



AI Index: ASA 23/8640/2024  
1 October 2024

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**ORAL STATEMENT**  
**Item 6**  
**Consideration of UPR reports: Cambodia**

UN Human Rights Council  
57<sup>th</sup> session  
9 September – 11 October

Mr. President,

The range of recommendations made to Cambodia reflect the litany of ongoing human rights violations in the country.

Following the forced eviction last year of an estimated ten thousand families from their homes at the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Angkor, we regret in particular that Cambodia has failed to accept recommendations on land conflicts and forced evictions. We ask recommending states to insist that Cambodia stop forced evictions, and ensure that victims are provided with access to justice and effective remedy. We also urge relevant UN agencies– including UNESCO – to prioritize raising concerns about forced evictions with the government of Cambodia.

Human trafficking remains endemic in Cambodia, with UN Special Rapporteurs concluding in 2022 that 100,000 victims of trafficking may be present in Sihanoukville City alone. The Special Rapporteurs, along with OHCHR, suggested that state authorities may be complicit with online scamming and casino operators, including by taking bribes or not investigating complaints. Credible reporting from 2024 suggests human trafficking continues unabated. We call on Cambodian authorities to take immediate steps to implement recommendations to address this.

The mandate of the Special Rapporteur on Cambodia is a complementary mechanism to the UPR process, and we regret that Cambodia has not committed to implementing the recommendations of the mandate, on the basis that they have ‘undermined the sovereignty and independence of the Cambodian judiciary’. On the contrary, these recommendations reflect the reality that the judiciary is not independent and that the criminal justice system is used to harass, intimidate and crackdown on human rights defenders, activists, political opponents, independent media and civil society.

We call on Cambodian authorities to immediately release all detained human rights defenders solely for the peaceful exercise of their human rights, amend or repeal repressive laws in accordance with the country’s international human rights obligations, and to guarantee and uphold the rights to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly.

Thank you.