



KINGDOM OF CAMBODIA
NATION RELIGION KING

**MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION**

Press Statement

**"An award is not the lawful means of defense in the courts of any country,"
states the Foreign Ministry's Spokesperson**

Phnom Penh, 02 February 2023 – The Spokesperson of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of the Kingdom of Cambodia would like to offer observations as to the U.S. Department of State's recent announcement of an award bestowed upon a law-breaking person in Cambodia.

1. An honor usually recognizes advocates for, among others, peace, national harmony and reconciliation, disarmament; eradication of racial discrimination, violence and hatred; or an accomplishment for the interest of the society. The move of the Department of State does not represent a genuine wish of the majority of the Cambodian people as it emboldens certain forces, who readily exploit the situation for their hidden agenda under the guise of human rights and democracy.
2. The legal actions against the said individual were neither about human rights nor about labor disputes, but her flagrant violation of the ban on leaving the country while still under court supervision. "If the accused deliberately evades the obligation of judicial supervision, the investigating judge can decide to place the accused in pre-trial detention," stipulates article 230 of Cambodia's Criminal Procedure Code.
3. The prize is not the lawful means of defense in the courts of any country in the world. What is lawful is to attend the proceedings and offer legal arguments with concrete evidences against the charge under the law and procedures of the state concerned. ENDS