

JOINT STATEMENT
WORKING TOGETHER TO PROMOTE REAL DIGNITY OF WOMEN

We all, networks of Non-Governmental Organizations working to promote human rights, especially women's human rights in Cambodia listed below as representatives of the Networks and Organizations, were regretful and disappointed when hearing the remarks of **Samdech Akkeak Moha Senapadei Techo Hun Sen**, top leader of the Cambodian government, delivered during the inaugural ceremony of Tonle Bassac River Bridge in Kandal province on August 3, 2015. In the speech, **Samdech Hun Sen** stated, *"Among the violent fighters, there was a woman, who slide-kicked like groups of wrestling boxers. Hunt and apprehend Mi Srey Noeng [or the very contemptible woman]! That very person is not called WOMAN. It's called Mi Srey (contemptible woman) or it is called Nhi (Female animal). [She] plays to attack; kick hard without exception; it's too unreasonable. [This is] not a violation of women's rights, but it's extremely bad. Then, policemen still continue the work"*.

"Mi Srey" are the terms that insult women while the term **"Nhi"** is generally used for only female animals. These remarks indeed harm women's honor and dignity as well as the whole society. These also serve to impede women's participation in different sectors. It will affect and set a bad example for other government's officials and young generations who might copy them.

Cambodia ratified the International Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (**CEDAW**) in 1992 and its Optional Protocol (**OP-CEDAW**) in 2010. In addition, the Royal Government of Cambodia and Civil Society have been making untiring efforts to promote women's human rights and to eliminate all forms of discrimination and violence against women. So, all rude remarks toward women ought to be avoided and must not be used by leaders.

In this regard, we all, networks of NGOs, hope that Samdech will play a role model and encourage the government's officials to pay attention on promoting women's rights and moving toward the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women.

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For further information, Please contact:

1. Ms. Ros Sopheap, Representative of GADNet 012 627 857
2. Mr. Koul Panha, Representative of COMFREL 012 942 017
3. Ms. Chak Sopheap, Representative of Cambodian Center for Human Rights (CCHR), 012 943 213
4. Mr. Meas Chanthan, Representative of Cooperation for Social Service and Development (CSSD) 017 373 986
5. Ms. Chea Muoy Kry, Representative of Women Peacemakers Cambodia (WPM) 012 921 621
6. Ms. Thida Khus, Representative of Committee for Promotion of Women in Politics (CPWP) 012 838 464
7. Mr. Him Yon, Representative of Coalition for Integrity and Social Accountability (CISA) 012 947 022
8. Ms. Chan Kunthea, Representative of JASS Regional Office, 012 854 295
9. Mr. Chhay Kimsore, Representative of Cambodian Men's Network (CMN) 012 627 837

10. Ms. Sum Samoun, Representative of Urban Poor Women Development (UPWD) 012 646 955
11. Ms. Arun Reaksmeay, Representative of Strey Khmer Organization (SKO) 012 236 653
12. Mr. Long Vuthy, Representative of Independent Democracy of Informal Economy Association (IDEA) 089 548 845