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## **Cambodia: The Time to Act is Now**

Behind the image of generalised chaos in Cambodia, a violent campaign of intimidation, arrests and harassment of politicians, party activists and journalists is being conducted by forces loyal to Hun Sen, Amnesty International said today.

“The last three days have seen systematic targeting of key members of FUNCINPEC, clearly aimed at cowing opposition to Hun Sen’s party and instilling a climate of fear throughout the country,” said Pierre Sané, Secretary General of Amnesty International.

“Individual houses of members of FUNCINPEC have been shelled and the MPs and their families forced to flee into hiding. These people need immediate protection -- foreign embassies should open their doors and provide asylum to those at risk.”

According to the human rights organization, more than 50 people are currently in hiding or in need of protection. FUNCINPEC officials in provincial areas have been arrested and several journalists loyal to Prince Norodom Ranariddh are believed to be in custody. The fate and whereabouts of 13 people detained in Battambang province and 22 in Prey Veng is unknown.

The organization is gravely concerned at reports that FUNCINPEC Minister Hor Sok, who was arrested yesterday allegedly committed suicide in custody. Amnesty International has received information that he may have been executed, and fears for the safety of all those held in incommunicado detention.

Mr Sané called on the international community to provide protection to anyone who needs asylum, and on governments, particularly ASEAN members states, to put the strongest pressure possible on those controlling Cambodia to ensure the safety of detainees.

“The Cambodian authorities should provide details of the numbers and names of those in detention, details of any charges against them and assurances that they will not be ill-treated. Access to detainees for human rights monitors, including the International Committee of the Red Cross and the United Nations Centre for Human Rights, must be guaranteed,” Mr Sané said.

“A durable political settlement to the current crisis will be impossible without safeguards for human rights,” he added.

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