

**FORCED REPATRIATION OF VIETNAMESE BOAT PEOPLE  
IN SIKIEW CAMP, THAILAND:**

**ATROCITIES, CASUALTIES AND UNHCR'S ROLE**

**BOAT PEOPLE S.O.S.  
August 1996**

## **FORCED REPATRIATION OF VIETNAMESE BOAT PEOPLE IN SIKIEW CAMP, THAILAND**

Early in the morning of June 29, 1996, Thai military forces surrounded Sikiew detention camp to conduct the first Orderly Repatriation Program (ORP) operation in Thailand. Some 160 people were rounded up and 87 people were eventually sent back to Vietnam. Several boat people were carried onto the plane with their injuries crudely patched-up. Many were forced onto the plane without any personal belongings. They landed in Vietnam with a shirt on their back and nothing more.

Although there was reported presence of reporters and camera crews capturing the violent operation, there has been no news account coming out of Thailand regarding the injuries and the fatalities caused by brutal beatings by the Thai police and military.

When criticized, Thailand has repeatedly claimed that it had conducted the ORP operation under the auspices of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). In his letter of July 11, 1996 to Congressman Robert Dornan, the Thai Ambassador to the United States affirmed that the operation was conducted "in keeping with the spirit of the tripartite agreement and [Memorandum of Understanding] on the Orderly Repatriation Programme signed by Thailand, Vietnam, and UNHCR on December 28, 1995." At the July 23 meeting with a Vietnamese-American delegation, Thai embassy officials reiterated this official line and revealed that the operation had been carried out in the presence of UNHCR officials. Sources from the Thai Government and UNHCR have indicated that the latter had agreed to pay some 30,000-40,000 U.S. dollars for this operation.

While specific details and numbers are still being investigated, reports and documentation of injuries and casualties are clear indications of the level of force and brutality used in the forced repatriation operation.

### **THE RAID**

In early morning June 29, 1996, several thousand (different estimates range from 2,500 to 5,000) armed Thai military and police personnel surrounded Section A of Sikiew camp, which housed some 1,000 asylum seekers who refused to sign up for voluntary repatriation.

At 3:30 a.m., geared with truncheons and shields, Thai forces cut through the barbed-wire fences and entered Section A. Walls of soldiers surrounded the camp detainees. An officer read the list of people to be forcibly repatriated. The asylum seekers who had gathered at a protest site began reciting prayers. As Thai forces approached, several dozen boat people, including some women, slashed their stomach in protest. At least 30 people were brutally clubbed. One man, Nguyen Ngoc Chau, was beaten to death. His body was immediately taken away and has never been returned to his relatives for proper burial. (A second fatality was also reported but has not been confirmed.)

By 7 a.m., about 160 individuals, including the injured, were taken out of section A. Some had their injuries tended at the air-base and were carried onto the plane. The Thai confiscated everyone's belongings. Of the initial list of 100 individuals targeted for forced repatriation, a dozen were so badly injured that they could not be moved to the air-base and was left at an emergency room. At around 10 a.m., Vietnam's Boeing 737 took off for Tan Son Nhat airport carrying 87 traumatized Vietnamese boat people back to the place they fled years ago.

Sixty seven others were taken to a special detention center in Bangkok where they remain locked up as prisoners to this date.

### **UNHCR'S INVOLVEMENT**

Many boat people in Sikiew Camp eye-witnessing the forced repatriation operation have reported the presence of a UNHCR official, which confirms the assertion of the Thai embassy in the United States.

In this operation, two individuals were forcibly repatriated although they qualified for UNHCR's mandate refugee status. In his letter of June 26, 1996 to the Council of Vietnamese Refugee Supporting Organizations in Australia (COVRSOA), the Australian Government reported that Nguyen Huu Nghia, PST 8452, and Le Van Hai, PST 1736, had been found to qualify as refugees under UNHCR's mandate. Mr. Nghia has undergone intense interrogation by the Vietnamese authorities since his forced return to Vietnam.

