



NEWSLETTER



10th EDITION
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KAS CAMBODIA OFFICE

JANINA KANDT

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The following articles are a composition of the last week's (23.01.-27.01.) press releases in Cambodia. They give a review on current developments in the country.

VOTES FOR CAMBODIA'S SEAT IN THE UN-SECURITY COUNCIL



Source: Nigerian Village Square¹

In a meeting with his foreign diplomatic corps on January 24th Prime Minister Hun Sen expressed his bid for a non-permanent seat in the UN-Security Council. Foreign Affairs spokesman Koy Kuong said that the PM urged Cambodia's foreign ambassadors and consul generals to lobby other nations for votes in the election for one of 10 non-permanent seats in the UN-Security Council in 2013 and 2014 taking place later in 2012. 100 countries already have pledged support for Cambodia, according

to Koy Kuong. Improving relations with Vietnam, China and the US would certainly help the country in that endeavor but its decision not to appoint the UN-nominated co-investigating judge Laurent Kasper-Ansermet to the Khmer Rouge tribunal could have a negative effect, Lao Monghay, a political analyst expressed.

Further Reading:

PM pushes Security Council bid:

<http://www.phnompenhpost.com/index.php/2012012554126/National-news/pm-pushes-security-council-bid.html>

Cambodia Candidate for the United Nations Security Council 2013-2014:

<http://www.cambodianembassy.org.uk/downloads/Cambodia%20UN%20Brochure%20BLUE.pdf>

¹http://farm1.static.flickr.com/86/214742945_acf80dcd8c.jpg

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HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH CRITICIZES THE GOVERNMENT



Source: The online citizen²

In its annual report Human Rights Watch (HRW) criticized Cambodia's rights record. HRW especially pointed out the government's performance regarding the NGO draft law as well as the Khmer Rouge Tribunal: The report emphasized that the NGO law would enable the government to close organizations on arbitrary reasons and Prime Minister Hun Sen would have undermined the independence of the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia (ECCC) in the Khmer Rouge cases. Furthermore, the report mentioned that the ruling CPP would use the judiciary and the penal code to restrict freedom of speech, jail government critics and silence opposition party members.

Further Reading:

World Report 2011: Cambodia:

<http://www.hrw.org/world-report-2011/cambodia>

FRICCTIONS IN THE ECCC



Source: KI-Media³

Cambodia's Supreme Council of Magistracy has refused to appoint the Swiss co-investigating judge Laurent Kasper-Ansermet. He was nominated by the United Nations to replace the German judge Siegfried Blunk who resigned in October last year. According to Blunk he made this decision in consequence of interference by the Cambodian government in his investigations. As a reason for the rejection of Kasper-Ansermet the government named 'ethical' concerns: Kasper-Ansermet had used social-media to publicly express his determination to investigate cases 003 and 004 - which are not favored by the government. The United Nations reviewed these concerns and came to the conclusion that the decision to reject him was not founded but instead, according to UN-spokesmen Martin Nesirky, breached the terms of the 2003 agreement between Cambodia and the United Nations that

established the tribunal.

Further Reading:

Cambodia Refuses to Seat Swiss Judge at Khmer Rouge Tribunal:

<http://www.voanews.com/khmer-english/news/Cambodia-Refuses-to-Seat-Swiss-Judge-at-Khmer-Rouge-Tribunal-137884018.html>

UN holds firm on judge:

<http://www.phnompenhpost.com/index.php/2012012654160/National-news/un-holds-firm-on-judge.html>

²<http://theonlinecitizen.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/01/hrw-300x297.jpg>

³<http://3.bp.blogspot.com/-dZgj2Qt5b6Y/TwvI9Tj7a7I/AAAAAAAAAYig/UkPm-AEtiP0/s1600/Laurent+Kasper-Ansermet+%2528ECCC%2529.jpg>

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Salaries stopped for Cambodian staffers at Khmer Rouge tribunal due to funding cuts:

http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/asia-pacific/salaries-stopped-for-cambodian-staffers-at-khmer-rouge-tribunal-due-to-funding-cuts/2012/01/26/gIOAHBAHSQ_story.html

LAND DISPUTES RAISE CONCERN AMONG HUMAN RIGHTS GROUPS



Source: Licadho-Cambodia⁴

Human Rights Group Licadho expressed its concern about the increased use of armed force by authorities against villagers who protested against eviction from their land. During the last two months, security forces had opened fire on villagers during three protests and fired warning shots at two other protests in which 19 protesters got injured, according to Licadho. Several more cases in Kratie province, Phnom Penh, Battambang province and Ratanakkiri province in which mixed police forces and

armed guards used bullets and tear gas were reported. Licadho mentioned that since 2003 400,000 people have been affected by land disputes and Licadho president Pung Chhiv Kek added that these developments would be symptoms of an accelerating breakdown in Cambodian society. Colonel Khen Tito, spokesmen of the National Military Police in turn said that he had not received any reports which state that military police officers were involved in shootings in land disputes and added that the military police would have been established to defend the villager's interests and not the companies'.

