



Joint Statement

Phnom Penh, May 2, 2023—The 30th anniversary of World Press Freedom Day is jointly commemorated on 2nd May 2023 in Phnom Penh by over 10 civil society organizations and media association/organizations in collaboration with development partners. This event gathers around 200 participants including journalists, representatives from civil society organizations, youths, and other stakeholders.

This year’s theme is **“Shaping a Future of Rights: Freedom of Expression as a driver for all Other Human Rights”**. With this theme, the undersigned civil society groups, media association/organizations working to promote access to information, press freedom and freedom of expression in Cambodia collectively urge the Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC) and all stakeholders to continue paying more attention to addressing the following requests:

1. Ensure a free, safe, and secure environment favourable for journalists and news outlets to perform their professional role without restriction and fear, especially before, during and after the upcoming July national elections.
2. Development partners should increase support for the work of independent media and civil society organizations which provide protection services and emergency support to journalists who are at risks as a result of their journalistic practices.
3. Stop all forms of harassment against media houses and journalists who dare to report “sensitive” social issues and release all journalists who remain in prison, particularly end the use of the penal code to prosecute journalists in relation to their work.
4. Accelerate the legislation of access to information in accordance with international standards and ensure effective enforcement of the law.
5. The RGC must be open for comprehensive consultations with and accept inputs from relevant stakeholders in the amendment process of press law as well as other new draft legislations such as cybercrime draft law, cybersecurity draft law and other regulations which potentially undermine press freedom and freedom of expression.
6. The RGC must enhance its efforts to eliminate all forms of gender-based violence against woman journalists to show its commitment to enabling greater participation of women in journalism sector.

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This joint statement is endorsed by:

1. Cambodian Journalists Alliance Association (CamboJA)
2. Cambodian Center for Independent Media (CCIM)
3. Cambodian Center for Human Rights (CCHR)
4. Committee for Free and Fair Elections in Cambodia (COMFREL)
5. Center for Alliance of Labor and Human Rights (CENTRAL)
6. The Cambodian Youth Network Association (CYN)
7. Youth Resource Development Program (YRDP)
8. Building Community Voices (BCV)
9. Women’s Media Centre of Cambodia (WMC)
10. Cambodian Human Rights and Development Association (ADHOC)
11. Conserve Indigenous Peoples Languages Organization (CIPL)
12. Transparency International Cambodia (TIC)
13. Coalition for Partnership in Democratic Development (CPDD)