

URGENT ACTION

VICTIMS OF FORCED EVICTION DETAINED

Twenty-four women and six children forcibly evicted from the Borei Keila area of Phnom Penh, Cambodia, were arrested on 11 January during a peaceful protest. They are being arbitrarily detained, and are at risk of ill-treatment.

The **30 women and children** were among a group protesting peacefully in Phnom Penh against the detention of around eight people arrested during the forced eviction of Borei Keila on 3 January 2012. The women and children were arrested and taken to Prey Speu Social Affairs Center in Phnom Penh. The Center is used by the authorities to arbitrarily detain homeless people, drug users and sex workers rounded up from the streets. Human rights NGOs have previously reported that detainees there have been subjected to abuses including rape, murder, and threats of violence. No human rights monitors have been able to visit the 30 women and children in the Center.

On 3 January, the homes of around 300 families living in Borei Keila were destroyed by workers from a construction company which had acquired some of the land in 2003. Human rights monitors and media reported that security forces who were present used tear gas and rubber bullets against the residents, and rocks, logs and bottles were thrown during clashes. More than 64 people were reportedly injured. At least eight of the residents were arrested, and remain in detention. The charges against them are not known. Most of those evicted have been moved to two separate sites. Conditions at one site, Srah Po, 45 kilometres from Phnom Penh, are reportedly poor, with no adequate sanitation or housing. Some families have only received a plot of land and are living under tarpaulins, others have not been given anything. Many lost their possessions when their homes were destroyed.

Please write immediately in English, Khmer or your own language:

- Express concern at the arrest of 30 peaceful protesters on 11 January, including 24 women and six children, who are now detained at Prey Speu Social Affairs Center, and call for their immediate release;
- Urge the authorities to conduct a full and independent investigation into the forced eviction of some 300 families living at Borei Keila, Phnom Penh on 3 January, including into why the eviction took place, and the apparent excessive use of force by security forces;
- Call for the release of at least eight villagers, pending further investigations and for members of the security forces found to be responsible for excessive use of force to be suspended and prosecuted;
- Call for all those forcibly evicted to be provided with adequate compensation and suitable alternative accommodation that meets international standards for adequate housing, and remind the authorities of their obligation to prevent forced evictions and respect and protect the right to adequate housing, in accordance with international treaties to which it is a state party.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 22 FEBRUARY 2012 TO:

Minister of Interior and Deputy Prime

Minister

Sar Kheng

#75 Norodom Blvd.

Khan Chamkarmon

Phnom Penh, Cambodia

Email: moi@interior.gov.kh

Salutation: Your Excellency

Governor of Phnom Penh

Kep Chuktema

69 Blvd. Preah Monivong

Khan Daun Penh

Phnom Penh, Cambodia

Email: info@phnompenh.gov.kh

Salutation: Dear Governor

And copies to:

Minister of Foreign Affairs

Hor Nam

No 3 Samdech Hun Sen Street

Sangkat Tonle Bassac

Khan Chamcar Mon

Phnom Penh, Cambodia

Fax: + 855 23 216141

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. Please insert local diplomatic addresses below:

Name Address 1 Address 2 Address 3 Fax Fax number Email Email address Salutation Salutation

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Borei Keila has been the home for a large poor urban community for many years. The government designated the area as a so-called social land concession for residential development in 2003. Poor homeless families are the primary beneficiaries of social land concessions, according to the 2003 Sub-Decree on Social Land Concessions. The Borei Keila social land concession was intended to be implemented as a land-sharing arrangement between a private developer, a government ministry, and residents. The agreement gave the developer 2.6 hectares of the land for commercial development, in exchange for constructing new housing for over 1,700 residents on two hectares of the land. The remainder, consisting of 10 hectares, was to be returned to the ministry concerned. However in April 2010, the company claimed that it could not afford to build all of the housing and received government approval to build only eight of the 10 apartment blocks it had pledged. Left with no prospect of new homes, the 300 families have been protesting against the company and local authority during the past year.

As a party to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and other international human rights treaties, Cambodia has an obligation to stop forced evictions and to protect the population from them. Forced evictions are evictions carried out without adequate notice, consultation with those affected, legal safeguards or assurances of adequate alternative accommodation. Whether they be owners, renters or informal settlers, everyone should possess a degree of security of tenure which guarantees legal protection against forced eviction, harassment and other threats.

Name: Evictees

Gender m/f: Female

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