

APPEAL FOR HUMAN RIGHTS IN LAOS

Social Policy Resolution

CA03.06.30



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

Adopted by the 2003 Churchwide Assembly.

Whereas

WHEREAS, ELCA pastor Naw-Karl Mua (Light of Light Lutheran Church, St. Paul, Minn.) was imprisoned in Laos from June 3 to July 9, 2003, as reported in both The Lutheran (August and September 2003 issues) and in national secular media; and

WHEREAS, this became an occasion for people in Minnesota and throughout the country to become aware of the oppression of the Hmong people in Laos; therefore, be it

Resolved

RESOLVED, that the members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America gathered in Churchwide Assembly express our common concern 2003 Churchwide Assembly: Preliminary Minutes Plenary Session Eleven X Page 94 that the basic human rights of all people of the world be protected. In that concern we convey the following to the Lao People's Democratic Republic:

- a. We welcome the release on July 9, 2003, of Naw-Karl Mua, ethnic Hmong, U.S. national, and ELCA pastor; and of Thierry Falise, Belgian national, and Vincent Reynaud, French national.
- b. We appeal for the immediate and unconditional release of Pa Fue Khang, Thao Moua, and Char Yang and other other ethnic Hmong Lao nationals who were imprisoned and tried along with Naw-Karl Mua in a court procedure which the U.S. Department of State has determined did not meet international standards of justice.
- c. We express concern about reported ill treatment of Hmong Lao nationals, and ask that they be given access to lawyers, medical treatment, and trials that meet international standards of justice.
- d. We appeal to the Lao government to allow access to ethnic Hmong Lao nationals by international human rights and other organizations including Amnesty International, the office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the International Committee of the Red Cross, the World Council of Churches, Lutheran World Relief, the Lutheran World Federation, and other religious and humanitarian agencies.

and be it further

RESOLVED, that we urge members of ELCA congregations and advocacy agencies to express these same concerns to U.S. and Lao government officials.

