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## **Introductory Statement**

**By**

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the United Nations Office, the World Trade Organization and  
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Alternate Head of the Delegation**

**At**

**The 6<sup>th</sup> Session of the Universal Periodic Review on the  
National Report of the Kingdom of Cambodia**

**(Geneva, 30 November - 11 December 2009)**

Mr. President,  
Madame High Commissioner,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

1- I have the honor and privilege to represent the delegation of Cambodia at this Universal Periodic Review. On behalf of the Cambodia delegation, allow me to express our sincere appreciation to the Working Group of the Human Rights Council for giving us this opportunity to present our National Report and to elaborate on issues pertaining to the promotion and protection of human rights in Cambodia. The Cambodian National Report had been prepared through several meetings and consultations with relevant national agencies/ministries. At the last meeting, the consultation was conducted jointly with the participation by a number of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) operating in the promotion of human rights in Cambodia.

2- Cambodia attaches high importance to the work of the Human Rights Council, including the establishment of the UPR mechanism to promote and protect human rights worldwide. We believe that the UPR mechanism provide states not only with the opportunity to have an accurate picture, but it offers an avenue for the State under UPR mechanism to assess its achievements and shortcomings in the promotion and protection of human rights, and thus to share its experiences with others for the improvement and enhancement of this important area through various means and approaches.

3- We are fully confident that the review of today's session will contribute towards Cambodia's efforts in further enhancing the enjoyment of the full spectrum of human rights of its people. In this context, Cambodia stands ready to engage with all the delegations to consider constructive suggestions, comments and recommendations we will receive at this session.

Mr. President,

4- Cambodia fully shares the view that all human rights are universal, indivisible, interdependent and interrelated. We believe that the value of democracy and human rights should be built and promoted through these principles, taking into account the historical, political, economic, social and cultural reality of the country and its particularity.

5- History has shown that Cambodia has been a country of glory with rich culture in the past centuries. But the country has also been struggling for its survival over the past history. The recent conflicts and civil war had plagued Cambodia over the past decades of 70s and 80s with the total destruction and the break-down of all social fabrics including education, health and social protection services. The loss of qualifications and devaluation of human capital through the Khmer Rouge regime left Cambodia with untold sufferings and consequences. As such, it has been a long way for the country to recover from its legacy by overcoming all those challenges toward the processes of peace building, national reconciliation, reconstruction and development.

6- In this context, the assessment of Cambodia human rights should take into account the retrospective of the past situation. It should be made by looking at the efforts it has then made at the early stage after the Paris Peace Agreements of 1991 toward the process of ensuring peace and stability, of reconstruction and development of Cambodia with the support by the international community and through the evolving process of internal

politics of a national reconciliation based on the win-win policy of the Royal Government in late 1990s. The people of Cambodia have shown the courage and perseverance as a Nation to overcome all the challenges through the process of the country's developments including in the field of human rights.

7- At present, Cambodia is known for its records of important accomplishments in many areas (including in the fields of political, economic, social and cultural rights) through its process of democratization. The country has achieved a remarkable success in performing its economic growth over the last five years (2003-2007). Much of what it has achieved thus so far is attributed to political stability and security of the country.

Mr. President,

8- Cambodia is a constitutional monarchy that adopts the principles of democracy, multi-party and pluralism in its political system of governance. The basis for the promotion and protection of human rights in Cambodia is enshrined in 1993 Constitution which remains the primary source of law in Cambodia. The Constitution of the Kingdom of Cambodia provides fundamental rights that guarantee the equality of its peoples before the law, including that for the protection of law and the protection of liberty; it prohibits all kind of discrimination, and thus provides for the protection of other rights such as the freedom of speech and expression, free movement, rights to form associations or assembly, rights to religion and beliefs, to property and security, among others. The country is striving for the promotion of the rule of law, good governance, integrity and accountability and these have clearly been reflected in our laws and the on-going policies and plans of actions of the Government which provide a balance between the interests of the country and those of its citizens.

