

(This is translation of the Khmer original)

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

29th September 2014

AN OPEN STATEMENT

by

Community Members of Srekor 1 &2 Village, Srekor Commune along Sesan 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 Lao and Khmer group living in Srekor 1&2 Village, Srekor Commune, Sesan District along Sesan 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 compensation and resettlement, because:

- We are very happy to live in Srekor Villages, which provides us with rich natural resources. These natural resources support our daily life. Moreover, culturally and ethnically, we have deep sentimental ties to our land which our ancestors have left us and for 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 agricultural 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. We have arranged praying ceremony to Kro Harm Kor Spirit every year at Kro Harm Kor Spirit house which is located on the bank of Sesan River to request happiness of our community and also ask the spirit to protect our environment and natural resources, especially to protect/keep our river's natural flow for our generation. Kro Harm Kor spirit is important for us to connect ourselves to ancestors. If we lose this spiritual place by LS2, 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 alternative places.

- If we move out from our village, we will lose our identity as the ethnic Lao. 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.
- LS2 will bring even more tragic despair than what happened in Pol Pot's time. But government says this is bringing "development." We think a "development" should make Cambodian ordinary people like us happier. Authorities like your agency, which have more power and education than we do, should find good solutions to this problem rather than making us despair and suffer.

We kindly request your committee to take the following actions:

- Take our voice as expressed above into serious consideration and re-consider resettlement and compensation policies.
- When committee or company come to work at our village, please bring along interpreter for Laos language which will enable us to communicate and discuss.
- 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 of October 2014.

For more information, please contact:

1. Mr. Futh Kheun, Community Representative in Srekor 2 Village, mobile: 097 7 797 488
2. Mrs. Sarun Khom, Community Representative in Srekor 1 Village, mobile: 097 5 703 735
3. Mrs. Pha Vy, Community Representative in Srekor 2 Village, mobile: 088 9 384 901
4. Mr. Chann Thon, Community Representative in Srekor 1 Village, mobile: 088 5 895 006

CC to:

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

- Department of Environment
- Department of Rural Development
- Sesan District hall
- Srekor commune
- Village chief of Srekor
- 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