According to several returnees, they had refused to have their pictures taken and to sign the repatriation form. These returnees alleged that UNHCR officials had forged their signatures and used old pictures taken many years ago, when the asylum seekers first set foot in Thailand, to complete repatriation forms before sending these forms to Vietnam for clearance.

UNHCR has participated in and financed a military operation that resulted in fatalities, injuries, and arbitrary detention of asylum seekers. It has also resulted in the forced repatriation of recognized refugees.

Note: On August 17, Thailand forcibly repatriated 170 Vietnamese asylum seekers. Of the initial list of 200 targeted individuals, 30 inflicted self-injuries to avoid deportation. Again, Thailand declared this repatriation to have been conducted under the auspices of UNHCR.

**Enclosures:**

1. Letter of Ambassador Nitya Pibulsonggram to Rep. Robert Dornan, July 11, 1996
2. Pictures of Nguyen Ngoc Chau's corpse showing bleeding and bruises
3. Partial list of people deported to Vietnam on June 29, 1996
4. List of people detained at the Special Detention Center in Bangkok
5. Letter of returnee # 1, July 2, 1996
6. Letter of returnee # 2, July 9, 1996
7. Letter of returnee # 3, July 10, 1996
8. Letter of returnee # 4, July 29, 1996
9. Letter of boat people in Sikiew Camp, July 6, 1996
10. Letter of detainees at the Special Detention Center in Bangkok
11. Questionnaire that all returnees must fill out at the reception centers in Vietnam



Religious leaders and their followers demonstrating against injustice in screening and forced repatriation. Section A, Sikiew Camp, Thailand.



*Royal Thai Embassy  
1025 Wisconsin Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20007*

No. 1001/2539

July 11, 1996

The Honorable Robert K. Dornan  
Member of Congress  
1201 Longworth Building  
House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Dornan,

I write with reference to your letter dated July 8, 1996. In this connection, I have received communications from the Thai authorities concerned in Bangkok relating to the recent incident at Sikhieu Camp in regard to the repatriation of Vietnamese asylum-seekers about which you had inquired.

These communications indicated that:

- On June 29, 1996, in keeping with the spirit of the tripartite agreement and MOU on the Orderly Repatriation Programme signed by Thailand, Vietnam, and UNHCR on December 28, 1995, the Thai authorities began the repatriation process at the camp. Approximately 2,300 unarmed Thai policemen and policewomen entered the camp at 4:00 a.m.

- As the authorities entered the camp, they encountered resistance by approximately 20 asylum-seekers who inflicted injuries on themselves in protest. Of these, two required immediate medical attention, and were sent to a local hospital. The other 18 suffered minor cuts and did not require hospitalization. By 7:00 a.m., 87 asylum-seekers were transported peacefully to the airport for a flight back to Vietnam.

- The two individuals who required hospitalization were transported to Bangkok Detention Center in Bangkok with their families, awaiting eventual repatriation. At the moment, there are still 3,800 Vietnamese Asylum-seekers in the Camp waiting to be repatriated back to Vietnam.

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It remains for me to reiterate to you the Thai authorities' determination to see the end to the suffering of all asylum-seekers by completing the repatriation process. In the conduct of their duties, Thai authorities have used maximum restraint. Reports of the recent incident in Sikhieu Camp have been exaggerated and inaccurately portrayed.

