



Téléfax: (41-22) 917 9018
Télégrammes: UNATIONS, GENEVE
Téléx: 41 29 62
Téléphone: (41-22) 917 9287
Internet: www.unhchr.ch
E-mail: mhaugaard@ohchr.org



Address:
Palais des Nations
CH-1211 GENEVE 10

REFERENCE: LTR_08.12.06_HC.Thailand

The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights presents its compliments to the Permanent Mission of the Kingdom of Thailand to the United Nations Office at Geneva and has the honour to request it to forward the attached letter to the addressee.

The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights takes this opportunity to renew to the Permanent Mission of Thailand, the assurances of its highest consideration.

UNITED NATIONS - OFFICE OF THE
HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS
Geneva, 8 December 2006



Office of the Regional Representative for South-East Asia
Room 601, Block A, 6th Floor, United Nations Building
Rajdamnern Nok Avenue, Bangkok, 10200, Thailand
Tel: 66-2-2881235
Fax: 66-2-288 3009
Email : ohchr.bangkok@un.org



REFERENCE: LTR08_12HC.Thailand.PM

8 December 2006

Excellency,

I am writing to you in regard to the situation of the Lao Hmong refugees and asylum seekers in the Kingdom of Thailand and, in particular to the reportedly imminent forcible deportation of a number of them back to the Lao People's Democratic Republic.

While welcoming your prompt intervention last week in suspending the deportation of 152 Lao Hmong, including 85 children, back to their country of origin, I understand that they have now been transferred late last night from the Immigration Detention Centre in Bangkok to the Nong Kai Immigration Centre on the Thai/Laotian border. Fears have been expressed over their potential imminent forcible deportation to the Lao People's Democratic Republic, where it is believed that some of the deportees might be subjected to serious human rights violations.

As per the information received, last month 53 Lao Hmong people were reportedly deported to their country of origin without prior screening by the UNHCR and the whereabouts of the deportees remain unknown. We are equally concerned about the deportation of 26 Lao Hmong children in December 2005, as their location and status remain unknown in spite of the significant efforts of the United Nations system and the diplomatic community, with support from the Royal Thai Government, to find them.

In this context, I note that in January 2006 the Committee on the Rights of the Child, during its forty-first session, issued concluding observations following the review of the second periodic report of the Royal Thai Government which urged the Government to ensure that the customary international law principle of *non-refoulement* was respected in decisions involving asylum-seeking and refugee children. Similarly, the Human Rights Committee, in its eighty-fourth session in July 2005 after reviewing Thailand's initial State report, noted with concern the situation of the Hmong people in Petchabun Province, some of whom were facing imminent deportation to a State where they feared persecution.

His Excellency Mr. Nitya Pibulsonggram
Minister of Foreign Affairs
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Sri Ayudhya Rd
Bangkok 10400, Kingdom of Thailand
Fax: (662)-2643-5320

Taking into account the sustained engagement of the Royal Thai Government with the United Nations and especially with the Human Rights Treaty Bodies, such as the Committee on the Rights of the Child and the Human Rights Committee, I would like to urge the Royal Thai Government to pay special attention to the situation of the Hmong People in Thailand and to take the necessary steps to implement the relevant recommendations of the above mentioned human rights treaty bodies. I also urge the Royal Thai Government to fully respect the customary international principle of *non-refoulement*.

In light of the above, I urge your Government to fully respect your international obligations *vis-à-vis* this particular group of Lao Hmong facing imminent deportation. I also strongly recommend that the Royal Thai Government continues to work closely with the UNHCR with the view to finding appropriate durable solutions.

My Office in Bangkok stands ready to provide you with any assistance as required.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Louise Arbour', written in a cursive style.

Louise Arbour
High Commissioner for Human Rights