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CCHR launches social media campaign to commemorate World Press Freedom Day

Tomorrow - 03 May 2018 - is World Press Freedom Day, an occasion on which people around the world celebrate the principles of press freedom, to highlight the importance of the media and to pay tribute to the vital work of journalists worldwide. This day is especially important in Cambodia, where many journalists have lost their lives in the course of their work. This year’s global theme is “Keeping Power in Check: Media, Justice and the Rule of Law”. In order to mark this day, the Cambodian Center for Human Rights (“CCHR”) is launching a 30-day social media awareness-raising campaign from 3 May until 1 June 2018.

Throughout this online campaign, CCHR will post a series of opinions of Cambodian journalists on the theme of “Keeping Power in Check: Media, Justice and the Rule of Law”. Thirty journalists, media professionals and media students will share their perspectives regarding the importance of the media in keeping power in check. Each of their quotes, along with their portraits, will be shared on CCHR’s Facebook and Twitter pages.

In addition to the launch of this campaign, CCHR has today released a visual snapshot of the media situation in Cambodia, along with the legal standards governing press freedom and freedom of expression. The snapshot can be downloaded at the following links in Khmer and English. This snapshot highlights the threats and challenges facing Cambodian journalists and media actors, and the legal standards that exist to protect them in their work. It is hoped that these publications will assist the general public to understand the extent of the misapplication of the law governing press freedom, and the prevalence of violations of the rights of journalists and other media actors.

As part of this campaign, CCHR also plans to publish a factsheet emphasizing the contribution of the media to society and democracy, including access to information, as well as highlighting the international legal standards governing press freedom.

In order to follow this campaign and read the factsheet, please follow CCHR’s Facebook and Twitter pages.

CCHR’s Protecting Fundamental Freedoms Coordinator, Ms. Sorn Ramana, comments:
“Press freedom is a crucial component of any healthy democracy. The open exchange of information and ideas, including in relation to political and social issues, is key to ensuring transparency, justice, and the rule of law. Moreover, the cultivation and protection of a free press is a key part of the government’s obligations to protect the right to freedom of expression, as guaranteed under the Cambodian Constitution and binding international human rights law. However, recent events have seen these obligations disregarded, as Cambodian media actors have come under relentless pressure amid a crackdown on critical voices. The harassment of independent journalists and media outlets must end. Access to independent information and a free media is in everyone’s interests, and vital to the future sustainable development of Cambodia.”

For more information, please contact Protecting Fundamental Freedoms Project Coordinator Sorn Ramana via telephone at +855 (0) 17 655 591 or e-mail at ramansorn@cchrcambodia.org.

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Notes to the Editor:

CCHR, founded in November 2002, is a non-aligned, independent, non-governmental organization that works to promote and protect democracy and respect for human rights throughout Cambodia.

CCHR is a member of International Freedom of Expression Exchange (IFEX), the global network for freedom of expression. CCHR is also a member of the World Organization Against Torture (OMCT), OECD-Watch, the SOS-Torture Network and the Southeast Asian Press Alliance (SEAPA).

The Cambodian Human Rights Portal www.sithi.org is the 2011 winner of the Information Society Innovation Fund Award in the category of Rights and Freedoms and the 2013 winner of the Communication for Social Change Award, awarded by the Centre of Communication and Social Change at the University of Queensland in Brisbane, Australia.