

Response from the Ministry of Health, Cambodia, regarding the prevention measures for COVID-19 in Cambodian prisons

Referred to joint-Statement of Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch and LICADHO on the necessity to protect prisoners from COVID-19, dated December, 9th 2020.

The Ministry of Health Cambodia would like to confirm that the Royal Government of Cambodia has committed to assuring the rights of citizens to access health care with equity and without discrimination. Vulnerable groups, low socioeconomic group, elderly, people with disability, women and children are given financial and social support to ensure that they can access quality health services.

Regarding the interventions to prevent COVID-19 in prisons, the Ministry of Health has been working with the General Department of Prison of Ministry of Interior to monitor health of prisoners. The General Department of Prison will report to the Ministry of Health of any suspected health problems related to COVID-19 if identified as done in the past already with our assistance for those who had a symptom flu-like-illness with testing for Covid-19 plus providing care and treatment until they were fully recovered in some provinces.

Related to the 28th November community cluster transmission event, the General Department of Prison has strengthened monitoring health of staff and prisoners. They have traced all cases that are possibly linked to the event. They reported that no personals involved with the 28th November event have been presented at prisons and as from December 1st to 10th, 2020, there is no case of flu illness among their staff (354 staffs) and prisoners (7,608) in the Prison 1. In addition, after receiving news from media network about the outbreak of flu in Prison 1, the Ministry of Health has assigned the Rapid Response Team to visit Prison on the night of December 09th and the morning of December 10th, 2020 and received the report of no case of flu among prisoners from the office of this prison.

The Ministry of Health of Cambodia continues to collaborate with the General Department of Prison to monitor flu and COVID-19 among prisoners in Cambodia, and encourage the General Department of Prison to enforce stronger implementation of Ministry of Health's guidance and instruction to prevent COVID-19 transmission in Prisons.

The Ministry of Health would like to call for collaboration from all partners to implement the Ministry of Health measures and to strengthen social solidary and equity in the fights against COVID-19.

Thank you very much.

10 December 2020

