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H E Hun Sen  
Second Prime Minister  
Office of the Council of Ministers  
Phnom Penh  
KINGDOM OF CAMBODIA

11 July 1997

**OPEN LETTER TO SECOND PRIME MINISTER HUN SEN FROM AMNESTY  
INTERNATIONAL SECRETARY GENERAL PIERRE SANE**

Your Excellency

Amnesty International condemns the reported summary execution of FUNCINPEC ministers Hor Sok and Chao Sambath and other royalist officials and supporters.

Your assurances to the international community that “there is no persecution” are simply not borne out by the systematic campaign of arrests, harassment and even killings conducted by your forces in recent days against your political opponents. Several journalists have also been targeted, and we are concerned for the safety of human rights workers and court defenders in provincial areas.

We hold grave fears for the safety of the hundreds of FUNCINPEC soldiers and officials believed to be in the custody of your forces. We are also deeply concerned for the safety of other politicians, journalists and activists linked to FUNCINPEC, the KNP and BLDP. We urge you to clarify immediately and publicly the status and welfare of all those being held, provide guarantees of their safety and fair treatment and afford access to them by independent monitors such as the International Committee of the Red Cross and the UN Centre for Human Rights in Cambodia.

As fighting continues, we urge you to demonstrate concretely that your forces will abide by international human rights and humanitarian law and standards.

It is tragic that the gains made through the transition process in Cambodia should be placed at risk in this way, that ordinary Cambodians are yet again suffering violations of their fundamental human rights, and that developments in Cambodia have again become a threat to stability and security in the Asia-Pacific region.

We find it especially disturbing that such grave abuses should occur in the very same week that your officials had invited Amnesty International to visit Cambodia for discussions on human rights with you and other government representatives.

You know only too well the spectre of gross human rights violations that haunts Cambodia to this day. As you told an Amnesty International delegation visiting Cambodia in November 1994, *“the promotion of human rights and democracy is essential in Cambodia, otherwise the country will fall into anarchy, which is very difficult to pull back from and will lead Cambodia to violence, a very dangerous situation”*.

The signatories to the Paris Peace Accords of 1991 explicitly recognised “that Cambodia’s tragic recent history requires special measures to assure protection of human rights and the non-return to the policies and practices of the past”. They undertook to “promote and encourage respect for and observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms in Cambodia as embodied in the relevant international instruments in order, in particular, to prevent the recurrence of human rights abuses”.

The time has come for you and all the signatories of the Paris Peace Accords to live up to that solemn commitment. Cambodia will not enjoy stability, security and development without protection for human rights. Human rights considerations should therefore be at the forefront of efforts to restore peace and normalise government in Cambodia. No durable political settlement will be found to the current crisis without adequate guarantees and safeguards for human rights. The violent suppression of your political opponents will in no way restore the stability and legitimacy of government in Cambodia.

We call on you to demonstrate good faith by taking immediate steps to halt the killing, arrest and harassment of peaceful political activists in Cambodia.

Yours sincerely

Pierre Sane  
Secretary General