

## **Joint Statement for the 106th International Women's Day, 8 March 2017**

International Women's Day is dedicated to the courage of women workers in the world who claim their right to freedom, democracy and the recognition and equal treatment between women and men. Cambodia has ratified the main international human rights treaties including CEDAW which ensures the protection of women's human rights. However, we have observed that the discrimination against women is continuing in political participation and land rights. Violence against women in the form of domestic violence, rape and sexual harassment happens often. Discrimination happens in all sectors of industry, affecting female garment factory, entertainment, informal economy, migrant and domestic workers both inside and outside the country.

On behalf of CSOs, communities, unions and associations working to promote better respect for women's rights, we jointly urge the Royal Government of Cambodia and relevant institutions to take the following actions:

- 1) Ensure the equal participation of women in the upcoming election. Alternate men and women's names in the candidate lists.
- 2) Take the following measures to protect women workers:
  - Amend the trade union law to remove restrictions on registering unions, so that the law complies with International Labour Organization Convention 87 and 98, which Cambodia ratified in 1999.
  - Adopt a universal minimum wage for all workers in all industries.
  - Ratify ILO Convention 183 on maternity protection.
  - Ratify ILO 189 on working conditions for domestic workers.
  - Ratify the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, which Cambodia signed in 2004.
- 3) Release human rights activists whose charges stem from their exercise of their legal rights to free speech and assembly.
- 4) Amend the Law on the Prevention of Domestic Violence and the Protection of Victims (DV Law) to conform to the requirements of CEDAW.
- 5) Ensure the independence of the judicial system, as required by Cambodia's constitution and treaties, so that women have full access to justice.
- 6) Eliminate punishment for people suspected of being prostitutes in the Criminal Code and Law on Suppression of Human Trafficking and Sexual Exploitation. Anti-trafficking efforts should focus on the people engaged in exploitation of women and children, not on those who are exploited in the sex industry.
- 7) Fully implement UN Security Council Resolution 1325 by training all security guards, police, military, and other persons acting on behalf of, or in tandem with the government, on non-

violent conflict resolution, particularly when dealing with assemblies by civil society members, women and children protesters.

We strongly hope that the Royal Government of Cambodia and relevant institutions follow these recommendations to implement the government's commitment to invest in gender equality according to Goal 5 of the UN Sustainable Development Goals.