I hope the above account allays your concerns over the reported incident.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nitya Fibulsonggram', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Nitya Fibulsonggram  
Ambassador

**PARTIAL LIST OF VIETNAMESE ASYLUM SEEKERS  
FORCIBLY REPATRIATED ON JUNE 29, 1996**

Name	PST		
		Doan The Kiet	7163
		Ton Nu Dien Anh	7163
Pham Xuan Truong	1872	Doan The Phiet	7163
Pham Duy The Phong	1872	Doan Kim Lan	7163
Nguyen Duc Vinh	2867	Doan Kim Khang	7163
Nguyen Thanh Hieu	8361	Doan Kim Tue	7163
Hoang Van Hoai Bao	251	Nguyen Kim Ngoc	1260
Bui Van Dung	2799	Nguyen Van Hai	7537
Nguyen Thi Phuc	2809	Tran Viet Son	741
Bui Thi Nguyet Dung	2809	Quach Tu Anh	741
Tran Ngoc Son	3754	Tran Viet Thai	741
Nguyen Tan Loi	3043	Tran Viet Binh	741
Nguyen Thi Kieu	6565	Tran Thai Binh Yen	741
Nguyen Quoc Van	7415	Nguyen Kien Dien	3814
Thai Lam	1634	Huynh Hiep Son	9289
Ho Thi Thanh Nga	1634	Thai Si Kinh	725
Thai Ho Ngoc Tai	1634	Nguyen Thi Hoang Ha	725
Tran Thi Ha Loan	2606	Thai Tuan Anh	725
Tran Thi Truc Thanh	2606	Thai Viet Anh	725
Nguyen Ngoc Duy	2606	Thai Hoang Anh	725
Nguyen Ngoc Chau	2292	Thai Anh	725
Huynh Son Thai	9288	Tran Van Luom	265
Huynh Thai Thanh Duyen	9926	Tran Le Quoc	265
Ta Van Giau	9098	Tran Le Tan	265
Tran Thi Ha Nang	9098	Huynh Tu Phuong	792
Ta Thi Anh Minh	9098	Do Thu Thuy	698
Ta Thi Anh Mai	9098	Tran Anh Tuan	698
Truong Minh Long	9207	Huynh P. Ngoc Huong	698
Pham Thi Suu	9207	Doan Van Hung	1871
Truong Van Ni	9207	Doan Duy Tan	1871
Truong Tuan Dien	2667	Nguyen Ngoc Lieu	3474
Nguyen Van Thinh	5239	Nguyen Duy Lan	3474
Nguyen Thi Ngoc Bich	2539	Nguyen Ngoc Ly	3474
Nguyen Ngoc T. Truc	5239	Nguyen Ngoc Le	3474
Nguyen Nghia Thanh	5239	Huynh Ngoc Thu Trinh	3474
Nguyen N. Thien Y	5239	Duong Minh Thu	11751
Ly Tan Tai	727	Pham Dinh Hoi	2235
Tran Thi Do	4732	Duong Van Trang	8742
Nguyen Van Tam	3813	Chau Cam Hong	3621
Phan Truong Giang	3408	Bui Nguyet Chi	2800
Nguyen Thu Ha	3408	Nguyen Huu Nghia	8452
Le Nguyen Vinh Duc	3408	Le Van Hai	1736

