

Right Livelihood

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

57th session of the UN Human Rights Council

Oral Statement

Interactive Dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on Cambodia

Mr. President,

Right Livelihood thanks the Special Rapporteur for his report. We are extremely alarmed by the current situation in Cambodia, where human rights defenders are increasingly, unjustly prosecuted and arbitrarily detained.

On July 2, ten environmental activists affiliated to Mother Nature Cambodia, were sentenced between 6 to 8 years for allegedly “plotting against the government” and “insulting the king.” The youth movement has been tirelessly engaging in campaigns to shed light on the threats posed by environmental issues such as sand extraction scams, unsafe gold mining and man-made pollution, that threaten the human rights of all Cambodians, including their right to a safe, healthy and sustainable environment.

Instead of recognising their important contribution, the authorities engaged in a judicial proceedings without credible evidence, marred with irregularities, which concluded in unprecedented sentences and five violent arrests - showing to the world that the State prefers the interests of large transnational corporations over that of its own population.

Mr. Special Rapporteur

Ly Chandaravuth, Thun Ratha, Long Kunthea, Phuon Keoraksmeay and Yim Leanghy are now held in facilities scattered across the country, far from their families and in precarious conditions. While we echo your calls to end all forms of harassment, ensure access to justice for all, and immediately and unconditionally release activists from prison, we ask:

As the repression intensifies, how do you intend to scale up your interactions with Cambodian civil society? Which avenues do you see for accountability?

Thank you