Phnom Penh, 3 June 2014

Joint Statement by NGO-CEDAW, CAMBOW and GADNet

NGO-CEDAW (coalition of 79 NGOs) GADNet (coalition of 58 NGOs) and CAMBOW (coalition of 35 NGOs) are Cambodian coalitions of NGOs working for the advancement of the rights of women. Two of the persons arrested are members of NGO-CEDAW: Mr. VORN Pao (IDEA) and Mr. THENG Savoeun (CCFC).

We are relieved by the decision made on May 30 by the Phnom Penh Municipal Court to release the 23 persons jailed for more than 5 months following their arrests. However, we deeply regret they were released following suspended sentences, some of them having to pay heavy fines, at the conclusion of an extremely flawed trial process.

We believe those arrested and convicted should never have been taken into custody to begin with.

We also denounce the lack of fair trial rights witnessed during the trial. The presumption of innocence seemed to have been ignored by the prosecution. The Court seemed to focus on the defendants' attendance at the protests and possible inconsistencies in their testimonies rather than providing clear evidence supporting the charges placed against them.

We expect all these charges to be dropped when the case comes to the Appeal Court.

We urge authorities to launch an investigation to identify and bring the perpetrators to justice.

For more information, contact:

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