**LIST OF VIETNAMESE ASYLUM SEEKERS  
DETAINED AT SPECIAL DETENTION CENTER IN BANGKOK  
SINCE JUNE 29, 1996**

<b>Name</b>	<b>PST</b>		
		Dao Trinh Thai	2508
		Dao Minh Tri	2508
Nguyen Ba Dang	3832	Tran Quang Trung	10319
Dang Ngoc Tho	7495	Son Danh	10812
Nguyen Thi Hoa	7495	Duong Hong Tham	10926
Nguyen Duy Trinh	2380	Pham Dinh Thuy	5227
Nguyen Tu Thanh	1356	Mai Thi Thu Thuy	2624
Vo Van Hue	5359	Huynh Minh Thao	5413
Doan Phuoc Nguyen	657	Le Thi Xuan	5623
Nguyen Van Tho	3185	Huynh Xuan Thai	5623
Pham Thi Luong	1773	Truong Manh Tan	8437
Pham Thi Tu	6083	Ho Minh Long	5370
Nguyen Van Minh	5902	Pham Thi Lan	8196
Pham Thu Nguyet	3179	Nguyen Thi Nhat	5197
Da Ra Huong	4302	Thach Thi My Lien	8380
Chao Thi Na	9926	Pham Van Tot	10932
Le Van Binh	6384	Cheng A Cau	5131
Thach Nang	8925	Cheng A Sinh	5132
La Ai Minh	3890	Nguyen Van Cuong	8754
Ho Van Ro	9212	Nguyen Tuyen Hung	10579
Phan Van Duc	3350	Phan Van Hai	3454
Huynh Thi Chi	3350	Huynh Thai Son	9288
Pham Dinh Lap	477	Huynh Thai Son Nguyen	9326
Ta Van Chinh	6518	Do Minh Tuyen	10227
Huynh Thi Sanh	6518	Nguyen Van Hai	2304
Nguyen Van Phuc	6518	Phung Ung Mui	2304
Le Hoa Phong	365	Tran Tuan Nghia	7049
Tran Van Hai	3454	Do Cong Minh	3056
Lam Thi Nau	540	Trinh Tri Quang	2844
Nguyen Thanh Minh Tri	4931		
Tran Thi Kim Hoang	8546		
Lam Quoc Nguyen	10260		
Danh Be	8759		
Nguyen Van Can	7351		
Giang Thi Nguyet	7351		
Nguyen Van Trieu	5300		
Chau Soc	2999		
Nguyen Thanh Liem	1434		
Dao Van Khai	2508		
Trinh Thi My Danh	2508		
Dao Kim Du	2508		



**LETTER OF RETURNEE # 1**

Vietnam, July 2, 1996

Dear sister,

This letter is supposed to be coming to you when we arrived at the transit center in Thu Duc, but no one had even a piece of paper or a pencil. Actually, none of the 88 people, young and old, had a pair of sandals.

The following is an account of the forced repatriation of the first 100 people from Section A (A1 & A2) of the detention center. On June 28, 1996 (in the evening) camp administrators posted the list of the 100 people to be repatriated. The situation was tense. On the night of June 28, 1996, police vehicles shuttled back and forth carrying officials to a meeting. They left at 10:30. Thai military forces surrounded the outside perimeter of the camp, using approximately 2 regiments composed many different units. Also, on the 28th, Thai MOI [Ministry of Interior] had surrounded sections A1 and A2 with barbed wires. Sections A5 and A6 were surrounded with a B-40 net until it was over on June 29, 1996.

At 3:30 am, the Thai military and police quickly advanced through the camp's gate where they stood like a fortress -- not even an ant could pass through. They surrounded areas A1 and A2, which held more than 1,000 asylum seekers. With truncheons and red arm bands, they entered these sections by cutting through the barbed wire fences. At that time, we were praying. Young men locked their arms together to protect the women. Some people started to stab themselves in the stomach and the scream for mercy but the Thai simply ignored these desperate pleas. The roars and thuds of people crying and drumming on containers were terrifying.

The Thai still exerted full force and came in to drag people on to a covered truck just like animals. The young men saw this and started to slash their stomachs so that the police and military would stop, but nothing mattered; anyone who collapsed were dragged on to the truck; I was among those people; brother N. was also dragged on to the covered truck. After several hours the police and military rounded everyone up and threw them in the covered trucks. After that, they identified those on the repatriation list and left them there. Those who were not on the list were thrown out of the trucks and transferred to another area.

A few people who tried to escape were brutally beaten. I've never seen anything like that. It's possible to say that Thailand's brutality eclipsed that of Hong Kong. The asylum seekers here did not fight back; they only inflicted self wounds and cried out for mercy.

A number of people were badly injured so they left them at the emergency room -- some were transferred via Red Cross vehicles straight to the military air base in Nakorn Ratchasima. At 8:30 am, the police and other officials crowded the air base and

surrounded the a Boeing 737 of Vietnam airline. In this forced repatriation maneuver, the commander was a general assisted by many high ranking officers. There were also many reporters there.

