



Comment to Media – Phnom Penh, 21 April 2011

CCHR condemns beatings and arrests of lake protestors

Eleven Boeung Kak Lake residents were arrested today, 21 April 2011, during a demonstration outside the Phnom Penh Municipality office. Two of the eleven arrested are said to be children. The arrests were made during a brutal crackdown on a demonstration in which violence was used against protestors. Human Rights monitors at the scene have stated that protestors as old as 70 were beaten by police in uniform and plain clothes using electric batons. The protestors had gathered outside the office of the Phnom Penh Municipality as seven community leaders had been invited by the Deputy Governor to attend a meeting. After the meeting the seven leaders were arrested together with four other protestors.

Responding to the violent crackdown on the demonstration and the arrest of the protestors, Ou Virak, President of [CCHR](http://cchrcambodia.org), a non-political, independent, non-governmental organization that works to promote and protect democracy and respect for human rights throughout Cambodia, commented:

“This is a shocking and entirely unjustifiable response to a peaceful protest by the disenfranchised lake residents. The arrests of children and beatings of elderly women represent a new low in what has already been a hardly fought land conflict. If anything, the actions of the authorities today illustrate that the rights to freedom of assembly and expression of ordinary Cambodians is secondary to the business operations of the wealthy and well connected. What is of particular concern however is the extent to which the authorities are clearly willing to go to facilitate those business operations”.

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