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FOR IMMEDIATE PRESS RELEASE

A Step Toward Justice: Four Khmer-Krom Activists Released, But Many Remain Behind Bars

WASHINGTON, D.C., September 01, 2025 – The Khmers Kampuchea-Krom Federation (KKF) welcomes the release today, September 1, 2025, of four Khmer-Krom activists: **Mr. Thach Ve Sanal, Mr. Thach Nha, Mr. Kim Khu, and Venerable Thach Chop.**

These individuals were arrested in March 2024 and endured nearly eight months of incommunicado detention without family visits or access to legal representation. On November 26, 2024, they were unjustly sentenced to terms ranging from two to two and a half years in prison on vague charges, solely for peacefully exercising their fundamental rights. Their release is a meaningful and hopeful step toward justice.

However, 11 other Khmer-Krom monks and activists remain unjustly imprisoned. Their only "crime" has been defending their Indigenous rights, practicing Theravada Buddhism freely in their temples, and speaking out against systemic human rights violations. The ongoing detention of these individuals underscores the urgent need for Vietnam, as a member of the Human Rights Council, to uphold its obligations under international law, including the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR).

KKF extends its sincere gratitude to the United Nations and the international community for their continued efforts to raise these concerns. We strongly urge the Government of Vietnam to build on this positive step by immediately and unconditionally releasing all remaining Khmer-Krom prisoners of conscience. True reconciliation and justice can only be achieved when every voice is free to speak, every temple is free to practice, and every community is free to live with dignity.