

Joint Statement

The Effects of the Law on Associations and Non-Governmental Organizations And the Process of its Amendment

The under-signed associations and non-governmental organizations, which are actively operating in Cambodia, express serious concern about the challenges of the Law on Associations and Non-Governmental Organizations (LANGO), which hinder the freedom to implement their activities. The law is understood as imposing obligations and abusing individual autonomy. We perceive that the law set the obligations which violent entity autonomy of associations and non-governmental organizations since it requires them to submit reports to the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Economy and Finance, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, and to comply with complicated taxation procedures. The wording of the Law also enables state officials to interpret provisions based on a political situation and circumstances in a manner, which can cause confusion and implementation not reflective of the contents of the Law.

These obligations and abuses of individual autonomy violate the existing Civil Code and international conventions on human rights, which Cambodia has ratified.

After experiencing these effects and challenges, CSOs, including associations and non-governmental organizations have undertaken a thorough study and discussion of each article and have already submitted their recommendations on proposed amendments to the Ministry of Interior. So far, representatives of civil society organization groups have submitted proposed amendments to 14 articles including articles 1, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 20, 24, 25, 26, 30, 31, 32 and Article 35. It is also noted that CSOs have submitted their joint proposed amendment in the second meeting with MOI on 03 December 2019. Consequently, there is no contrasting proposed amendment submitted to MOI.

The associations and non-governmental organizations strongly urge the governmental working group on LANGO amendments to take the following steps:

1. Creation of a roadmap indicating specific timelines for the process of amending the LANGO.
2. Accept concerns of CSOs, including associations and non-governmental organizations, and speed up the amendment process to ensure CSOs' freedom and rights in the process of national development.
3. Establish separate meetings and discussions with various groups that have submitted proposed amendments to the LANGO.

For further information:

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Here are the associations and organizations endorsed this statement:

1. Committee for Free and Fair Elections in Cambodia (COMFREL)
2. Cambodian Human Right and Development Association (ADHOC)
3. People Center for Development and Peace (PDP-CENTER)
4. Youth Resource Development Program (YRDP)
5. Center for Alliance of Labor and Human Rights (សង្គ្រោះ-Central)
6. Cambodian Food and Service Workers' Federation (CFSWF)
7. Cambodian Center for Independent Media (CCIM)
8. Coalition of Cambodian Farmer Community (CCFC-Association)
9. Independent Democracy of Informal Economy Association (IDEA)
10. Cambodian Human Rights Action Coalition (CHRAC)
11. Affiliated Network for Social Accountability-Cambodia (ANSA)
12. Khmer Kampuchea Krom for Human Rights and Development Association (KKKHRDA)
13. Cambodian Volunteers for Society (CVS)
14. Khmer Youth Association (KYA)
15. Coalition for Integrity and Social Accountability (CISA)
16. Youth Coalition for Unity and Development (YCUD)
17. Alliance for Conflict Transformation (ACT)
18. Coalition of Cambodian Apparel Workers Democratic Union (C.CAWDU)
19. Peace Bridges Organization (PBO)
20. Transparency International Cambodia (TIC)
21. Cambodian Alliance of Trade Union (CATU)
22. Neutral and Impartial Committee for Free and Fair Elections in Cambodia (NICFEC)
23. Sahmakum Teang Tnaut (STT)
24. Cambodian's Independent Civil-Servants Association (CICA)
25. Cambodian Institute for Democracy (CID)
26. Cambodian Grassroots Cross-sector Network (CGCN)
27. Youth Council of Cambodia (YCC)
28. Cambodian Youth Network (CYN)