



# CENTRE FOR LAW AND DEMOCRACY

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## Lawyers' Rights Watch Canada

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3 August 2012

H.E. Hun Sen  
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(c/o Council of Ministers)  
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Your Excellency,

We are writing on behalf of the Centre for Law and Democracy (CLD), the International Federation of Journalists Asia Pacific (IFJ) and Lawyers' Rights Watch Canada (LRWC). CLD is an international human rights NGO that specialises in providing legal and policy expertise to promote foundational rights for democracy, including freedom of expression and association. The IFJ is the world's largest organisation of journalists, representing

around 600,000 members in over 130 countries. LRWC is a committee of Canadian lawyers who promote human rights and the rule of law by providing support internationally to human rights defenders in danger.

We write to you to express our grave concern over the detention of Mam Sonando, owner and operator of the independent Beehive Radio station in Cambodia and President of the Democrats Association. Mr. Sonando was arrested from his home in Phnom Penh on 15 July 2012 and charged with violating six sections of the Penal Code, chiefly as the result of an accusation that he attempted to form a secession movement in the province of Kratie. He is facing up to 30 years in prison. Mr. Sonando is elderly and according to the information we have received, his health is starting to suffer while he is imprisoned in the overcrowded Prey Sar prison in Phnom Penh. He has been refused bail, even though he returned willingly to Cambodia after learning of his impending arrest.

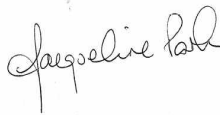
The arrest was announced the day after Mr. Sonando appeared at the International Criminal Court for a presentation by the Khmer People Power Movement to the Office of the Prosecutor on alleged crimes against humanity by the Cambodian government. There is no substantial evidence connecting Mr. Sonando to the disturbances in Kratie. What is clear, however, is that Mr. Sonando has been a prominent critic of human rights abuses in Cambodia, and has been arrested twice before on spurious charges after publicly criticising the Cambodian government.

It is our belief that Mr. Sonando was arrested for exercising his right to freedom of expression. Freedom of expression is a fundamental human right, as guaranteed by Article 41 of the Constitution of Cambodia and Article 19 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, to which Cambodia became a party in 1992. The detention of Mr. Sonando violates Cambodia's human rights obligations. We call on the Cambodia authorities to immediately and unconditionally release him and to drop all of the charges against him.

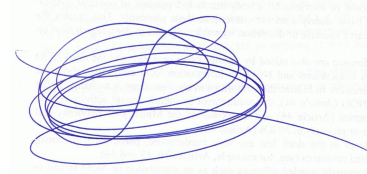
Yours Sincerely,

A stylized, dark ink signature consisting of several horizontal, wavy strokes.

Toby Mendel  
Executive Director  
Centre for Law and Democracy

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Jacqueline Park'.

Jacqueline Park  
Director, Asia Pacific Region  
International Federation of  
Journalists

A signature in blue ink, consisting of a series of overlapping, circular loops.

Gail Davidson  
Executive Director  
Lawyers' Rights Watch Canada