

Press Release

The Updated Political Situation of the Kingdom of Cambodia

1- The opposition Party's protest:

- Since December 15th, 2013, under the pretext of protesting the election results, the opposition party has set up a permanent foothold in Democracy Park and marched along various streets in Phnom Penh, which is a violation of Peaceful Demonstration Law. However, the Royal Government of Cambodia has cooperated and coordinated everything to ensure the opposition's daily protests are peaceful, secure, and to prevent the violence.
- Furthermore, the opposition party has incited factory workers across the country to join its own protest under the pretext of raising the workers' wages. As a result of this, many factories suffered interruptions to its productivity, disturbance to its operation and destruction of its properties, in some cases, even damage to other private properties. The protestors even surrounded the Ministry of Labor and confined the Ministry's civil servants within the building and prevented them from leaving. On January 2nd and 3rd, 2014, the protestors turned violent in the industrial Canada Park on Veng Sreng road and destroyed private properties, blocked public roads, formed a mob, and used many makeshift weapons (such as Molotov cocktails and slings with steel pebbles) on security forces who were only tasked with reopening streets and facilitating traffic.
- Due to its aggressive nature, this protest is no longer a display of freedom of peaceful demonstration and has become an insurrection. In such a dire situation, the authorities have an obligation to maintain safety, security and social order as well as exercise self-defense and arrested some people suspected of inciting violence.
- This clash has resulted in 4 deaths and 53 injured so far to protestors and security forces.
- The Royal Government of Cambodia has formed a special commission to investigate the accidents that occurred on January 2nd and 3rd, 2014, find the cause of the violence and bring the perpetrators who incite it to justice. At the

same time, another special commission has been formed to investigate and assess of damages across the country that resulted from this violent demonstration.

- The Royal Government of Cambodia has also established a new mechanism to study the case of the minimum wages for workers with transparency and participation from all relevant parties. Meanwhile, Royal Government of Cambodia has already started the salary increase process for civil servants, military, and police to further reduce the gaps between low and high wages.

2- The temporary suspension of the opposition party's protest:

- On January 4, 2014, the Phnom Penh Municipality decided to temporarily suspend all forms of demonstrations and marches until public order is restored. This temporary suspension is not a suppression of protestors' freedom of expressions, but an enforcement of Article 9 of the Peaceful Demonstration Law.

3- Legal measures to the violent protest on January 2nd and 3rd, 2014:

- Democracy and the rule of law must go hand in hand. The exercise of the right to freedom of expression cannot infringe upon the right and dignity of other person, or violate public law and order or compromise the national security. Wrongdoers shall and will be held responsible and liable.
- Within the framework of its jurisdiction, prosecutors from Phnom Penh Municipal Court opened an investigation on incitement cases in criminal behavior or social chaos. In accordance to investigative legal procedures, three people (Mr. Sam Rainsy, Mr. Kem Sokha and Mr. Rong Chhun) were summoned to court to provide clarifications, however, they have not been formally charged by the court on any count of wrongdoing.

4- Resolution to the political situation in Cambodia:

- The ruling party, the Cambodian People's Party, welcomes the return of the opposition party back to the negotiating table on democracy principals and rule of law.
- The Cambodian People's Party strong believe that resolutions can be achieved through peaceful negotiations instead of violent protests in the street. It is calling for the Cambodia National Rescue Party to stop all acts inciting violence and social chaos, and urgently return to the negotiating table in order to peacefully resolve issues together for the sake of peace, stability, prosperity, and harmony of the nation in the future.