After searching and tending the wounds of those who slashed their stomachs, the Thai carried each person onto the plane. Many people cried and struggled but they ignored it all. At 10-11 am, the plane took off. Only a few people were able to take any belongings; the majority was not allowed to take anything; they only had the clothes they were wearing. We arrived at Tan Son Nhat airport at 12:30 noon and arrived in Thu Duc at 3 in the afternoon. Processing took 2 days.

The UNHCR took one day to interview those who were repatriated, they told each person to make an account of what had happened and make a list of the belongings left behind so that it could try to recover them. UNHCR officials told us that during the repatriation, Thailand beat the people and 2 died, 10 were seriously injured. That is why there were only 88 repatriated. In that group, there were me, N., K., L., his wife and children. I was taken to [my village] at 3:30 p.m. on July 1, 1996.

On the morning of July 2, 1996, I met the local Public Security officer for an interview. It lasted more than a day and had to be continued the next day. Please find a way to alert people all over to help me because the authorities already know that I've been involved in religious activities. Please notify brother L. and other Vietnamese communities so they know. R. (L.'s son) will return on the July 4, 1996. Please help the people who are still struggling in the camp. I'm facing difficulties right now because as I left the airport, the authorities took all my documents so I don't have any addresses to make contact with brother L. and other people. Please help. I will write to you on the days ahead.

I wish you and your family good health and peace. It's been 4 nights, the horrifying images keep appearing in my head, I will never forget it, dear sister.

**LETTER OF RETURNEE # 2**

Saigon, 9 July 1996

... They sent in more than 3,000 military and police officers in the middle of the night of 29 June, 1996. They dragged us out of our quarters by force. They used clubs to beat us without mercy. My husband, Mr. L., Mr. L. and Mr. N. cut their stomachs open in protest of the forcible repatriation. Despite the wound, my husband was beaten to point of unconsciousness. My leg was broken due to the beating. My twelve-year old son had a sprung arm as a result of the pulling by the police. We were tossed into a van, taken to a military airport where the wounded received stitches. We were then carried onto a plane... Our belongings were confiscated while we were pulled out of the camp... I arrived at the Tan Son Nhut Airport without a pair of sandals to walk in.

Ho Thi Thanh Nga, PST 1634



Boat people pleading for humane treatment. Section A, Sikiew Camp, Thailand.

**LETTER OF RETURNEE # 3**

Dong Thap Province, 10 July 1996

Dearest darling,

This letter will bring very sad news to you. I was repatriated by force on 29 June, 1996 by plane. We arrived in Tan Son Nhat Airport at 12:20 the same day. It was quite horrible to see about 5,000 Thai policemen, many beating the boat people. It took four policemen to carry one boat person away. A few boat people slashed their stomachs in protest but were carried anyway onto a police van.

I am still in shock over what happened that day. I also stabbed myself in the stomach but the wound was not very serious, and I was put on the airplane regardless. In Vietnam, I had to report to the local security police and was exhaustively interrogated. I really felt that I would have been better off dead than alive in this situation.

I have no belonging except a T-shirt and a pair of pants on me. I don't even have a pair of shoes to wear. I will tell you more about my situation in a few days. At this point, I am put under local surveillance and am not permitted to go anywhere.

Please stop sending money to me. I am living with our children here and we can find means to subsist. I am not sure when I will be allowed to leave the area to visit our parents.

When I arrived in Thu Duc Province, I ran into T. whose wife and child had resettled in Australia. UNHCR had told him to go back to Vietnam and apply for entry to Australia. However, the Australian Immigration Office and the Vietnamese government have recently told him that he was not eligible to go to Australia because their marriage certificate was invalid since it had been granted in the asylum camp...

Please understand my situation. I am prepared to deal with any hardship. Whoever comes to visit me will be spied on.

