

EXTERNAL

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Fear for safety

12 February 1996

CAMBODIA Christine Alfsen-Norodom (f), United Nations employee

Alexandra (f), aged 5

Sarah (f), aged 3

Marithivong, aged 1

Amnesty International fears for the safety of Christine Alfsen-Norodom and her three young children, following death threats received at their home in Phnom Penh on 12 February 1996.

Christine Alfsen-Norodom is an international civil servant and the wife of Prince Norodom Sirivudh, a prominent politician and member of the Royal Family.

Prince Norodom Sirivudh was arrested in November 1995 and charged in connection with an alleged plot to kill Cambodia's Second Prime Minister Hun Sen. He was exiled to France in December, but his trial is due to take place in Cambodia on 15 February. He has yet to announce if he intends to return for the hearing.

Amnesty International believes the charges against Prince Norodom Sirivudh may be politically motivated.

On the morning of 12 February, Christine Alfsen-Norodom's bodyguard received a telephone call, saying that her life will be in danger when she leaves her house on 15 February to go to the court to hear the trial. Christine Alfsen-Norodom works in a United Nations office in Phnom Penh and her children go to school and kindergarten in the city. All four have dual Cambodian and French citizenship.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The threats against the lives of Christine Alfsen-Norodom and her children come at a time of heightened political tension in Cambodia. A popular radio journalist was shot in the street last week in what may have been a politically motivated attack, and members of a new political party were illegally detained in their building by heavily armed police at the end of January. Several journalists are currently facing prison sentences because of articles they have published criticising the government. The Royal Government of Cambodia is increasingly intolerant of criticism and political opposition, and last year the most prominent critic of the government was expelled from his party and the National Assembly because of his outspoken political views. Both he and other critics have received death threats in the last year.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/faxes/airmail letters in French or English or your own language:

- expressing concern at the threats against the lives of Christine Alfsen-Norodom and her three young children;
- calling on the Royal Government of Cambodia to ensure their safety, and the safety of all its citizens who have been threatened, regardless of their position or political affiliation.

APPEALS TO:

His Excellency Sar Kheng
Vice Prime Minister
Office of the Council of Ministers
Phnom Penh, Cambodia

Faxes: + 855 234 26144 (c/o Ministry of Foreign Affairs)

Telegrams: Vice Prime Minister Sar Kheng, Phnom Penh, Cambodia
Salutation: Your Excellency

You Hok Kry
Minister of Interior and National Security
Office of the Council of Ministers
Phnom Penh, Cambodia

Telegrams: Minister of Interior You Hok Kry, Phnom Penh, Cambodia
Salutation: Dear Minister

His Excellency Hun Sen
Second Prime Minister
Office of the Council of Ministers
Phnom Penh, Cambodia

Telegrams: Second Prime Minister Hun Sen, Phnom Penh, Cambodia
Salutation: Your Excellency

COPIES TO: diplomatic representatives of CAMBODIA accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat,
or your section office, if sending appeals after 15 March 1996.