



One Hundred Fourteenth Congress
U.S. House of Representatives
Committee on Foreign Affairs
2170 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515
www.foreignaffairs.house.gov

September 7, 2016

His Excellency Hun Sen
Prime Minister of Cambodia
c/o Royal Embassy of Cambodia to the United States
4530 16th Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20011

Mr. Prime Minister:

I write to you with great concern over the continued deterioration of democracy in Cambodia and reports that Kem Sokha, Vice President of the Cambodian National Rescue Party (CNRP), has been forced to seek refuge in party headquarters and may soon be arrested on a charge of refusing to appear in court over a “prostitution” case – despite his parliamentary immunity.

Since holding elections in 2013, we have seen significant attacks on human rights, as members of the political opposition and activists have been arrested, jailed, and beaten. The severe attack on Nhay Chamreoun on October 26, 2015 was particularly troubling, as he is a United States citizen, as was the murder of Kem Ley, a popular Cambodian political commentator on July 10, 2016.

Today, the Government of Cambodia’s targeting of opposition party leadership - through the persecution of CNRP President Sam Rainsy and the recent harassment of de facto leader Kem Sokha – completely undermines the legitimacy of upcoming elections. It is my strong belief that the charges brought against both Mr. Rainsy and Mr. Sokha are spurious and politically motivated. Without the full and free participation of the CNRP, the results of future elections will be deeply flawed, something we can simply not accept.

Mr. Prime Minister, the people of Cambodia deserve the opportunity to elect the government of their choosing. By attempting to disqualify and otherwise harass the political opposition, you are denying the people this chance. As such, I strongly urge you to consider the likely negative effects this targeting of the political opposition will have on Cambodia’s election process and stop harassing and brutalizing Kem Sokha and other opposition leaders.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Ed Royce".

EDWARD R. ROYCE
Chairman