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CAMBODIAN CENTER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS



No. 00072/...../CCHR

Phnom Penh, February 6, 2012

Jayne Arnott (Director)

Unit 29, Waverley Business Park,
Dane Street, Mowbray,
Cape Town, South Africa

Subject: CCHR's Statement in Support of the Judgment in the Zoliswa Nkonyana Case

Dear Mrs Jayne Arnott,

The Cambodian Center for Human Rights (CCHR) is a non-aligned, independent, non-governmental organization that works to promote and protect democracy and respect for human rights – primarily civil and political rights – throughout the Kingdom of Cambodia (“Cambodia”).

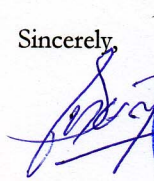

It was reported by the BBC News on February 1, 2012 that “Lesbian killers in South Africa get 18-year jail terms”. The Court in Khayelitsha, a Cape Town township, found four men Lubabalo Ntlabathi, Sicelo Mase, Luyanda Londzi and Mbulelo Damba guilty and sentenced them to 18 years in jail for stabbing and stoning to death 19-year-old openly lesbian Zoliswa Nkonyana in 2006 – a crime motivated by hate and intolerance on the basis of sexual orientation. The South African magistrate set its first-ever precedent stating that hate and intolerance on the basis of sexual orientation are aggravating factors in sentencing.

The Sexual Orientation & Gender Identity (“SOGI”) project at CCHR works to promote and protect the human rights of Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual and Transgender (“LGBT”) people by building network of LGBT Cambodians and empowering them to advocate for their own rights. CCHR would like to join the LGBT friendly South African NGOs in supporting the decision made by Khayelitsha Magistrate's Court. In so doing, CCHR reaffirms its strong commitment to promoting and protecting the rights of all LGBT people at home and abroad.

CCHR is keen to acknowledge the South African men and women, especially all the staff of the Triangle Project, The Social Justice Coalition (SJC), Treatment Action Campaign (TAC), Free Gender, and Sonke Gender Justice who have devoted and played an important role in delivering justice for Zoliswa Nkonyana, and in particular, and fighting for the rights of gay and lesbian people in South Africa, in general.

The decision is an aspirational movement toward individuals and collective rights of LGBT people, taking into account their specific sexual orientation and gender identity. In endorsing the decision, CCHR reaffirms its commitment to build on a positive and productive relationship with Triangle Project and other stakeholders to improve the well-being of LGBT Cambodians, based on respect and a desire to move forwards.

Sincerely,

HEM Sokly,

Project Coordinator for Sexual Orientation & Gender Identity
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