9- In the context of international cooperation, it is quite evident that the country has been making efforts by engaging itself in the promotion and protection of human rights under the UN framework. Since the end of peace process of 1993, Cambodia had extended its cooperation with the Special Representatives of the Secretary General and the Human Rights Office in Cambodia. The Government of Cambodia has made great efforts through the Agreement with the United Nations to establish the Extraordinary Chambers (ECCC) to conduct the Prosecution of Crimes Committed during the Period of Democratic Kampuchea (The Khmer Rouge regime). The Chambers have come into operation since 2007<sup>1</sup>.

10- Cambodia is a State Party to major international human rights and humanitarian law instruments globally as well as at regional settings.<sup>2</sup> As a fellow member, Cambodia has been actively involved in the relevant framework of ASEAN, on human rights (including in drafting a Term of reference of the Human Rights Body). The government has made practical steps in its obligation as a State Party, to submit its national reports to a number of international treaty bodies in these recent last two years. As a new State Party to OPCAT, Cambodia continues to work and study for the establishment of a National Preventive Mechanism in compliance with the relevant Instrument in closer cooperation with the UN Office for human rights and other stakeholders. At this initial stage, the Government took a

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<sup>1</sup> In a Joint Statement of 23 February 2009, issued at the meeting between High Representatives of the Royal Government of Cambodia and the United Nations, it was welcomed the significant achievements made by ECCC after the first commencement of the public hearings in the first trial before the ECCC and recognized the important progress toward addressing impunity for crimes of the former Khmer Rouge. It is hoped that the ECCC will become a model court for future judicial systems.

<sup>2</sup> Most of them have been well recorded in the UN compilation.

practical step (this year) in the establishment of the NPM by a Sub-Decree signed by Prime Minister toward this implementation process.

11- On the institutional building aspects, Cambodia has established a national human rights committee attached to the Government in order to coordinate and cooperate with national agencies and other stakeholders to address all relevant challenges of human rights. In the legislative branch, the Human Rights Commission were established within their law-making competencies since the first legislature of the parliament to serve the people. In Cambodia, civil societies have been and are being ever increasingly developed with their active participation in the promotion of the economic-social agenda, democracy and human rights of all spheres.

12- On legal and judicial reforms, Cambodia has equally made significant progress in adopting and ratifying various legislations. Just in the third legislature, for example, a total of 140 laws were promulgated (including three major codes- the Criminal Procedure Code, the Civil Procedure Code and the Civil Code). A large number of legal texts and other regulations adopted in the past decade are related to political, economic, social and cultural sectors<sup>3</sup> which have contributed to the realization of the enjoyment of basic human rights of relevant fields.

13- Now progress is being made in continuing its legislation efforts, namely the adoption of the National Assembly of a Law on National Disability and a new Law on Demonstration in recent month this year. Cambodia is taking step further in combating corruption, including the completion of drafting of Anti-Corruption Law. It has made the continued efforts in combating trafficking in person and the enforcement of the law on the suppression of human trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation. Cambodia is now preparing a number of relevant laws for their adoption that are essential to the enhancement of rule of law and democracy.

