

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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UA 189/94 "Disappearance" / Fear of extrajudicial execution 16 May 1994

CAMBODIA Three villagers (names unknown) from Sei La Keyo village, Kom Ping Poi district, Battambang Province

On 7 April 1994, three villagers were taken from Sei La Keyo village by a senior military officer of the Royal Cambodian Armed Forces in connection with a land dispute. They have not been seen since. Amnesty International fears for their safety, especially in view of the many reports of extrajudicial executions in Battambang Province during the last 12 months.

The village of Sei La Keyo (which means "glass stone") houses about 100 families who have lived there since 1979, and is located on land believed to be rich in mineral resources. Negotiations for sale of the land were reportedly being carried out between a foreign investment company and the local military. Local human rights monitors state that the villagers of Sei La Keyo were approached by the Deputy Commander of F6 Brigade and asked to leave the village. The villagers requested the deputy governor of Battambang Province to intervene in the dispute but received no response.

At 9 pm on 7 April the Deputy Commander of F6 Brigade went to the village with a letter from the deputy governor of Battambang Province. The letter instructed the Deputy Commander to offer three alternative sites to the villagers and to ensure that they moved to one of the sites. The Deputy Commander then took three of the villagers with him when he left in order to ensure that the villagers cooperated with the instructions. To date the villagers have not agreed to move from the site of Sei La Keyo.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

In 1993, under a United Nations-sponsored peace accord, 90% of Cambodia's electorate voted in democratic elections, following over 20 years of civil war, violent revolution and foreign occupation. A new coalition government was formed, and the armed forces of each party within the government combined to form a new national army - the Royal Cambodian Armed Forces. Local military commanders enjoy a great deal of autonomy and are frequently involved in business transactions for their own personal gain.

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

- expressing concern that three villagers were taken from Sei La Keyo village, Kom Ping Poi district, Battambang Province by a senior military officer of F6 Brigade on 7 April as hostages in a land dispute and have not been seen since;
- calling for an immediate, thorough and impartial investigation into the whereabouts of these villagers;
- urging that those found to be responsible for the "disappearance" of these villagers be brought promptly to justice.

APPEALS TO

1. His Majesty King Norodom Sihanouk
Head of State
The Royal Palace
Phnom Penh, Cambodia

Telegrams: HM King Norodom Sihanouk, Phnom Penh, Cambodia
Faxes: + 855 232 6110
Salutation: Your Majesty

2. Samdech Krompreah Norodom Ranariddh
First Prime Minister
Office of the Council of Ministers
Phnom Penh, Cambodia
Telegrams: HRH Norodom Ranariddh, Phnom Penh, Cambodia
Faxes: + 855 232 6144 (c/o Ministry of Foreign Affairs)
Salutation: Your Royal Highness

3. His Excellency Hun Sen
Second Prime Minister
Office of the Council of Ministers
Phnom Penh, Cambodia
Telegrams: HE Hun Sen, Phnom Penh, Cambodia
Faxes: + 855 232 6144 (c/o Ministry of Foreign Affairs)
Salutation: Your Excellency

4. His Excellency Tea Banh
Co-Minister of National Defence
Ministry of National Defence
Phnom Penh, Cambodia
Telegrams: HE Tea Banh, Phnom Penh, Cambodia
Faxes: + 855 232 6144 (c/o Ministry of Foreign Affairs)
Salutation: Your Excellency

5. His Excellency Tea Chamrath
Co-Minister of National Defence
Ministry of National Defence
Phnom Penh, Cambodia
Telegrams: HE Tea Chamrath, Phnom Penh, Cambodia
Faxes: + 855 232 6144 (c/o Ministry of Foreign Affairs)
Salutation: Your Excellency

Cambodia has almost no diplomatic representation in other countries

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat,
or your section office, if sending appeals after 27 June 1994.