

PRESS RELEASE

First steps towards Victim and Witness Protection (VWP) in Cambodia National and international institutions support the ECCC and beyond

On April 8th 2008, the Khmer Institute of Democracy (KID), KAF partner since 1994, will host the final closing ceremony for Cambodian police officers trained on Victim and Witness Protection (VWP). The closing ceremony will be held from 15:00-16:10 at KID, No. 5, Street 57, Boeung Keng Kang I, Phnom Penh. The ceremony will be followed by a press conference on Victim and Witness Protection (VWP), the role of police in the process of the ECCC, and justice. The press conference will last for one half hour, from 16:10 until 16:40.

Co-funded by the European Union (EU) and Konrad Adenauer Foundation (KAF), KID implemented five 13-day training courses on VWP for a total of 151 Cambodian police officers, most of them holding the rank of Captain or Major.

The courses mark the first co-ordination between national and international institutions to train officers on international standards of Victim and Witness Protection. The Ministry of Interior selected the officers that would participate in the course, and a number of the officers are now employed at the ECCC as judicial police officers or within the Witness Expert Support Unit.

Speaking at the ceremony, trainers and course implementers will discuss the current methods and future direction of VWP at the ECCC and beyond.

The VWP training courses were run as part of the KID's co-funded EU-KAF project, "Victim and Witness Standards for the ECCC and Beyond".

Officers were trained on VWP laws and practices at the ECCC by ECCC representatives and KID training staff) and on the psychological aspects of working with witnesses (trained by the Transcultural Psychosocial Organization- TPO), and on the practical techniques of working within a VWP Unit by Mr. Dieter Lohrmann, former German police Colonel, International Governance Consulting Inc.

"The objective of this project is to contribute to the effective functioning of the ECCC, and to educate Cambodian police and the general public on their rights and obligations under national and international law" Ms. Johanna Macdonald, the VWP Project Manager said.

"As an indigenous non-government organization promoting democracy and pluralism, KID would like to thank the national and international institutions and organizations for their co-operation and support given to work for a socially just, decent Cambodia. With the success of this first step of coordinated support to building the structures of witness protection, KID is hopeful that further positive contributions on this topic will be achieved," Mr. Hang Chhaya, Executive Director of KID.

For more information, please do not hesitate to contact:

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