Mr. President,

14- Cambodia places special emphasis on the poverty reduction as a major effort for promoting and protecting human rights. Poverty reduction is one of most priorities in the implementation of the Government strategic policy documents namely the Rectangular Strategy and National Strategic Development Plan (NSDP) for 1996-2010 which are designed as a pro poor focus instrument to speed up development, especially in rural areas. The implementation of the Rectangular Strategy during the Third Legislature (from 2003-2008) has resulted in major achievements. Poverty reduction was recorded in steady progress at a rate of over 1% percentage per annum, and there is an improvement of main social indicators, especially in education, health and gender equity.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>3</sup> These laws include among others: Suppression of gambling, Land management, urbanization and construction (23/05/1994), Organization and functioning of the Council of Ministers (19/07/1994), Investment (04/08/1994), Immigration (26/08/1994), Co-statutes of civil servants (21/10/1994), Organization and functioning of the Supreme Council of Magistracy (22/12/1994) Commercial procedures and registration (03/05/1995), Commercial chambers (16/05/1995), Statutes of Bar (15/06/1995), Press (18/07/1995), Retirement pension and benefits for soldiers of the Royal Cambodian Armed Forces with incapability (18/10/1995), Suppression of kidnapping, trafficking, sale and exploitation of human persons (29/02/1996), Law on Nationality (20/08/1996), Environmental protection and natural resources management (18/11/1996) Drug control (09/12/1996), Management of pharmaceuticals (09/12/1996), Labour law (10/01/1997), Law on the Election of the Members of the National Assembly (1997-2002), Law on the Election of Commune Councils 2001

<sup>4</sup> Based on the growth highlighted above, the income per capita in 2008 is around 625 USD, which increased in average of 9.5% per annum starting from 1999.

15- A plan of the Cambodian Millennium Development Goals (CMDGs) has been also established in line with other national strategic documents for implementation in order to meet the most targets of the MDGs. The Government has thus made progress in ensuring macro-economic climate in support poverty reduction and other related sectors. This has positive impact that that has contributed to the improvement of human rights of relevant fields.

16- The Government attaches high importance to land reforms for sustainable socio-economic development, mindful of historical, political, economic and social dimension of the issue. In implementing the land law and policies, the Royal Government has paid more attention to the measures of strengthening the system of land management, distribution, use and land ownership, land rights security, eradication of illegal land encroachment, and taking proper steps to prevent the concentration of unused and unproductive lands. The systematic land registration has been greatly welcomed by the rural people. In practice, we have provided more than 1 million of land titles so far, and we are mindful of the continued challenges of this particular issue.

17- By the same token, the efforts have been made in the establishment of institutional and legal frameworks and mechanism to address the issue of land reforms at present and the future. These also include sustained efforts by the Government in implementing and addressing the programs pertaining to the rights and interest of the ethnic and minority community<sup>5</sup>.

18- Remarkable progress has been achieved in the field of mine clearance. Continued efforts in de-mining operation as starting from 1992 to February 2008, have contributed to the improvement of social and economic conditions of poor farming household in remote areas, which constitutes part of rural development<sup>6</sup>. As a state party to the Ottawa Convention, Cambodia has been active in the international campaign against landmine worldwide. Since 2006 the Government has sent hundred of Cambodia de-miners, to participate in the peacekeeping operations in a number of countries (such as in Sudan; and it is prepared to send them to Chad and Central Africa) under the humanitarian framework of the United Nations and the Organization of Francophonie respectively.

19- Cambodia places the cross-cutting issue such as gender at the forefront of its political agenda. Women are regarded as the backbone of the national economy and society. The Royal Government has exerted all efforts to promote the status of women through the continued implementation of "Neary Rattanak" or "women as valuable gems" to deliver value and hope to Cambodian women with emphasis on gender equity in economic development.

20- Steps have been taken to tackle violence against women, as the Law on the Prevention of Domestic Violence and the Protection of Victims was adopted in 2005 and the national plan of preventing domestic violence is being prepared to promote awareness and the implementation of women-related laws. This law effectively and timely provides legal protection to victims, of which women and children account for the majority. The Royal Government has exerted all efforts to fight women and children trafficking since 2006. The Law on Anti-trafficking was also passed in 2008.

<sup>5</sup> The Policy of Registration and Use Rights of Land of Indigenous People was developed and approved by the Council for Land Policy. The Policy is now awaiting approval from the Government. To implement the Policy, a sub-decree detailing for registration of indigenous people's communal lands has been drafted by the Council of Land Policy. The said draft is under consultation within the government and with other stakeholders.

