

# URGENT ACTION

## GROUP 78 EVICTED IN CAMBODIA

**Low-income families living in the area known as Group 78, in the Cambodian capital Phnom Penh, have been forcibly evicted after three years of government harassment and intimidation.**

Around 60 Group 78 families had no choice but to accept inadequate compensation and dismantle their own homes rather than have them destroyed by force. The authorities threatened to forcibly evict them on 17 July, and they received information that up to 700 security forces had been mobilized for the eviction.

Most of the families left on the day before the deadline. Seven remaining families stayed in their homes, with human rights workers and journalists monitoring the situation. Before dawn on 17 July, at least 70 security forces, some armed with guns and electronic batons, moved in and blocked off the area. Dozens of hired workers dressed in red shirts demolished what was left of the already dismantled houses. Within hours, the resisting families had agreed to go. They were given until 3pm the same day to dismantle their houses and leave. The families have taken their belongings with them to find somewhere else to live.

The process leading to forced eviction has been deeply flawed. Group 78 residents have lived constantly under the threat of forced eviction for three years. They started moving into the area on the riverfront in 1983. Since then the value of the land has increased enormously. The families have applied for formal land titles several times since 2006, but the authorities ignored their applications despite official documentation proving strong ownership claims.

**PLEASE WRITE IMMEDIATELY in English, Khmer or your own language:**

- Condemning the authorities for the forced eviction of around 60 low-income families living at Group 78 on 16 and 17 July, with compensation packages deemed unfair and inadequate by the community;
- Calling on the authorities to ensure that those evicted have access to affordable alternative housing and basic services, including clean water, an adequate sanitation and sewage system, and access to local health care;
- Calling on the authorities to immediately end and protect the population from forced evictions;
- Calling for them to introduce a moratorium on all mass evictions until Cambodia has a framework of laws and policies that comply with international human rights law.

**PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 28 AUGUST 2009 TO:**

Kep Chuktema

Governor

Phnom Penh Municipality

# 69 blvd. Preah Monivong

Phnom Penh, Cambodia

**Fax: + 855 23 526101**

**Email: [phnompenh@phnompenh.gov.kh](mailto:phnompenh@phnompenh.gov.kh),**

**[info@phnompenh.gov.kh](mailto:info@phnompenh.gov.kh)**

**Salutation: Dear Governor**

Sar Kheng

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister  
of Interior

Ministry of Interior

# 75 Norodom Blvd.

Khan Chamkarmon

Phnom Penh, Cambodia

**Fax: + 855 23 212708**

**Email: [moi@interior.gov.kh](mailto:moi@interior.gov.kh)**

**Salutation: Dear Minister**

And copies to diplomatic  
representatives of Cambodia  
accredited to your country:

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date. This is the 3rd update of UA: 110/09 (ASA 23/007/2009).

Further information: <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/ASA23/007/2009/en>

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### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Forced evictions are carried out without adequate notice and consultation with those affected, without legal safeguards and without assurances of adequate alternative accommodation. Under international law, including the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), Cambodia is prohibited from carrying out forced evictions, and must protect people from forced evictions.

The Cambodian government has consistently failed to guarantee the right to adequate housing and protect its population against forced evictions. In 2008 alone, Amnesty International received reports about 27 forced evictions, affecting an estimated 23,000 people.

On 16 July, Cambodia's development partners called for a halt to forced evictions from disputed areas in Phnom Penh and elsewhere in the country until there are fair and transparent mechanisms for resolving land disputes in place and a comprehensive resettlement policy.

Further information on UA: 110/09 Index: ASA 23/016/2009 Issue Date: 17 July 2009