Further Reading:

Cambodia evictions remain unchecked:

<http://www.globalpost.com/dispatch/news/regions/asia-pacific/120117/cambodia-evictions-forced-phnom-penh>

Five Shooting Incidents at Land Dispute Protests in the Past Two Months Show Alarming Increase in Use of Lethal Force:

<http://www.licadho-cambodia.org/pressrelease.php?perm=269>

Video: Military Shoot Land Protesters in Northeastern Cambodia:

<http://licadho-cambodia.org/video.php?perm=29>

BOREI KEILA LAND DISPUTE



Source: Amnesty International⁵

On the 3rd of January about 100 families from Borei Keila district in Phnom Penh, were evicted to relocation sites outside the city. The private company Phan Imex that started constructions on the resident's land was supposed to build 10 houses for compensation but built only 8 and sent the remaining families to relocation sites. Some of the relocated left these sites and came back to the capital due to bad living conditions caused by a lack of infrastructure. On January 11th 24 women

⁴<http://www.licadho-cambodia.org/album/files/thumb/751-boreikeila-forcedeviction-gun-small.jpg>

⁵<http://www.amnesty.org/en/news/cambodia-release-peaceful-protesters-detained-over-forced-eviction-2012-01-12>

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and six children were arrested for protesting against their eviction in front of the Phnom Penh Municipality building. Human Rights Groups criticized this as an illegal act.

Further Reading:

Joint letter to Cambodian Prime Minister regarding the Borei Keila Forced Eviction:

<http://www.hrw.org/news/2012/01/23/joint-letter-cambodian-prime-minister-regarding-borei-keila-forced- eviction>

The Borei Keila Nightmare:

<http://the-diplomat.com/asean-beat/2012/01/15/the-borei-keila-nightmare/>

Video: Borei Keila: Broken Promises in Cambodia:

<http://licadho-cambodia.org/video.php?perm=28>

VILLAGERS REGAIN THEIR LAND



Source: xmu.edu⁶

Villagers in Kratie province, who were evicted from their land by a private company in 2008, saw a first step forward to get their land returned. The Minister of Environment declared in a meeting with villagers, who were affected by land convictions, that those families who had previously used their land for agriculture will get their property back. The Ministry of Interior issued a statement in which it is said that altogether 380 families in Kratie province will regain their land in case they can prove that

they have it. Deputy Governor of Kratie province said that the government will also start to prepare land titles for those who did not possess official documents for their land.

Further Reading:

Land to be returned

<http://www.phnompenhpost.com/index.php/2012012454113/National-news/land-to-be-returned.html>

SUBSIDIES FOR SMEs



Source: United Nations⁷

The Ministry of Industry, Mines and Energy plans to provide subsidies to 30 small and medium sized companies with the aim to strengthen the sector's technical and competitive strategy. The subsidies, altogether US\$800,000, are supposed to upgrade technological capacity of the food-producing sector. For the first phase of funding about 10 enterprises will be selected through a lottery process to guarantee transparency.

Further Reading:

MIME backs Kingdom SMEs:

<http://www.phnompenhpost.com/index.php/2012012354085/Business/mime-backs-kingdom-smes.html>

⁶<http://ny.xmu.edu.cn/Article/UploadFiles/201109/2011092214595541.jpg>

⁷http://www.unido.org/uploads/tx_templavoila/gdi2.jpg

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FIRST PUBLIC TRANSPORT



Source: paperblog⁸

In Kratie province a low cost transport system will be provided as the first scheme of its kind. On January 19th development partners had started to operate for the Providing Rural Communities Equal Care Through Transport (PROTECT) project. For 4,000 riels (US\$1) per month, villagers can use the transport system consistent of vehicles that can transport up to 25 people, called remarks. It is planned that they follow set routes passing by hospitals, markets and schools, six times a day. As,

according to a research study conducted by Partners for Development (PFD), particularly women face severe problems to access public health facilities the project intends to facilitate it. A second aim is the provision of low-cost transport to reduce poverty - pregnant women and children can use the transport for free.

Further Reading:

Transport aid gets on road:

<http://www.phnompenhpost.com/index.php/2012012454106/National-news/transport-aid-gets-on-road.html>



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⁸<http://m3.paperblog.com/i/28/286200/cambodia-a-kind-of-first-public-transportatio-L-VM7C38.jpeg>