<sup>6</sup> From 1992 to February 2008, the Government have cleared more than 43,650 hectares of landmines (and other devices such as ERW); and the dangers caused by landmines have been reduced by 1.5 times from 800 cases in 2003 to 315 cases in 2007.

21- Priority is now given by the Royal Government to the implementation of the **Gender Mainstreaming Strategy-phase II**, which aims at promoting women's capacity building, enhancing women's ability to participate in public affairs, especially in education and health sector, and economic resources, and eliminating negative perception and attitudes towards women, and thereby ensuring an equitable contribution of active women's rights to the national development.

22- The Kingdom of Cambodia is mindful of its commitment to protecting the interest and the rights of the children as stated in article 47 and 48 of the Constitution. The efforts have been made in enforcing the laws and other regulations as regard to child protection with the four basic rights of child: rights to life, rights to the protection, rights to the participation, and rights to development which are consistent with the international instruments, including the UN Conventions on the Rights of the Child, to which Cambodia is a State Party.

23- As a practical measure, the Government has incorporated the relevant concepts of the Convention into a number of Laws it has adopted for implementation, (namely Labor Law, Criminal Law in Transitional Period, Penal Procedure Code, Civil Code, Law on the Crackdown of Human Trafficking and Sex Exploitation etc.). The Department of Anti-Human Trafficking and Juvenile Protection of the Ministry of Interior has worked cooperatively with the coordination committee of UNICEF, World Vision, Save the Children Norway, and UNOHCHR to implement the Program called the implementation of law against sex abuse, sex trade, women and child trafficking (LEASETC).

24- Cambodia recognizes the importance of education as a major tool for national development of human resources. The rights to education are promoted and protected by the Constitution. For this purpose, the Government has published and implemented the "Educational Strategic Plan for 2006-2010" which is a component of the Government's "Rectangular Strategy" and the "National Strategic Development Plan 2006-2010". In undertaking this strategy, the Royal Government has made significant progress in ensuring equity in the 9-year basic education for all children. The number of schools has increased by 30% (from 6,963 in 2003-2004 to 9,108 in 2006-2007) academic years. Enrolment rate also climbs in all levels of schooling.

25- In the health sector, the Royal Government gives as priority in its programs and policy and it regards people's well-being as the prerequisite to human resource and sustainable socio-economic development. As a result, child mortality rate drops from 95 in 2000 to 66 per 1,000 in 2005.<sup>7</sup> Maternal mortality rate also declines. Health care and rural sanitation services as well as the supply of clean water in rural areas are below the targets set in the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). It was notably reported that HIV/AIDS prevalence at only 0.9% is less than half of 1.9% assumed earlier for 2005 and is likely well reaching within less than 0.6% prevalence by 2010.

26- Other important developments during the last two years include: a new Health Sector Plan for 2008-2015 has been developed to continue the old one; budget allocations and disbursement for the health sector have registered growth and stability; about 130 NGOs are involved in supporting the health sector, and most of them operating in remote areas. Interim indicators since 2005 suggest that health access and delivery have continued to improve and Cambodians now have much better health center; and child nutrition has continued to improve.

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<sup>7</sup> Infants and children under five-years-old mortality rate have remarkably decreased from 2000 to 2005

27- In order to implement the **Social Security Regime** under the Labor Law, the Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC) has established the **National Social Security Cash Box (Scheme)** by the Sub-Decree No. 16 dated March 2, 2007.<sup>8</sup> To achieve this long-term goal, the Royal Government has introduced the social security system in the Financial Sector Development Strategy Plan 2006-2015.

28- Cambodia ratifies the **UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities** in 2009 and is committed to upholding and implementing its provisions. The Government of Cambodia has come up with a **Policy Paper and Plan of Action on Disability** which contains a series of measures relating to health, education training, employment, human rights, sports, leisure, transport, communication and accessibility of the vulnerable people.

