



**Statement by Mr. NEY SAM OL, Ambassador/Permanent Representative of
Cambodia to the United Nations Office, the World Trade Organization and
Other International Organizations at Geneva
33rd Session of the Human Rights Council
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**Interactive Dialogue with Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights
in Cambodia**



Mr. President,

First of all, my delegation wishes to thank Professor Rhona Smith for presenting her Annual Report at this Session of the Council.

Cambodia highly values the works of the Special Rapporteur since taking up her post in 2015, including the two missions to the country, during which she was received by **Samdech Techo HUN Sen, Prime Minister**, and met with a number of Cambodian high dignitaries, with which she produced the Report.

After studying the Report with great attention, we take note some recommendations and appreciate the insightful contributions of the Report to the promotion and protection of human rights in Cambodia.

However, we found that the Report does not comprehensively translate the full image of the progress on the ground. Thus, I wish to avail myself of this opportunity to shed light on the shortcomings of the Report as follows:

The Participation in Political Process

All political parties in Cambodia freely conduct their activities in accordance with existing laws and legal instruments. Our people are enjoying harmonious lives as peace, security, stability, and remarkable economic growth of 7 percent for a decade prevails all over the country.

As such, it is improper, if not wrong, to claim that political tension exists in Cambodia for the time being.

As for the upcoming elections in 2017 and 2018, so far, around 3.6 million people turn out to register through a computerized voter registration.

In the above regards, what happen in Cambodia vindicate the fact that development and economic growth goes hand in hand with political stability, security, and peace.

However, we note that some individuals, or groups have been exploiting human rights agenda for their political purposes aiming at destabilizing the country and overthrowing the constitutionally elected Government.

In a genuine democracy, there is no room for acts of destruction of property, public order, tranquility and the harmonization of the society. The culprits have to be accountable for their acts.

Thus, as a sovereign state, we deny any acts of interference in our internal affairs infringing the spirit of the Charter of United Nations.

Democratic space

The remarkable improvement of human rights and democracy in Cambodia since the Paris Peace Accords signed on 23 October 1991 reflects the resolute dedication and perseverance of the Government.

As democracy is a process, not a destination, it would be extremely rush and unrealistic to single-mindedly construe that there has been an attempt to limit democratic spaces in Cambodia while the application of the rule of law, particularly the LANGOs, has been enforcing in order to maintain stability and security for the society.

Land Issues

The Government is committed to taking a holistic approach on land registration. As a result, 4.3 million land titles have been legalized, equivalent to 61 percent of the approximately 7 million existing plots of land. By 2023, the Government has set a target to reach a completion of land registration.

However, as a matter of fact, some land issues in some particular locations have been politicized in this country. The unlawful-brazen meddling of political party into almost every issue of people from all walks of life, ignoring the existing legal procedures and dispute-settlement mechanisms have complicated and dramatized the issues.

Some political parties manipulate the current land issue shamelessly for their political gain by breeding resentment and degradation of trust of Rights Holders toward Duties Bearers.

If leaving the current situation underwent unchecked, victory would have gone to the ill-will political party, whereas people and the whole society would have shouldered burdens of social anarchy, destruction, mutual hatred, and revenge.

Land issue in Cambodia is no strangers to that of others in the world. Any issue comes with a solution. Whenever political parties have political will in putting national interest above parties' interest, and let justice be done through existing legal instruments, land issues in this country will dissipate and disappear accordingly as time goes by.

Administration of Justice

The Constitution of Cambodia clearly provides that the executive, legislative, and judiciary powers shall be separated; and the judiciary is therefore an independent institution. Thus, each body knows what rule to abide by and which line one could not cross.

To guarantee the independence and effectiveness of the judiciary, three fundamental laws on the judicial reform have been enacted in 2014.

Law making process in this country has been conducted in conformity with the Constitution taking into account International Rules and Standards. Each process has to come through proper legal procedure before reaching its adoption and enactment.

Other Human rights Mechanisms

As one of the outstanding countries in human rights advocate, Cambodia ratified almost all core international human rights treaties. Therefore, Cambodia is well aware of its obligations toward the International Instruments to which it is a party.

As for the UPR, the Government has accepted 163 out of 205 recommendations received during the 2nd cycle, accounting for 79.5 percent. This acceptance of a very high percentage of the recommendations further reflects strong commitment and seriousness that the Government has made and continues to make toward the promotion and protection of human rights.

Mr. President,

To conclude, whilst looking forward to the upcoming visit of Professor Rhona Smith to Cambodia next month, I would like to reassure the Council that Cambodia remains committed to strengthening close cooperation, constructive dialogue, and partnership with all relevant stakeholders in order to further enhance the promotion and protection of human rights in this country.

I thank you Mr. President,