



គណៈកម្មាធិការដើម្បីការបោះឆ្នោតដោយសេរី និងយុត្តិធម៌នៅកម្ពុជា (គ.ប.ស.យ)

COMMITTEE FOR FREE AND FAIR ELECTIONS IN CAMBODIA (COMFREL)

ទីស្នាក់ការកណ្តាល ផ្ទះលេខ ១៣៨ ផ្លូវ ១២២ សង្កាត់ទឹកល្អក់ ១ ខណ្ឌទួលគោក រាជធានីភ្នំពេញ ព្រះរាជាណាចក្រកម្ពុជា
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Press Release on Women's Participation in Politics and Elections

The Committee for Free and Fair Elections in Cambodia (COMFREL) has produced a report on Women's Participation in Politics and Elections, combining data analysis and the opinions of Cambodian women who have participated in political affairs, particularly in the fourth legislature 2008 National Assembly election process.

The report remarks that:

- The number of women candidates in 2008 decreased to 12.20% (from 27% in 2003 and 14.80% in 2008). However, the number of women candidates in the Cambodian People's Party (CPP) increased from 14 in 2003 (11.38%) to 20 in 2008 (16.26%). In the Sam Rainsy Party (SRP) the increase was from 15 in 2003 (12.19%) to 17 in 2008 (13.82%).
- The number of elected women has increased slightly compared with previous elections (18 elected immediately, equal to 14.63% in 2008; 15, equal to 12.19% in 2003).
- In the campaign process from June 26 to July 25, 2008, all 11 parties campaigned to show voters policies that were relevant to women's and children's issues.
- Numbers of women are still low in the lower-level electoral commissions. Few women have supervisory roles or are involved in decision making regarding elections.
- Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) had more women observers (35%) than political parties did (17%).
- There were more women voters than men on Election Day in July 2008.
- Cases studies revealed that some women did not get involved or go to vote because they were busy, poor, confused or did not care (past electoral experiences did not show them voting brought any benefits for ordinary citizens; they were still poor and nothing had changed).

More debate has arisen recently regarding little respect to elected women, at both commune and national level. Obstacles are put in the way of women as they work, and little encouragement are given to officers (deputy district governors and deputy provincial governors) or women's representatives to help them carry out their duties. Women leaders are mocked when they talk about women's issues, particularly women from opposition parties.

For instance Mu Sochua, the opposition Sam Rainsy Party, Member of Parliament, was prohibited from participating in or leading meetings in the National Assembly, despite her efforts to obtain a letter of permission or an invitation. Her immunity can be lifted¹. COMFREL is continuing to monitor the situation and the condition of all female elected officials.

The new capital, provincial, town, district and khan councils will contain around 12% women (in a total of 3235 councils).

Please contact COMFREL for further details or log on to www.comfrel.org.

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Phnom Penh, May 18, 2009, Media Department, COMFREL

¹ She announced her intention to sue the Prime Minister for defamation, in connection with comments he made in a public speech in Kampot province on April 4. Within 24 hours of this, a pro-government television station quoted a Prime Ministerial advisor as saying the government would counter-sue Mu Sochua and that all Cambodian People's Party (CPP) MPs would support the lifting of her immunity.