Mr. President,

29- Cambodia is a **State Party to the Covenant of Civil and Political Rights**. As such, the government is mindful of the promotion and protection of civil and political rights, which are recognized in the Constitution as one of core elements for a democratic society.

30- After the departure of UNTAC<sup>9</sup>, Cambodia has managed with success to organize the three general elections and two communal elections on its own, with a broader participation of the people and other stakeholders in the ballots to enhance the democratic process. Cambodia has also made progress in the promotion of democracy at the grassroots levels through the implementation of the program of decentralization and de-concentration.<sup>10</sup>

31- Cambodia recognized the rights to life and the freedom of Cambodian people, mindful of their own tragic experience in the past as a survival society<sup>11</sup>. In Cambodia the death penalty was abolished under the 1993 Constitution. This clearly demonstrates the political and legal commitment of the Government of Cambodia in its stand as regard to policy of the abolition of death penalty.

Mr. President,

32- Cambodia attaches high importance to the concept of freedom of expression which is one of fundamental rights that we have embraced as an essential foundation of a democratic and pluralistic society.<sup>12</sup> The right of freedom of expression has been promoted by the Government and exercised by its citizen over the years in Cambodia.

33- Cambodia prohibits any discrimination on grounds of race, religion, sex or birthplace in its society. Our Constitution provides guarantees for equality before law and

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<sup>8</sup> The objective is to manage the Social Security Regime, to guarantee all allowances for government officials, members of the armed forces, workers, employees and Cambodians from all walks of life and their members to assist them with their difficulties relating to their old age, dependency, demise, and other work related risks or in the event of illness and maternity.

<sup>9</sup> UNTAC is an acronym of United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia

<sup>10</sup> 32. In undertaking the policy of decentralization, recently in May 2009, Cambodia, has made another step in holding the Capital, Provinces/Municipalities/, District /Khan Councils elections. This clearly demonstrates that Cambodia has committed to the strengthening of democracy in Cambodia which is now taking roots at all community levels.

<sup>11</sup> from the Democratic Kampuchea regime in 1979 (the Pol Pot regime)

<sup>12</sup> The Constitution of the Kingdom of Cambodia states that: "Khmer citizens shall have freedom of expression, press, publication and assembly.

equality of opportunity for all citizens including the affirmative action that applies for the minority and other disadvantaged groups.<sup>13</sup>

Mr. President,

34- The delegation of Cambodia fully acknowledges the long term and multidimensional efforts toward the advancement of human rights in line with the process of reconstruction and development in the country. Despite remarkable progress in key reforms aimed at alleviating poverty and strengthening good governance, the quality, efficiency and delivery of the public service still remain to be the challenges. Cambodia is still qualified among LDCs countries. The base of economic growth of Cambodia is still too narrow to ensure the fulfillment of the enjoyment of all human rights.

35- Although the Government has managed to reduce poverty rate from 47% (1993) to 32% in 2007, through high economic growth and pro-poor policies, the rural poverty rate remains high. It is therefore acknowledged that there are bold undertakings ahead, in addressing the constraints and shortcomings of many sectors and reforms as mentioned in the Report in order to further advance all fields of human rights.

Mr. President,

36- The Kingdom of Cambodia appreciates the support provided by the international community to Cambodia on the promotion and protection of human rights. It is hoped that all friendly countries and international Organizations, including civil societies (NGOs) shall share with us their good experiences and practices with recommendations during this UPR process and thus provides us with further technical assistance so as to enhance the institutional capacity of human rights in Cambodia and thus to advance the democratic society for the sake of peace, stability, progress and prosperity.

37- Cambodia would also like to thank countries that have submitted questions in advance. We have studied the questions and we are appreciative of the highly constructive concerns expressed by the various countries. We will address some of the questions in general in this statement; bearing in mind that the allocation of time is limited and that some of issues being highlighted in general in the content of this statement.

Mr. President,

38- With your permission, I would like to turn to some of the advanced questions that have been put to Cambodia.

