



**CHRISTIAN
SOLIDARITY
WORLDWIDE**
VOICE FOR THE VOICELESS

CSW is a Christian organisation working for religious freedom through advocacy and human rights, in the pursuit of justice.

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9th January 2013

To: His Excellency, President Choummaly Sayasone, President of the People's Democratic Republic of Laos

Dear President Sayasone,

I am writing to you from Christian Solidarity Worldwide (CSW), an organisation that promotes religious freedom, to call to your attention the case of Mr Boontheong of Luang Namtha Province.

Mr Boontheong is a Khmu Christian from Hua Na village, Luang Namtha district in Luang Namtha Province who disappeared on 3 July 2004 along with his wife and his then seven-year-old son. He is a peace loving man and a former government official who was threatened and imprisoned previously by the local Luang Namtha police because of his Christian faith prior to the family's disappearance. Despite many attempts over the years by human rights organisations, including CSW, to urge the Lao government to investigate the family's disappearance, no news has been heard of their situation or whereabouts.

Although it has been over eight years since their disappearance, Christians worldwide have not forgotten or ceased praying for Mr. Boontheong and his family. We are deeply concerned about the safety, whereabouts and well-being of this family.

We urge the Lao Government to investigate the disappearance of Boontheong and his family and provide urgent information on their status and whereabouts. Furthermore, we urge the Government to lead the country, especially the local government and police in provinces where persecution and intolerance of Christians is still rampant, in upholding the Constitution of Laos, in particular Article 43 of the 2003 Amended Constitution (Article 30 in the 1991 Constitution) which respects the fundamental right of every citizen to believe or not to believe in religions.

In line with Your Excellency's responsibility to uphold justice, freedom and human rights in Laos, we respectfully request that the Lao Government provides information on the whereabouts of Mr Boontheong and his family, and ultimately secures their unconditional release. I also petition the Lao Government to uphold freedom of religion and human rights in the affected provinces in Laos.

Yours respectfully,

Andrew Johnston
Advocacy Director, CSW UK

Charles Dickson
Chairman, CSW Hong Kong

CC: Embassy of the Lao PDR in Paris, France.

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