



អង្គការជួយជំនះគ្រោះកម្មវិធីដោយសារអាស៊ីត  
Cambodian Acid Survivors Charity



មជ្ឈមណ្ឌលសិទ្ធិមនុស្សកម្ពុជា  
Cambodian Center for Human Rights

### MEDIA COMMENT – Phnom Penh, 27 October 2013

#### CCHR and CASC urge the RGC to ensure the Acid Sub-Decree is implemented

[The Cambodian Center for Human Rights](#) (CCHR) and the [Cambodian Acid Survivors Charity](#) (CASC) are concerned about the lack of implementation of the [Sub-Decree on the Formalities and Conditions for Strong Acid Control](#) (the “Sub-Decree”), passed on 31 January 2013, as well as comments made by high-ranking officials of the Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC) regarding their responsibility of the implementation of the Sub-Decree. In a *Phnom Penh Post* article dated 18 October 2013, ‘*Weak enforcement for strong acid*,’ the spokesman for the Council of Ministers, Phay Siphon, is quoted as saying “*I thought you had forgotten about that [the sub-decree] [...] We have no role in regulating the law.*” Moreover, representatives of other ministries – all of whom are listed in the Sub-Decree – contacted by the newspaper either denied responsibility for implementing the Sub-Decree or were not even aware of its existence.

Acid attacks have been steadily decreasing in the Kingdom of Cambodia, in part due to the passage of the Acid Law in December 2011. CASC has recorded only three acid attacks, which resulted in six victims, thus far in 2013. In contrast, in 2010 – the peak year for acid attacks in Cambodia and before the passage of the acid law – there were 27 attacks recorded, which affected 36 victims. Nevertheless, three people have died this year from consuming acid – one person accidentally, and two suicides – which demonstrates that acid still needs stricter regulations and control by the relevant authorities.

While CCHR and CASC commend the RGC for passing the Sub-Decree, meant to regulate the sale, transport, and storage of concentrated acid, it is concerning that the Sub-Decree is excessively vague with regards to how the regulations will be implemented and, despite listing several ministries and agencies, which government agency is ultimately responsible for its enforcement. CCHR and CASC urge all ministries listed in the Sub-Decree to prioritize the implementation: Representatives of the ministries and agencies cited must meet as soon as possible and determine a plan of action for implementing the law and for raising awareness about the provisions in the Sub-Decree.

#### **Ms. Ramana Sorn, CCHR Ending Acid Violence Project Researcher comments:**

*“The dismissive attitude of the RGC expressed in the Phnom Penh Post article towards the implementation of the Sub-Decree demonstrates a blatant disregard for victims of acid violence. The ministries and agencies listed in the Sub-Decree must find a way to implement these regulations. Without full implementation of the law, acid violence will continue to be a problem in Cambodia.”*

#### **Erin Bourgois, Project Manager of the CASC comments:**

*“In addition to fully implementing the Sub-Decree’s regulations, the RGC must devote resources to raising awareness about the law, especially with acid vendors, workers on rubber plantations, law enforcement officials, judicial sector officials, legal aid providers, and any other key groups of individuals that are concerned by the legislation. This will be the only way to ensure that the provisions of the Sub-Decree are respected and acid violence is prevented.”*

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