

**Kingdom of Cambodia
Nation Religion King****Declaration**

We, the Bunong of Bousra commune, Pechr Chrada district, Mondulkiri province, comprising of 97 families with approximately 485 members, represented by 9 elderly and young people named in this declaration, express our deep disappointment with the decision of the judge of the Nanterre court of Paris city, France, on July 2, 2021, that was not made in our favor. The decision of July 2, 2021 constitutes the greatest injustice, which was not acceptable to us.

1. The judge of the French court argued that we, the Bunong of Bousra commune, do not possess tenure right according to the law of Cambodia.

In fact, we have been the owners of the land in the village since before the Cambodian land law was created, and we are a group of people who have used and exploited the land and non-timber forest products in accordance with traditions and the law in force, for which Bolloré company, through Socfin company, has cleared and planted rubber trees. Article 23, point 2 of the Land Law stipulates that *prior to their legal status being determined under a law on communities, the groups actually existing at present shall continue to manage their community and immovable property according to their traditional customs and shall be subject to the provisions of this law.*

2. In addition to the protection, and recognition by the community land law, we also have our Bunong indigenous community identification letter issued by the Ministry of Rural Development and our by-laws registered at the Ministry of Interior.
3. Our land has a special connection to the society, culture, traditions, economy and existence of our indigenous Bunong community, of which we cannot be deprived. The decision rendered by the French court did not respond to our human rights reasons as set out in the Universal Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the laws of regarding our Bunong's rights to immovable property. Since the state has never registered the land for us, we do not possess collective land title; though, we have other rights over these lands and forests that the Bolloré group, via Socfin, has completely destroyed. We have the rights to use and exploit this land in accordance with Cambodian and international laws. The Bolloré group, owner of Socfin in Cambodia, has invested in rubber plantations on the plantations and lands on which we depend for our livelihoods and beliefs since 2008 to date. Because of the decision to invest, to clear the forests which include our sacred forests, spirit forests, sources of our daily food have been lost. We do not oppose to development, but the development by the Bolloré has not had any consultation with us, nor has it obtained our consent.
4. Some members of our community are still in detention because this French company filed a complaint to Mondulkiri Provincial Court for customary logging on their land, and 15 other people are under trial in Mondulkiri Provincial Court for protesting against Socfin's clearance over the lands and forests on which our resources depend.
5. We do not agree with this decision and we wish to continue to assign our lawyer in France in accordance with the legal procedures authorized by French law to lodge the appeal.

Unofficial English translation from the original Khmer text.

Translated by Makara Hong, edited by Kunthy Sok



- 6. Once again, we are disappointed and angry with the decision to impose a fine on us for damages of 20,000 euros when we have lost the land, forests exploitation, traditional economy on top of being sued in the court of Cambodia. We have complained to the authorities at all levels without receiving any solution; therefore, we decided to pursue the French court to make Bolloré, through Socfin company, responsible for the damages for its decision before the French court.
- 7. Taking this opportunity, we appeal that national and international fellows to monitor our appeals at the upper court of France against this decision and to continue to claim justice.

Made in the commune of Bousra, district of Pechr Chrada, Mondulkiri province,
July 14, 2021

Right thumbprints

១. ឈ្មោះ: ក្រេង តុលា

1. Kreng Tola

២. ឈ្មោះ: សុវណ្ណ ព្រូ

2. Sorng Prou

៣. ឈ្មោះ: យ៉ុង សុផល

3. Yong Sophal

៤. ឈ្មោះ: គ្រាង ផូល

4. Klang Phaul

៥. ឈ្មោះ: ស្រាង ស៊ែរ៉ាង

5. Sraing Soeurng

៦. ឈ្មោះ: ក្រេស ខ្នីល

6. Kres Khven

៧. ឈ្មោះ: រ៉ូយ សុត

7. Roy Sot

៨. ឈ្មោះ: ស្រាម គ្រូន

8. Sram Kronn

៩. ឈ្មោះ: ចិន ប៊ឺស

9. Chhin Bjeus

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