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CAMBODIAN HUMAN RIGHTS ACTION COMMITTEE

ADHOC - CARAM Cambodia - CCPCR - CDP - CHHRA - CKIMHRDA - CSD - CWCC - GENEROUS - HROTP- IDA
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STATEMENT

Intimidation and Disruption against Human Rights Defenders

Phnom Penh, March 01, 2010

The Cambodian Human Rights Action Committee (CHRAC), a coalition of 23 NGO members, is really disappointed at recent intimidation and disruption against human rights defenders, who are working for promoting and defending human rights, by police officials of Khan Meanchey on March 01, 2010. This action is seriously affecting the promotion and defense of human rights in Cambodia.

CHRAC has been aware that 335 families of people, who are living in Proka Village, Sangkat Prey Sar, Khan Dangkor, Phnom Penh, having land dispute with Mr. In Samon, deputy Secretary-General of the Ministry of Interior since 2007, but no any resolution up to date. Therefore on March 01, 2010, these people were not satisfied and came to the Prime Minister’s house in order to seek for resolutions, but instead they were cracked down seriously by police of Khan Dangkor and some of them were also arrested during this event. Due to this crackdown, the victims had filed complaints to ADHOC office asking for assistance; then ADHOC sent its monitoring staff to monitor the case sooner later. As a result, however, three cameras of the monitors (two from ADHOC and one from LICADHO) were suddenly confiscated by the police, and approximately three hours later, those cameras were return back to the monitors; but all photos taken were completely erased.

CHRAC considers this action is an intimidation and disruption of human rights defenders’ activities. The photo erasing is also considered as another act of destruction of official documents without any permission from the owners and without any legal basis for confiscating them. The photo taking by the monitors is also not illegal since they took them in the public areas.

CHRAC, therefore, would like to urges all relevant competent authorities and other relevant institutions to take serious steps to bring the perpetrators to justice so as to promote the rights to information and ensure that Cambodia is country that fully promotes democracy and respects the rule of law.

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