

# CHRAAC - AFEC - NGO CEDAW - COMFREL CCC - COSECAM - STAR Kampuchea - YCC

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## JOINT STATEMENT

### **Cambodian Civil Society Calls on Royal Government of Cambodia to Stop Attacks on the Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General**

*(For immediate release)*

*Phnom Penh, December 18, 2007*

The Cambodian Civil Society Organization Coalition wishes to express its deep concern about the recent direct attack by the Head of the Royal Government of Cambodia on Professor Yash Ghai, Special Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations for Human Rights in Cambodia, during his fourth visit to Cambodia, which just took place.

The Cambodian Civil Society Organization Coalition has noted that his fourth 10-day visit in Cambodia gave him more opportunity to meet and discuss with representatives of civil society organizations, political parties and members of the legal profession regarding the human rights situation in Cambodia. Mr. Yash Ghai was not only denied the opportunity to meet with some senior government officials during his visit, but the possibility of future meetings were also strongly rejected and his mandate as UN Special Representative for Cambodia attacked.

The Civil Society Organization Coalition is of the opinion that all statements, concerns and recommendations raised in his human rights situation report, which will be submitted to the United Nations Human Rights Council, are crucially important and valuable. They must be considered by the Cambodian Government so as to better promote and protect the human rights situation in Cambodia, particularly considering that Cambodia adheres to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, is a signatory to many other international covenants and conventions on human rights, and is a party to the Paris Agreement which has acknowledged the mandate of the UN special envoy to monitor and make recommendations regarding the human rights situation in Cambodia.

Furthermore, the Civil Society Organization Coalition also considers that any rejection of official meetings with the Special Representative by the senior Government officials regarding the human rights situation is disrespectful of the decision made by the United Nations to grant Mr. Yash Ghai the mandate to monitor human rights issues in Cambodia.

The Civil Society Organization Coalition calls on the Cambodian Government to tolerate the existence of the important mandate and role of the UN Special Representative, Mr. Yash Ghai, and of the Office of High Commissioner for Human Rights in Cambodia, and to provide him the opportunity to discuss current human rights work so as to lead to the realization of the commitments of the Cambodian Government to promote and protect human rights, which are also recognized in the Constitution of Cambodia.

#### **For more information, please contact:**

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|----------------------|--|------------------|
| - Mr. Thun Saray,    | Chairman of CHRAAC/President of ADHOC, | Tel: 016 880 509 |
| - Mr. Sok Sam Oeun,  | Executive Director of CDP,             | Tel: 012 901 199 |
| - Mr. Kul Panha,     | Executive Director of COMFEL,          | Tel: 012 942 017 |
| - Mr. Ou Virak       | Representative of AFEC,                | Tel: 012 404 051 |
| - Mr. Keo Chamroeun, | Advocacy Officer of COSECAM            | Tel: 012 867 438 |
| - Ms. Ouk Sothira    | Coordinator of NGO CEDAW               | Tel: 012 732 562 |