On May 08, 2009 the Cambodian Center for Human Rights (CCHR) conducted a Public Forum on Human Rights and Development in Prey Peay Village, Trapang Phlang Commune, Chhouk District, Kampot Province. Presentations were delivered by nine guest speakers: H.E Muo Sochua, SRP parliamentarian, Mr. Duk Savoeun, provincial governor representative, Mr. Soch Sert, Trapang Phlang Commune representative, Mr. Prum Phun, Taken Commune representative, Mr. Ou Virak, the president of CCHR, Mr. Yeng Virak, executive director of Cambodian Legal Education Center (CLEC), Mr. Sao Seny, Licadho representative, Mr. Lor Chan, Adhoc representative and Mr. Am Sokha, Clec representative. In addition, 347 citizens joined the forum, 68 of whom were women. Eleven of the citizens raised concerns and expressed opinions related to the loss of their land after the Government granted economic land concessions of over 9800 hectares to the private company Sour Nguon. The company has started to clear the land, affecting hundreds of families there, but claims to have legal documents related to the concession.
Most of the questions from the attendees to guest speakers were about the concession and the improper collection of taxes by local authorities. For example, Mr. Say Neth, a resident of the Trapang Phlang Commune, asked, “Do people have legal rights to live in their land? If not, where can they live?”

H.E. Muo Sochua promised to file a complaint with the government to ensure that a proper review of the legality of the concession and its impact on local residents has been undertaken. She also requested a reduction in the amount of taxes collected.

The provincial governor representative explained that he will make a request to his supervisor to find an appropriate solution for the effected people. The government will intervene if the company does not respect the principle of concession.

Social NGO representative asked both government officials and the people to respect the rule of law.