



**KINGDOM OF CAMBODIA**  
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**Permanent Mission of the Kingdom of Cambodia  
to the United Nations Office and other  
International Organizations in Geneva**

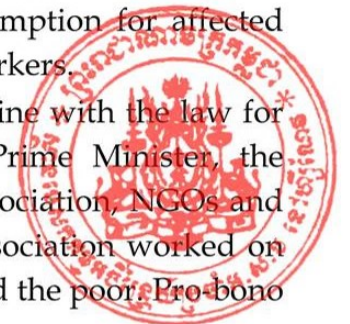
**PRESS RELEASE**

**“Cambodia’s efforts and progress in human rights accentuated at  
the Human Rights Council”**

*Geneva, 16 July 2023* – The Human Rights Council (HRC) concluded its 53<sup>rd</sup> Session on 14 July 2023 after having hosted a total of 38 meetings and adopted 30 resolutions on thematic and country-specific issues.

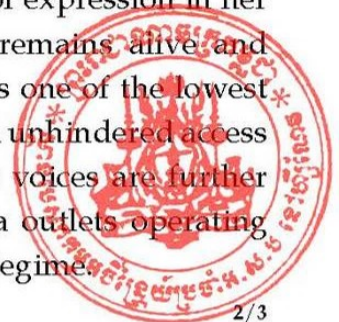
During the four-week interaction (19 June–14 July 2023), the Permanent Mission of the Kingdom of Cambodia to the United Nations Office in Geneva delivered a total of 20 statements, featuring the normative and practical achievements and progress of Cambodia in all categories of human rights – civil, political, social, economic and cultural, including the rights to development. The delegation of Cambodia also contributed to the debates on the improvement of the working methods of the OHCHR and the Council as well as consideration of human rights situations in some other countries. Below are highlights of Cambodia’s statements delivered during the said exchanges.

- In 2023, Cambodia maintains a high employment rate of the total labour force. Our success includes the development of a resilient and high-income labour market for people with better working conditions, with a focus on improving the well-being of both formal and informal workers. By 2022, people with disabilities (PwD) working in 37 public institutions witness two percent increase compared to 2020, whereas more than 200 private enterprises employ the PwD.
- Cambodia’s poverty rate has now dropped half to 16 percent. In strengthening our local resilience in the face of the post-pandemic recovery and global recession, the Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC) to date has rolled out wide-ranging support schemes, to name a few, the cash transfer program to poor and vulnerable households, tax exemption for affected sectors, and cash relief programs for job-suspended workers.
- To guarantee access to justice and legal protection in line with the law for vulnerable groups, volunteer lawyer units of the Prime Minister, the Cambodia Human Rights Committee, and the Bar Association, NGOs and legal clinics offer pro-bono legal services. The Bar Association worked on several thousand cases involving juveniles, women, and the poor. Pro-bono



lawyers units of the Prime Minister, deployed in all the localities across the country, have provided legal support to journalists who face litigation, in addition to the vulnerable group.

- As a state party to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, Cambodia is deeply committed to eliminating all forms of discrimination against women and girls while advancing gender equality and women's empowerment cross-cutting all sectors. The RGC has taken steps to safeguard the well-being and rights of women and children, with a view to ensuring a more supportive and nurturing environment for all.
- To protect and promote the rights of migrant workers, wide-ranging policies, programs and strategic plans at national and subnational levels have been in place. Cambodia has signed MoUs with host countries to ensure that the rights of over Cambodian workers abroad are protected and upheld.
- As one of the champion countries in implementing the Global Compact for Migration and a state party to the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, Cambodia's effort in addressing trafficking in person lies in the core pillars of "Prevention and Combat; Protection and Assistance; and Promotion of International Cooperation." Furthermore, several agreements, treaties, and MoUs between Cambodia and other countries and partners have been forged to provide mutual and legal assistance, with a view to enhancing cooperation on the suppression of human trafficking and assistance to victims.
- Despite being a low emitter of greenhouse gases, Cambodia has consistently contributed to climate mitigation. As the first country in ASEAN and second LDC, Cambodia submitted a Long-Term Strategy for Carbon Neutrality with a 2050 target to the UNFCCC and updated its NDC report with a 42 percent emission reduction goal by 2030.
- Civic and political space in Cambodia is free and open, attested by, inter alia, the constructive vibrant roles of 6,000 NGOs and over 2,000 media outlets operating freely without censorship or restriction, in contribution to the promotion and protection of human rights, good governance, and policy-making. Moreover, 18 political parties are registered to compete in the upcoming elections, a true indication of the pluralistic and democratic nature of the country, as guaranteed by the Constitution of Cambodia.
- Cambodia attaches high priority to the role of freedom of expression in her liberal democratic path. The media in the Kingdom remains alive and dynamic. The high mobile internet penetration, which is one of the lowest costs in the region, has empowered ordinary citizens with unhindered access to express their opinions freely on public affairs. Their voices are further amplified by nearly 2,000 traditional and digital media outlets operating without censorship as guaranteed by the Law on Press Regime.



- Misinformation and disinformation are a dire threat to freedom of expression and many other spheres integral to sustainable development. As such, Cambodia's efforts in cooperation with the UN agencies and civil societies include awareness-raising campaigns and the launch of guidelines for journalists and media professionals with a view to addressing misinformation and disinformation while building trust in the media and ensuring the public access to reliable information.
- To address global challenges, the strengthening of international solidarity is vital for promoting peace, human rights, and sustainable development by fostering cooperation, mutual support, and collective responsibility among nations. In this spirit, once a recipient of the UN peacekeepers, Cambodia has deployed over 9,000 peacekeepers, 722 of whom are women, to partake in eleven UN peacekeeping operations in nine different countries.
- A purported independence or affiliation with a political party or any purported rights organization is not a license to break the law with impunity. To tag the law enforcement process as a form of restriction of the freedoms of certain groups is to downplay the rule of law and its equal application to all citizens.
- Despite the absence of a few politicians and political parties, who are either in conflict with the law or banned from politics due to their infringement of the law, Cambodia remains steadfast in holding July's general elections in a free, fair, just and transparent manner, the one that will be fully reflective of the people's will.
- Cooperation is a two-way process. To engender real impact, it is imperative that the UN human rights bodies and mechanisms, including the OHCHR, work in a fair and depoliticized manner, guided by the principles of universality, impartiality, objectivity and non-selectivity, and to engage in constructive and genuine dialogues based on verified sources of information.
- Effective technical assistance and cooperation programs must always be demand-driven in consultation with and with the full consent of the states in line with the national priorities and the accepted UPR recommendations. The primacy of the role of the state as the human rights duty bearer should be respected in this process.

During the 53<sup>rd</sup> Session of the HRC, Cambodia signed up to 13 joint statements proposed by ASEAN, Group of Friends in Defense of the UN Charter, and countries of the Like-Minded Group on a wide range of topics from family and human rights, women's rights, poverty reduction, clean energy, climate change, international solidarity, to technical co-operation and capacity-building.

