

## Joint Statement: End Threats and Persecution Against Independent Journalists

**Phnom Penh, June 19, 2020** - The Cambodian Center for Independent Media (CCIM) and the Cambodian Journalists Alliance (CamboJA) are deeply concerned that VOD reporters have been repeatedly stopped and intimidated by authorities while they are carrying out their professional duties.

On June 18, 2021, Prek Pnov district authorities with more than 10 members led by the district governor stopped and threatened a VOD videographer from the Cambodian Center for Independent Media who had gone to capture a temporary stopping place for Vietnamese people's floating houses and fish farms after they were evacuated by authorities from a number of locations in Phnom Penh. In addition, the authorities also took photos of the videographer and his press card, and made a threat that he would be in trouble if any photos or videos were published.

This case came just a week after VOD reporters were blocked and threatened in a separate incident. On the morning of June 11, a VOD reporter and a videographer went to report the delivery of petitions by about 10 women, all wives of former CNRP activists, to the European Union.

Daun Penh district authorities, with about 60 guards and officials, banned the reporters from taking photos and videos, warning that their equipment would be confiscated and they would be sent to the district hall if they dared to do so.

On May 11, Pursat provincial authorities led by a deputy provincial governor confiscated equipment and banned a VOD reporter from taking photos of Kampong Chhnang province protesters who were protesting and blocking National Road 5, which borders Pursat province, to demand that authorities resolve their land disputes.

All of the above acts of obstruction and intimidation by the authorities are a serious threat to freedom of the press, and goes against the Constitution and the Press Law, which ensure press freedom and professional journalism.

CCIM, a non-governmental organization promoting freedom of the press and freedom of expression, and CamboJA, which has more than 100 members, are again urging the government to stop the activities of authorities that persecute reporters and, instead, ensure the safety and security of all reporters so that they can exercise their rights, freedoms and professionalism to participate in reporting stories and crimes that are happening in society without fear.

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