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## ANFREL CONDEMNS THE SHUTDOWN OF VOICE OF DEMOCRACY (VOD) IN CAMBODIA

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The Asian Network for Free Elections (ANFREL) condemns the shutdown of the Voice of Democracy (VOD) in Cambodia today, a blatant attack on media freedom and a gross violation of the Cambodian people's right to access information.

Prime Minister Hun Sen ordered the revocation of the license of the country's one of the last remaining local independent media outlets effective today, 13 February 2023 at 10:00 am due to his dissatisfaction with a news report regarding his son Gen. Hun Manet.

The shutdown will have serious implications for Cambodia's democratic process and set a dangerous precedent for media freedom in the country. This is especially concerning

ahead of the upcoming general election, when citizens must have access to diverse and independent sources of information to make informed decisions.

We call on the Cambodian government, led by Prime Minister Hun Sen, to immediately reverse its decision to shut down the VOD and to guarantee that all media outlets are allowed to operate freely and without fear of persecution. The right to freedom of expression and access to information is the cornerstone of a democratic society, and ANFREL will continue to monitor and raise awareness of any attacks against these rights in Cambodia and beyond.

ANFREL stands in solidarity with the VOD and all journalists and media outlets in Cambodia who are committed to reporting the truth and promoting accountability, and urges the Cambodian government to respect the right of freedom of expression and information set forth in Article 19 of the ICCPR, of which Cambodia is a state party. We also call on the international community to join us in speaking out against this attack on media freedom in Cambodia.

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