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## **Cambodia: Global call to release Yorm Bopha ahead of Supreme Court appeal**

Cambodia must free housing rights activist Yorm Bopha, Amnesty International said as it launched a worldwide campaign for her release just days before the country's Supreme Court hears her final appeal on 22 November.

"Yorm Bopha is a prisoner of conscience who is behind bars purely because of her human rights activism. She must be freed immediately and unconditionally," said Isabelle Arradon, Amnesty International's Deputy Asia-Pacific Director.

"Thousands of our members and supporters around the world are taking action on Yorm Bopha's behalf, calling on the Cambodian authorities to finally set her free."

A 30-year old mother of one, Yorm Bopha has been locked up since her arrest in September 2012 on accusations of planning an assault on two men. She was convicted in December last year for "intentional violence with aggravating circumstances," despite no evidence against her and inconsistent witness testimonies.

In June 2013, Cambodia's Appeals Court upheld her conviction with one year of her three-year sentence suspended. She is not due for release until September 2014.

"The lack of evidence against Yorm Bopha suggests that the authorities have unfairly targeted her," said Isabelle Arradon.

Amnesty International believes that the real reason for Yorm Bopha's imprisonment is her human rights activism. She had been defending her community's rights at the former Boeung Kak Lake in the capital Phnom Penh, where thousands of people have been forcibly evicted since 2007.

She also played a leading role in the campaign to release 13 women activists from her community who were convicted and imprisoned in May 2012 after they took part in a peaceful protest.

"Amnesty International stands up for human rights defenders across the world. We will keep campaigning hard on Yorm Bopha's case until she has been released without conditions and reunited with her family and community," said Isabelle Arradon.

Yorm Bopha's case is among 12 cases selected for Amnesty International's flagship campaign Write for Rights 2013, the world's biggest human rights event. It runs until mid-December, and is expected to garner more than two million individual actions.

Members in almost 40 countries around the world are writing appeals and gathering thousands of signatures for petitions to demand Yorm Bopha's release. They are holding events and sharing their

photos and messages of support online, to show their solidarity with the imprisoned housing rights activist.