Please take care of our parents for me... My head is still spinning from all the upheavals, so I cannot write you a long letter. I hope you all will forgive me. I wish you good health and peace.

N.

P.S.: There were about 90 people who were with me on the 29 June, 1996 repatriation flight.

**LETTER OF RETURNEE # 4**

Saigon, 29 July 1996

Dear Mr. Nguyen Manh Tien and members of Vietnamese organizations in Australia,

I am T., a former boat person in Section A of Sikiew Camp, Thailand. Last year, when I was still detained in Section A, I was the keeper of all the records including documents and pictures related to the demonstrations in that Section. I then requested Mr. Gabriel Foucher, a Frenchman, who was in Thailand at the time, to send some of these materials to you. Have you received them yet? The total weight of the package including documents and pictures was about one kilogram.

I would like to inform you of an old news but I hope it would still be helpful to the boat people still in Sikiew Camp. At 3:30 p.m. on 29 June, 1996, about 3,000 Thai policemen and soldiers raided Sections A1 and A2 of the camp and used force to send 100 boat persons back to Vietnam. My family was part of this group. There were about 10 boat persons who were severely injured in the raid and were taken away. No one knew of their whereabouts since. Eighty of us who were not as severely injured were escorted to a military airport in Nakhorn Ratchasima Province by about 2,000 policemen and soldiers. We were restrained and carried onto a Boeing 737 belonging to Vietnam Airline. The UNHCR field officer of Sikiew Camp was a witness of the forcible repatriation.

Since we had refused to have our picture taken and to sign our passport, UNHCR falsified my passport by reproducing my picture from my original camp ID card and by forging my signature. We had also refused to undergo a physical exam administered by the IOM, so UNHCR produced false health records in order to legalize the forced repatriation.

I now write this letter to you with the hope that you will tell our story to the Vietnamese communities all over the world and to the right authorities that can help expose UNHCR's wrongdoing in order to help the boat people who are still in the camp. Letters to me should use a different address as yours may be discovered by the Vietnamese authorities; that would cause me hardships and would make future correspondence much more difficult.

**LETTER FROM VIETNAMESE ASYLUM SEEKERS  
IN SECTION A, SIKIEW CAMP, THAILAND**

Thailand July 6, 1996

To whom it may concern  
From the detention center

Letter from Thailand detention center

The following is the terrifying tragedy that has been witnessed by the Vietnamese boat people detained in Thailand during the first forced repatriation operation on June 29, 1996.

Several days before that time, we heard rumors that there would be a forced repatriation operation at Sikiew detention center, Thailand. We were very scared. Then on the evening of June 28, 1996, we saw Thai Police surround the camp, about 5,000 of them. Members in our veterans group urged people to stay calm and to avoid violence. The people sat together and began to recite prayers.

At 4 a.m. on June 29, 1996, the police cut through the barbed wire fences, entered and surrounded the group of people saying prayers; women and children screamed to protest the use of force. All of a sudden, there was a loud shout (a police order) from a high ranking Thai official. The police began using truncheons to beat the people on their heads and bodies; some collapsed. A few slashed their stomachs with knives. There wasn't even time for the knives to fall before the police took people's legs and dragged them across the ground. Their faces and stomachs were dragged on the ground along with the penetrating knives making screeching sounds across the path. After 90 minutes, Thai police rounded up all the young men. After that, they used Vietnamese renegades to identify people on the list for forced repatriation and transferred them to the military air base in Korat; some people were injured but were still brought onto the plane; also some of the injured were returned to the camp because they were not on the repatriation list.

There were 40-50 remaining victims who had to tend their own wounds. The Vietnamese staff at MSF [Médecins Sans Frontières] did their best to care for the people but about 2 days later the police entered the camp once again to take the injured away. Up until today, we still don't have any news about their fate. As for Nguyen Ngoc Chau, PST 2292, whose name was on the list for forced repatriation, he was bludgeoned on the head to death. Afterward, the police took his corpse away and refused to return it to us so that we could hold a proper funeral. Currently, we are holding a commemoration ceremony. However, camp administrators are hiding Chau's death so that they can avoid negative publicity and the condemnation by the international community. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees has ignored this tragedy even though Ms. Naddar was present during the forcible repatriation operation.

