

UPR18

CZECH REPUBLIC

STATEMENT ON CAMBODIA

Thank you, Mr. President.

The Czech Republic welcomes the delegation of Cambodia.

We note with regret that despite our previous recommendations the situation of freedom of expression in Cambodia has deteriorated. We **recommend** Cambodia revise the Penal Code as well as other laws so that they comply with international freedom of expression standards and prevent the harassment of human rights defenders, journalists and NGOs. Further, we **recommend** that the Government ensure independence of the media from political influence and liberalize media ownership rules.

The Czech Republic is worried about recent crackdowns on peaceful protestors which left several people dead. We **recommend** adopting and implementing effective measures in order to prevent the use of violence against demonstrators, in accordance with the Law on Peaceful Assembly, and enable all groups, including those expressing dissent views, to have their rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and association fully restored. We also **recommend** an impartial investigation into the alleged cases of the use of excessive force against protestors and the cases of killings so that the perpetrators are brought to justice.

Finally, responding to irregularities registered during last few national elections, we **recommend** that Cambodia ensure equal access of all candidates to the media, avoid manipulation of voters and foster a culture of dialogue, rather than exclusion and confrontation, amongst all political parties.

I thank you.