

PROGRESS ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ACCEPTED RECOMMENDATIONS TO CAMBODIA REGARDING PRESS FREEDOM

WHAT IS THE UPR?

The **Universal Periodic Review (UPR)** is a **United Nations (UN)** mechanism to **review** the human rights records of all UN Member States. The UPR is a **State-driven process**, whereby each State **declares** what **actions** they have taken to **improve** the human rights situations in their countries and to fulfil their human rights obligations.

Cambodia was reviewed by UPR in January of 2019, where it **received 198** recommendations and **accepted 173** recommendations at the adoption of its UPR outcome at the Human Rights Council 41, in July 2019. This is an **increase of 6%** when compared to the 2nd cycle.

The below recommendations have been accepted by the Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC).



1

Redouble the efforts to protect freedom of opinion and expression, both online and offline, to ensure and promote a safe environment for journalists, human rights defenders and political opposition, and to effectively and thoroughly investigate all attacks against them (Lithuania).

Guarantee freedom of expression for all citizens and journalists by revising the last Constitutional amendment and the inter-ministerial instruction of May 2018 allowing surveillance of the internet contents (France).

2



3

Ensure freedom of expression on the internet and removal of undue restrictions on civil society and independent media by revoking the inter-ministerial decree (number 170) on Publication Controls of Websites and Social Media Processing via the Internet (Germany, United States of America).

Revise recent enactments and revisions of legislation that violate the rights to freedom of expression and association, including the vague grounds for preventing publication on the Internet in the Proclamation on Publication Controls of Websites and Social Media (Sweden).

4



5

Amend the Law on Telecommunications and adopt the Law on Access to Information in line with international standards of the right to the freedom of expression and the right to privacy (Switzerland).

Take measures to protect the freedom of expression online and offline, as well as the freedom of association and assembly (Brazil).

6



AREAS OF PROGRESS

Since receiving the recommendations, the RGC has made progress in the following areas:

- The Ministry of Information has made a Draft Law on Access to Information in consultation with relevant stakeholders, including NGOs.
- The Ministry of Interior continues to accept all concerns, requests and suggestions of civil society organisations to discuss relevant issues.

THE WAY FORWARD

Despite such progress, it is recommended that the RGC:

- Ensure the procedure to send the Draft Law on Access to Information to relevant bodies for its adoption is completed.
- Promote the access of human rights to citizens and educate them about the rule of law and their ability to exercise their rights and freedoms.
- Amend the Law on Telecommunications to allow for greater freedom of expression and the right to privacy.
- Amend Prakas 170 so that internet and digital freedoms are less restricted.

CCHR reminds the RGC of its human rights obligations under the ICCPR and encourages the RGC to implement all accepted recommendations before the next UPR cycle. CCHR also urges the RGC to reconsider accepting all recommendations marked as noted in the fourth cycle.