We call on the international community, the Vietnamese community abroad to condemn the atrocious acts of the Thai police, at the same time bring to light the death of Nguyen Ngoc Chau and demand that his body be returned to us or his family for funeral arrangements. Once again, we call upon our fellow Vietnamese all over the world to condemn the inhumane treatment of the Vietnamese boat people in Southeast Asia, and we also call for the immediate assistance of concerned philanthropists, religious organizations, and Vietnamese community groups for your moral support for our continued struggle, and also monetary assistance for the injured and the sick, the children and women and those who are facing difficulties in the camp who need your generous moral as well as material support.

Sincerely,

Representatives of the Vietnamese community in Sikiew

Our sincere gratitude.

**LETTER FROM 67 ASYLUM SEEKERS DETAINED  
AT THE SPECIAL DETENTION CENTER**

Special Detention Center Bangkhen, July 19, 1996

Petition letter

We, the undersigned, are the 67 boat persons detained at the Bangkhen Special Detention Center (SDC), about 20 km from Bangkok.

We respectfully submit this petition to Boat People S.O.S. and would like to request Dr. Nguyen Dinh Thang and the organization to protect us (17 women, 45 men and 5 children), who have become prisoners in Thailand, a first-asylum country.

We all were victims and eyewitnesses of the forced repatriation of boat people in Section A of Sikiew Camp. We would like to report the following:

At 3:30 a.m. on June 29, 1996, UNHCR and the Ministry of Interior (MOI) have sent in a force of several thousand police officers. They surrounded Section A in preparation for forced repatriation. The cost of this operation was estimated at about 700,000 bahts, equalling 30,000 dollars.

Faced with the imminent threat, the boat people formed a line to stop the police from advancing. Several burnt incense and began to pray. Police forces however proceeded to cut the barbed wires, tore down the walls, and swept into Section A. To show the police our determination, we took turn to commit hara-kiri. A total of 53 people including 8 women and 45 men slashed our stomachs. There were 9 others who banged their head against the wall in their suicide attempts. However, waves of police forces continued to flood the camp to drag and pull the boat people out of the camp amidst the cries and pleas for mercy. A total of 87 boat persons were forced onto an airplane, including 17 who were injured during the forcible repatriation ordeal.

Sixty two of us who were injured were taken to a hospital. We were receiving medical treatment only for two days when a police force suddenly came and surrounded the hospital at 18:30 o'clock on 1 July 1996. They then took us to the Special Detention Center where we have been detained since.

At 9:30 a.m. on 17 July 1996, the police told 20 of us to meet with a delegation for an interview. When we met with the delegation, we found out that they represented the Vietnamese government and the meeting was arranged by a UNHCR representative. The delegation inquired about our background and the address of our relatives in Vietnam. We were determined not to give the delegation our information and flatly told them that we would rather die in a free country than go back to communist Vietnam. We also declared to the delegation that we would only return when Vietnam is no longer communist.



The delegation acknowledged our position but continued to probe the names of the religious and democratic movement leaders who were being detained here. This incident has left us restless and we have since lived in a state of uncertainty and fear of imminent forcible repatriation. Because the Vietnamese delegation was accompanied by Thai officials and UNHCR representatives when they met with us, we believe that they could sign an agreement to force us back anytime if they wish to (case in point: the 87 boat people of Section A who were forcibly repatriated were accepted by Vietnam even though they refused to participate in either the Orderly Repatriation Program or the voluntary repatriation program).

We are now living in terror and confusion. Some of us are having a mental crisis due to our separation from our children. There are many families here who currently have children left in Sikiew Camp without parental care.

