



KINGDOM OF CAMBODIA
NATION RELIGION KING

MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

**Statement of the Spokesperson
of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation**

1. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation (MFAIC) registers its strong protest against the announcement on 12 June 2018 by the US Department of Treasury concerning Cambodian General Hing Bun Hieng's alleged roles in human rights records.
2. The content of the release is very disturbing when a public figure of a country has become subject of punitive measures of another country based on groundless account and accusation in total disregard of the legal and judicial independence of the country. This is a flagrant violation of international principles of sovereign equality and non-interference in the domestic affairs of other states.
3. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation categorically dismisses the purported engagement of Cambodian armed forces in a series of serious violation abuses and crimes against its people. On the contrary, it is a general understanding that General Hing Bun Hieng as well as the Prime Minister's Bodyguard Unit have contributed significantly to the maintenance of peace, stability and social order especially in the defense of independence and territorial integrity from foreign invasion.
4. The Ministry considers such unilateral action as politically motivated and prejudicially biased, which ran counter to the ongoing efforts of the two countries in maintaining the long-standing ties and bilateral cooperation on the basis of mutual respect, shared interests and non-interference. The US seems to lose sight of its past policy of undemocratic changes leading to the destruction in this small Southeast Asian nation and its people while its war legacy, which disperses nation-wide, still presents a great challenge for Cambodia's socio-economic development.
5. The most glaring irony of justice is the fact that the former US administration spearheaded a coalition that supported the Khmer Rouge regime, which ruled the country with complete contempt for human rights and democracy, to occupy the Cambodian seat at the UN, and to engender unjust 12-year sanctions against a nation devastated by more than two million tons of US bombs.
6. As far as the timing is concerned, the release can be construed as a series of coordinated attacks targeting the Cambodian government's image in the run-up to July's parliamentary elections. We note with a question mark that the US government has never publicly reprimanded certain opposition elements in Cambodia, which conduct their political activities by ways of insult, racism, xenophobia, social hatred and defamation, all of which are massively condemned in any democratic country.
7. That decision notwithstanding, the MFAIC reiterates Cambodia's unwavering commitment to pursuing a liberal multi-party democracy in conformity with the Cambodian Constitution, to enforcing the rule of law, and to holding the parliamentary elections on 29 July 2018 in a free, transparent and orderly manner.

Phnom Penh, 13 June 2018

