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Bob Last, UK Mission,

United Kingdom of Great Britain & Northern Ireland

National Statement

Universal Periodic Review – Cambodia

Thank you Mr President,

The United Kingdom thanks the Royal Government of Cambodia for its national report and commitment to the UPR process.

The UK welcomed the peaceful elections in July 2013 and the increased space for political protest. However, we are concerned by recent events. The use of live ammunition by the security forces which led to several deaths in early January cannot be justified. We urge the government to conduct a credible enquiry into those events and release on bail the 23 individuals arrested. The recent ban on peaceful assemblies in Phnom Penh has no basis in Cambodian law and should be lifted. We urge the government and the opposition to focus on long term political and judicial reforms that strengthen the democratic process.

As your national report states, public confidence in the judiciary remains low. An independent judiciary is crucial for underpinning Cambodia's civil, political and economic development. We call on the government to address corruption and mistreatment of prisoners in the legal and judicial system more widely, including implementing the three major reforms on judicial independence suggested by Special Rapporteur Subedi.

We recommend

1. In parallel with its ongoing work on land titling, to undertake an urgent review of economic land concessions (ELCs) before the current moratorium on ELCs is lifted.
2. By the end of 2014, Cambodia to adopt and implement the Special Rapporteur's recommendations on electoral reform.