We urgently petition to your organization for your immediate intervention in this matter and for your help in saving us from the threat of forced repatriation.

**SELF-REPORT FORM THAT ALL RETURNEES MUST FILL OUT  
AT RECEPTION CENTERS IN VIETNAM**

Reception Center  
For Returnees

Socialist Republic of Vietnam  
Independence - Freedom - Happiness

**SELF REPORT**

**I/. BIO-DATA SUMMARY**

- Full name:
- Alias:
- Date of birth:
- Place of birth:
- Place of family registration prior to escape to a foreign country:
- Address to return to:
- Ethnicity:                      Religion:
- Education level:
- Foreign language familiarity:
- Occupation prior to escape to a foreign country:
- Previous convictions (describe nature of offenses, level of conviction, sentences):
- First repatriation:

**II/. FAMILY RELATIONS AND PERSONAL DATA**

RELATIONSHIP TO YOU	FULL NAME	AGE	OCCUPATION	CURRENT ADDRESS

- History of your personal activities from childhood until present (describe activity, time period, and place?)
- Name, age, address of relatives overseas (describe your relationship to relatives)

**III/. HISTORY OF ESCAPE TO FOREIGN COUNTRY**

**A/. Escape organizer:**

- Full name of lead organizer (Address):
- Full name of middle-person:
- Place and time of departure (by sea, by land, by air):
- Payment type (name of receiver of cash, gold? Amount, place of payment?)

**B/. Escape journey (describe any misfortunes or favorable situations encountered?)**

- Time period, where?
- C/. Date of arrival in HONG KONG:
  - Boat ID number (if applicable)
  - Camp ID number:

IV/. TIME SPENT IN FOREIGN COUNTRY

A/. List names of camps where you stayed at, activities, and time period?

- Number of times being interrogated, name of interrogators, questions and subject of interrogations?
- Number of times permitted to leave camp, places, and reasons:
- Any arrest, detention? Where, what crime, sentences?
- Number of times undergoing screening:                      Result:

B/. Knowledge of individuals, Associations, Organizations in the camps. The types of activities against the Vietnam government:

- Full name, address of the members of the above organizations:

C/. Did you work for the camps? Monthly salary:

- Did you work for any international organizations? Name of organizations? Salary?:

- Did you join any organizations to participate in activities against the Vietnam government?

- Name of organizations you joined, period of participation, and position held?

- Other issues to be reported to the Vietnam government?

D/. Reason for repatriation:

- ASSURANCE:

Day.....Month.....Year 199...  
(Signature with full name is required)

This report was prepared in conjunction with many organizations in the United States, Canada, Europe and Australia. For additional copies of this report or further information, contact:

**Boat People S.O.S.**

P.O. Box 2652  
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**Other publications:**

1. Report on Corruption in the Screening Process Under the Comprehensive Plan of Action in Galang Camp, Indonesia, August 1994
2. Families Broken: The Consequence of Screening Errors, September 1994
3. Hard Evidences of Corruption in Screening Under the Comprehensive Plan of Action, December 1994
4. A Cry to Humanity: How a Humanitarian Effort Turns into a Tragedy, January 1995
5. Corruption in the Screening Process in the Philippines, July 1995
6. Failures of the Comprehensive Plan of Action: Flaws and Corruption in the Screening Process in Malaysia, September 1995
7. A Proposal for Peaceful Removal of Vietnamese Boat People from the Philippine First-Asylum Camp, Palawan, October 1995
8. UNHCR's Failures in the Comprehensive Plan of Action: A Factual Presentation, Part I: The Screening Process, January 1996
9. The Role of UNHCR in the Forced Repatriation Operation in the Philippines, February 1996
10. Forced Repatriation and Abuses of the Human Rights of Vietnamese Asylum Seekers in Malaysia, March 1996
11. UNHCR's Failures in the Comprehensive Plan of Action: A Factual Presentation, Part II: Repatriation, May 1996