



Mekong Migration Network (MMN)

17 February 2011

Mekong Migration Network Statement concerning the border conflict between Thailand and Cambodia

The Mekong Migration Network is a network of civil society organizations from Burma, Cambodia, Lao PDR, Thailand, Vietnam, and Yunnan, China who have been working together for the last 10 years to promote the rights of migrants in the Mekong region through joint research, advocacy and capacity building. The MMN has 37 member organizations, 8 of which are from Cambodia and 18 from Thailand.

As a part of the Mekong civil society we are committed to promoting our cultural diversity and benefiting from the sharing of knowledge and wisdom. We are aware that for many years communication between civil society in the Mekong was extremely difficult as conflict spread through the region, we share the sorrows our region has suffered. We believed and hoped that our region was moving forwards, was moving away from conflicts and sorrows. But, the situation today between Cambodia and Thailand is moving us back not forwards.

The current armed conflict between Thailand and Cambodia has already claimed nine lives and displaced over 25,000 villagers. The Mekong Migration Network is deeply concerned for the thousands of displaced Cambodians and Thais whose lives have been severely disrupted by the clashes between the two militaries, and whose safety and security is at great risk.

We also wish to express our concern that the actions and words by our governments have given opportunities to those who would like to incite hatred between the peoples of our two countries. This is a dangerous and sad situation and we are particularly concerned for the migrant workers from Cambodia working and living in Thailand who may bear the brunt of any xenophobic rage inspired by the actions of the government leaders.

We therefore call on Prime Minister Abhisit Vejjajiva and Prime Minister Hun Sen:

- to immediately halt all military offensives and to take whatever peaceful measures are necessary to resolve the current dispute
- to ensure the security and safety of all displaced person on the border.
- to fulfill their commitments to Cambodian migrants in Thailand: for the Thai government to ensure that they are not victims of hate crimes, that they are not deported purely for being

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Cambodian and that they can live and work in safety and security. For the Cambodian government to ensure that migrants have access to consular services as needed.

We, as Mekong civil society, wish to share our tomorrows peacefully and joyfully, and in doing so, we believe that we will also have to learn to share our yesterdays.

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