(This is translation of the official letter which was sent separately to H. E You Bunleng)

**Appellate Court**
Samdach Sotheary Boulevard
Sangkat Chey Chomnas
Khan Daun Penh, Phnom Penh

16 November 2012

**Open letter to the Phnom Penh Appellate Court strongly urging Cambodian Judiciary to push forward with Mam Sonando's Appeal**

Dear H.E. You Bunleng, President of the Appellate Court:

I am writing to you regarding the case of Mam Sonando, Director of Beehive Radio and President of the Democrat Association. Mam Sonando was arrested on 15 July 2012 and held in pre-trial detention at Prey Sar Prison Phnom Penh. On 1 October 2012, he was found guilty by the Phnom Penh Municipal Court of all charges brought against him, including alleged instigation of a secessionist movement in Kratie province and incitement to take up arms against the state, and was subsequently sentenced to twenty years in prison.

In light of the upcoming ASEAN Summit, which will be attended by numerous foreign dignitaries, including the President of the United States, Barack Obama, I implore you to urgently push forward with Mam Sonando’s Appeal. His sentence, marked by a distinct lack of concrete evidence, essentially amounts to lifetime imprisonment for a man of seventy-one years of age. The judgement handed down by the Municipal Court has cast a dark shadow over the independence and fairness of Cambodia’s current judicial system.

Mam Sonando’s high profile case has been met with a global outcry of injustice as both international and national factions call for a fair decision to be reached. Many, including European Union lawmakers, the US Department of State and the French Ministry for Foreign Affairs, have reiterated that Cambodia must reinforce its commitment to democracy and respect for human rights. The Appeal in this case could provide a pivotal opportunity for the Cambodian judiciary to take positive steps in guaranteeing the citizens of Cambodia their basic rights and in demonstrating the separation of powers that are fundamental to a democracy.

As Cambodia will proudly host the twenty-first ASEAN Summit, it must act in accordance with the principles set forth in the ASEAN Charter, which include strengthening justice and the rule of law. To demonstrate Cambodia’s adherence to its fair trial and hearing rights obligations, under national and international law, CCHR calls upon you to do all in your power to take immediate steps to proceed with Mam Sonando’s Appeal in a timely manner, and to deliver the justice that he deserves.

Yours Sincerely,

Ou Virak,
President
The Cambodian Centre for Human Rights (CCHR)