

(This is translation of the Khmer original)

**KINGDOM OF CAMBODIA
NATION, RELIGION, KING**

29th September 2014

AN OPEN STATEMENT

by

Members of Kbal Romeas Village, Kbal Romeas Commune along Srepok River

to

H.E. Kol Samol, Chairperson of Provincial Council and President of Committee for Solving the Impacts of the Lower Sesan 2 Hydropower Dam Project

We are an ethnic Phou Nong minority group living in Kbal Romeas Village, Kbal Romeas Commune, Sesan District along Srepok River in Stung Treng Province, the Kingdom of Cambodia. We are very much concerned about the impacts of the 400MW Lower Sesan 2 (LS2) Hydropower Dam Project. Therefore, we are making this statement to express our collective voice to your committee and to the public.

First and foremost, we would like to state that we refuse to leave our village and be resettled, because:

- We are very happy to live in Kbal Romeas Village, which provides us with rich natural resources. These natural resources support our daily life. Moreover, culturally and racially, we have deep sentimental ties to our land that our ancestors have left us and next generations.
- We have beautiful land with rich natural resources that support our life and provide us with our food and income sources. These natural resources include agriculture land, land reserved for next generations, forests to raise livestock, cemeteries and ancestral graves, forbidden and sanctuary forests, rivers and other resources under the water as well as on land. These natural resources are priceless.
- These natural resources also have very strong connections with our culture, tradition and daily life, which are indispensable to us. If we lose access to these natural resources, we will lose our culture and tradition. Once we lose these natural resources and our culture and tradition, it is impossible to recover them.
- Our culture, tradition, guardian spirits and ancestral graves cannot be compensated by money or moved to other places.
- If we move out from our village, we will lose our identity as the ethnic Phou Nong minority. Our guardian spirits, ancestral graves, forbidden and sanctuary forests cannot be moved to other places.

- In accordance with international laws on Indigenous Peoples' rights and the Chinese government's Guidelines for Environmental Protection in Overseas Investment and Cooperation, any activity or development project that harms or affects identities or spiritual places of Indigenous Peoples should not be implemented.
- A development project like LS2 should make Cambodian people like us happier. But if we are moved from our village, how can we be happy? Authorities like you, who have more power and education than we do, should find good solutions to this problem rather than making us suffer. It is not fair.

Request:

We kindly request your committee to take the following actions:

- Cancel the agreement on resettlement made between CBO members and your committee in June 2014. Other villagers in Kbal Romeas Village have never agreed to be resettled.
- Take our voice as expressed above into serious consideration and re-consider resettlement and compensation policies.
- We have heard that the Government of Cambodia and the LS2 Company have agreed to redesign the project. Please disclose this information into public and conduct new research on all possible impacts which can be caused by LS2.
- Get local villagers involved in processes to conduct new research on LS2's impacts. Give us an opportunity to share our concerns and opinions on the project with you.

We hope that all the concerns and requests mentioned above will be taken into serious account and properly addressed by your committee and the Royal Government of Cambodia.

We would like to ask you, Chairperson of the Committee for Solving the Impacts, to please send your response to our requests to Mr. Dam Samnang, our community representative, in writing in Khmer language by no later than 20th October 2014.

For more information, please contact:

1. Mr. Dam Samang, Community Representative in Kbal Romea Village, mobile: 088 5 840 762, e-mail: three-s-community@hotmail.com
2. Mr. Kim Deung, Community Representative in Kbal Romeas Village, mobile: 097 7 542 042
3. Mr. Proch Rithy, Community Representative in Kbal Romeas Village, mobile: 088 9 384 901
4. Mr. Srey Lybi, Community Representative in Kbal Romeas Village, mobile: 097 5 001 806

CC to:

- Department of Industry, Mining and Energy
- Department of Economy and Finance
- Department of Environment

- Department of Rural Development
- Sesan District hall
- Kbal Romeas commune
- Village chief of Kbal Romeas
- Lower Sesan 2 Hydropower Company (Joint venture of Hydrolancang and the Royal Group) in Stung Treng
- National Assembly of Cambodia
- Ministry of Industry, Mining and Energy
- Ministry of Economy and Finance
- Ministry of Environment
- Ministry of Rural Development
- Chinese Embassy in Cambodia
- Media and civil society organizations in Mekong Region countries and internationally