 253.64	
<b>III</b>	<b>Legal Documents for the Victims' Families</b>							
1	Passport for the victims	person	1	\$ 185.00	\$ 185.00			
2	Birth certificates & population certificates from the CC	person	2	\$ 10.00	\$ 20.00			
3	Other expenses at the border check point		6	\$ 3.00	\$ 18.00			

BKSN, Press Conference Report, Sept 2010

	<b>Sub Total</b>				\$ 223.00	224.00	\$ (1.00)	
<b>IV</b>	<b>Media</b>							
	Media				\$ 30.00			
	<b>Sub Total</b>				\$ 30.00	0.00	\$ 30.00	
<b>V</b>	<b>Materials and documentation</b>							
	1 Recording & documentation	0	\$ -		\$ -			
	2 Materials - USB memory				\$ -			
	3 Conference Room				\$ 156.25			Paid by PEF
	<b>Sub Total</b>				\$ 156.25	18.00	\$ 138.25	
<b>VI</b>	<b>Communication</b>							
	Cellphone & others				\$ 70.00			
	<b>Sub Total</b>				\$ 70.00	146.48	\$ (76.48)	
<b>VII</b>	<b>Staff</b>						\$ -	
	Allowance for the General Secretary: Aug - Sept 2010	0	\$ -		\$ -	0.00	\$ -	
	<b>SUM SUB TCTAL</b>				\$ 1,161.75			
<b>VIII</b>	<b>Contingency (5%)</b>				\$ 58.09	52.07	\$ 6.02	
	<b>Total Budget Request</b>				\$ 1,219.84			
	<b>Total Budget Received from AFSC</b>				\$ 1,200.00	929.65	\$ 270.35	

Prepared by Chanthorn Kit, General Secretary

Agreed by Ubasak Sotha Ros, Representative



## Attachment 2: Article of the Prachatai

Thursday, 30 September 2010

### Local Thais and Cambodians want peace back at Preah Vihear

Wed, 15/09/2010 - 16:28

Representatives of local Thais and Cambodians along the border at Preah Vihear Temple have asked the National Human Rights Commission to help local people affected by the border dispute.

On 13 Sept, representatives from both sides of the border and the People's Empowerment Foundation held a press conference at the Foreign Correspondents Club of Thailand.

Sang Youn from Cambodia's Oddar Meanchey, whose young son was shot and burned by Thai soldiers after he trespassed into the disputed area while collecting forest products, said through an interpreter that he was not angry with the Thai soldiers, but he wanted both countries to bring peace back to the border.

Wisit Duangkaew, a local Thai from Bhumisarol Subdistrict, Kantharalak District, Si Sa Ket, said that the problems were not the fault of people of either country, but of their governments.

'It's not my fault or the Cambodian people's. But it's the rules which have been set up by the governments to bar us from maintaining our relationship as it used to be. People on both sides could see eye-to-eye in the past. Now soldiers have been deployed instead. I wish we could return to being brothers and sisters again,' he said.

A recent meeting on 9 Sept in an attempt to address the impact of the closure of the border was obstructed and eventually cancelled by a group of people who called themselves patriots.

'The government should listen to several groups of people, not only this group of patriots, and should look at the people living in the area,' Wisit said.

Pranom Buaton, a clothing vendor at the border, said that since the border closure in 2008 her family had been severely affected as she could not open her shop and her stock of clothes had become outdated and she had to distribute them among relatives and neighbours. Her daughter, who was a student nurse in Khon Kaen, almost failed to finish her studies for lack of money.

'I had to come to work as a house maid in Bangkok for several months at 6,000 baht a month,' she said. She returned to her province just two months ago after her daughter graduated and, she hoped, would be able to help with the burden as the youngest child was studying in high school in Si Sa Ket.

Chit Phanthob, who sells consumer goods like soft drinks, food, rice, detergent, soap, and toothpaste at the border, said that before the closure she traded about 40,000 baht a day, but she faced losses once the border was closed.

She then rented land to grow rice, and was hired as a general labourer. She had to carry her ID card every time she went to the paddy field because the authorities were very strict on checking it.

'There is a group of people who created this situation. We have petitioned the provincial governor and the media to pay attention to us. They said that they would find a new place for us, but nobody knew where. Now I want the old place reopened. We want to trade and have peace with our Cambodian relatives,' she said, adding, 'the people who call themselves a group of patriots came from Bangkok. But we are the people who live here.'

On 14 Sept, Chalida Tajaroensak, Director of the People's Empowerment Foundation, and the representatives met with Amara Pongsapit, Chair of the National Human Rights Commission.

Chalida said that her group asked to the government through the NHRC to find a new place for the locals to run their cross-border businesses.

'So far, the negotiations have been obstructed by a group of people in the province who received information from a people's network in Bangkok. The locals have been affected as they cannot trade or communicate with people in Cambodia. And they cannot move to relief spots because there are already traders there. So they want the government to find a new place for them. We hope that we will get a positive reaction from the government,' she said.

**Source:**

<http://www.prachatai.com/journal/2010/09/31089>

[http://www.prachatai3.info/english/node/2035?utm\\_source=feedburner&utm\\_medium=feed&utm\\_campaign=Feed:+prachataienglish+\(Prachatai+in+English\)&utm\\_content=Google+Reader](http://www.prachatai3.info/english/node/2035?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=feed&utm_campaign=Feed:+prachataienglish+(Prachatai+in+English)&utm_content=Google+Reader)

## Attachment 3

### **Tentative Plan Press Conference on Listening to the Voices of the Victims by the Border Conflict between Cambodia and Thailand**

**Objectives:** To enable the victims of the border conflict, especially those who have been treated violently by Thai armed forces, together with Cambodia and Thai activists to make a joint appeal to the Thai government for justice and to appeal to both Cambodian and Thai governments to address the conflict in a peaceful manner and ensure harmony along the border for the mutual benefit of the two peoples.

**Duration/Schedule: 10 –12/09/010**

- 12/9: Traveling from Cambodia to Bangkok
- 13/09:
  - Press Conference
  - Draft Plan for the Joint Committee Meeting and others
- 14/09: The victims and other partners travel back to Cambodia

**Place:** At FCCT, Bangkok, Thailand.

**Participants:**

**Cambodia:** There will be 5 people: 1 victim, 2 BKSN leaders, 1 media person and 1 ADHOC/HR.

**Thailand:**

There will be (5): 2 PEF, 2 border victims from Sisaket and 1 media.

**Facilitations:**

The facilitation of the conference will be lead by PEF (Chalida) and BKSN (Sotha Ros)

**Budgeting:**

BKSN will be responsible for the costs of the meals, transportation, accommodations and legal documents for the victims. PEF will be responsible to cover Thai participants' costs in Thailand.

**Panelists:** The Father of Saing Rith, Phumsarol villagers, ADHOC Samrong, Mr. Akkarapong-Thammasat University.

**Facilitators:** Chalida Tajaroensuk PEF-MC and Sotha Ros (BKSN).