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<sup>13</sup> In compliance with the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination, to which it is a Party, Cambodia has submitted its subsequent National Report to its relevant Treaty Body, this year.



## ADVANCED QUESTIONS

- **STRENGTHENING OF THE ANTI-CORRUPTION UNIT (ACU) –Germany and Sweden, Switzerland,<sup>14</sup>**

We believe that a corruption-fee society is critical for good governance. Cambodia is a state signatory to the UN Convention against Corruption. As such, the government has made efforts to address the issues of corruption. To this end, fighting corruption has been recognized as one of core elements of the Strategic Documents of the Government. A comprehensive Anti-Corruption Law, after various stages of intense scrutiny, is going through the final stages of approval within the government. It will be made to conform to the overarching Penal Code to be passed by the legislature before being enacted. Meanwhile, the already existing legal framework and institutional mechanisms are being invoked to reduce and prevent corruption. In this regard, the structure of Anti-Corruption Unit has been re-organized through a Sub-Decree on Anti-corruption issued in 2006. An Office for Receipt of Complaint functions at the Council of Minister with the aim of enhancing public participation in the supply and receipt of corruption-related information.

Disciplinary actions have been taken on civil servants, customs, police and judicial officers who were involved in corruption cases. In public management more transparency in being ensured in competitive bidding processes. Campaigns have been launched to provide information to and educate the public and disseminate knowledge on all aspects of corruption, including causes, effects and consequences. Already, the ever increasing private sector investments, macro-economic growth, and galloping increases in government revenues, resulting from enhanced transparency and predictability in government work, and streamlining of procedures and processes within the government, bear ample testimony to increasing confidence and comfort of the private sector about the country, a sure sign that corruption levels are decreasing.

It is however important to note that eradicating corruption is a sustained policy that face a long-term and challenging endeavor requiring thus adequate means including appropriate institutional framework, and enhanced human and financial resources.

We feel that the ACU can play a supporting role in ensuring accountability of the people within and outside the government. We will further strengthen it by providing the ACU with sufficient staff and expertise that it might need, and will assist in prosecuting the people accused of corruption.

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<sup>14</sup> Disquieting reports about the rule of law have been issued. CESCR, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Human Rights in Cambodia and CAT all were alarmed by reports of widespread corruption, including the judiciary (para. 34 of the OHCHR compilation A/HRC/WG.6/6/KHM/2, referring to E/C.12/KHM/CO/1, para. 14, A/HRC/4/36, para. 31-32 and CAT/C/CR/31/7, para. 6(e)). What steps has the Cambodian government taken to improve the work of the judiciary in this respect, particularly with regards to the adoption of the draft Anti-Corruption Law and further such intensifying efforts as recommended by the CESCR (para. 34 of the OHCHR compilation A/HRC/WG.6/6/KHM/2, referring to E/C.12/KHM/CO/1, para. 14)?

- **PLAN FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF INDEPENDENCE HUMAN RIGHTS INSTITUTION (based on the Paris Principles), UK and others<sup>15</sup>**

One again, we would like to reiterate the position of Cambodia that the Government remains committed to the future establishment of the Human Rights institution according to the Paris Principles. We already made clear in this Statement at the beginning that this is a process that needs all parties to discuss the issue within our context. We also believe in the pragmatic approach of doing this new institution in order to attain our common objective.

- **LAND ISSUES ( Germany, UK, Sweden)**

On land issue we've just spoken in general of the new development on this issue in this statement. We believe that land issue in Cambodia has its own special characteristics. The Government of Cambodia is fully aware of this complicated issue following the trend of economic development of the country. The delegation wishes to reiterate that land grabbing is not the policy of the Royal Government of Cambodia. The Government has taken serious steps and measures to address the issue which have its own historical, political economic, social and other dimensions. We will continue to highlight this issue during the interactive debate in order to share more details of information relating the policy, progress and on-going steps taken by the Government to address the land problems.

