

Voices for Gender Equality



Phnom Penh, March 6, 2020

JOINT STATEMENT: On International Women's Day 2020, CSOs call upon the Royal Government of Cambodia to prioritize women's human rights

Phnom Penh, 8 March 2020 – On the occasion of International Women's Day 2020, we, the undersigned civil society organizations, urge the Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC) to prioritize women's human rights by taking immediate and concrete steps to implement the recommendations they accepted during Cambodia's third Universal Periodic Review (UPR) and the recommendations in the UN CEDAW Committee's concluding observations issued after its periodic review of Cambodia in 2019.

We particularly urge the government to implement recommendations regarding the following key themes:

- 1) **Strengthening the legislative framework.** This includes:
 - a. enacting a comprehensive anti-discrimination law covering sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression and sex characteristics, race, and religion with a definition of discrimination covering direct and indirect discrimination in the public and private spheres;
 - b. amending the Law on Prevention of Domestic Violence and the Protection of Victims to define, prohibit and criminalize all domestic violence, including marital rape, to facilitate the process of obtaining protection orders and to ensure that survivors have access to effective remedies and that perpetrators are held accountable; and
 - c. conducting systemic gender impact assessments when adopting or revising laws.
- 2) **Gender-responsive budget and the national mechanism for the advancement of women.** This includes ensuring the effectiveness of action plans and policies for gender equality through sufficient funding from the national budget and strong evaluation and monitoring mechanisms.
- 3) **Freedom of expression for civil society** including women human rights defenders, trade union leaders, land and environmental activists and members of the political opposition, without harassment, surveillance or other undue restrictions. Members of the public must be allowed full freedom of self-expression, self-determination and body autonomy without threat of fines or imprisonment.
- 4) **Education.** This includes removing barriers to girls' access to education, encouraging girls to study science, and training all teachers on gender equality.

The full list of concluding observations and recommendations of the CEDAW Committee in English can be found at:

https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=CEDAW%2fC%2fKH.M%2fCO%2f6&Lang=en

The full list of UPR recommendations for Cambodia in English can be found at:

https://lib.ohchr.org/HRBodies/UPR/Documents/Session32/KH/UPR32_Cambodia_Thematic_List_Recommendations.docx

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