- **INDIGENOUS LAND (UK and others)**

In addition to the land problem associated with indigenous people, we would like to stress that the Government attaches great importance to the livelihood and social welfare of the indigenous and ethnic communities. In fact, the Government has already undertaken on a number of land reform programs with the support by the development partners, emphasizing its efforts on protecting the rights of most vulnerable groups of people, such as on the Charting of a national policy on the development of Indigenous Ethnic Minority regions. We will address further this issue during the interactive debate on overall land problem.

- **FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION (Sweden, Switzerland)**

As we stated in the preceding statement, freedom of expression is a core foundation of a democratic society which has been enshrined the Constitution of Cambodia. Furthermore, in the political platform of the Government, the freedom of press and freedom of expressions have been progressively put into practice. The Royal Government of Cambodia encourages the implementation the freedom of press, freedom of employment, freedom of expressions, rights to have the demonstration, rights to run a peaceful demonstration, the freedom of attending the rally within the legal framework.<sup>16</sup>

At present, Cambodia has thousands of civil society organizations, as well as free press and trade unions which have been operating in the country with their own voice. Out of that

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<sup>15</sup> The UK welcomes the steps taken to establish a national human rights body. What is the timetable for the establishment of this body and how does the Government of Cambodia believe its independence can be guaranteed?

<sup>16</sup> The Constitution provides for the rights to freedom of expression within a special responsibility: "No one shall exercise this right to infringe upon the rights of others, to affect the good traditions of the society, to violate public law and order and national security (Article 41)".

number, Cambodia has at least eleven foreign human rights organizations. The people of Cambodia, including those stakeholders, also have unobstructed access to all kinds of foreign media. Local media supporting or leaning to either the ruling or opposition party are allowed to have a complete freedom to publish and flourish it in the country. Cambodia has almost 600 newspapers, journals and magazines, 40 radio stations, and seven television channels. Some of the media have been critical of the government on a daily basis. The Government frequently adheres to the approach of tolerance, along the way of the democratic practice. The people of Cambodia, therefore, enjoy largely freedom of the press and freedom of expression in the country.

We are also of the view that individual rights should also come with the responsibility of maintaining national unity and security, which is of paramount importance to us in a country that has emerged from the past division and conflicts with the daunting challenges ahead.

• **WHO WILL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR OVERSIGHT OF THE FOLLOW-UP UPR PROCESS? (UK)<sup>17</sup>**

During the process of producing the UPR report for Cambodia, the Cambodian Human Rights Committee acting on behalf of the RGC has the duties to coordinate with related agencies and ministries in preparing the Report. It has held several inter-ministerial meetings with relevant agencies for this purpose. It has also cooperated with a number of NGOs on human rights areas in Cambodia. The RGC will assign the Cambodian Human Rights Committee to continue this follow-up action along with key ministries/agencies. We would be able to consider the broader and closer cooperation with civil societies to produce more relevant Report in the next UPR process. We also appreciate the support by UN Office, and the development partners for having supported the UPR workshop in Cambodia during the initial process of preparing the Report.

Mr. President,

39- The preceding information is the initial statement of the Cambodia Government with regard to the human rights situation in our country. Cambodia shares the view that the Universal Periodic Review conducted in a spirit of cooperation, transparency and openness can go a long way towards improving substantially the situation of human rights on the ground. It is from this perspective that my delegation looks forward to a constructive interactive dialogue at this UPR Session. We will endeavor to engage in an open and honest discussion on the human rights situation in Cambodia. The delegation of Cambodia will be pleased to continue to respond to the remaining questions put in advance during the interactive debate. We also welcome comments, criticisms and recommendations that will emerge out of this process. Our delegation remains committed to listening and responding to the other questions that may be raised during this interactive debate.

I thank you,

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<sup>17</sup> Who will be responsible for oversight of implementation, monitoring and reporting of the follow up UPR process;