

Human rights: UN Special Rapporteur's visit to Cambodia postponed

GENEVA / PHNOM PENH (18 May 2015) – The mission to Cambodia by the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Cambodia, Rhona Smith, has been postponed due to logistical and administrative difficulties.

The Human Rights Council's newly appointed independent expert was due to visit Cambodia from 18 to 22 May 2015 for a preliminary fact-finding mission.

A new media advisory will be released as soon as the mission is rescheduled.

This was to be the first visit to the country by the newly appointed Special Rapporteur. The mandate establishes a monitoring function, which is carried out through regular visits or missions to Cambodia at the invitation of the Government, and an annual reporting requirement to the Human Rights Council. Ms. Smith is expected to submit her first report to the Council in September 2015.

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*Professor **Rhona Smith** (United Kingdom) was appointed by the United Nations Human Rights Council in March 2015, succeeding Professor Surya P. Subedi, who completed his six-year term on the mandate in March 2015. The mandate of the Special Rapporteur derives from the Paris Peace Accords Agreement on a comprehensive political settlement of the Cambodian conflict. Ms. Smith is a Professor of international human rights in the United Kingdom. Ms. Smith has also been a visiting professor at Pannasastra University in Cambodia where she worked on designing and developing course curricula for the re-launch of Cambodia's first master level program in human rights law.*

The Special Rapporteurs are part of what is known as the Special Procedures of the Human Rights Council. Special Procedures, the largest body of independent experts in the UN Human Rights system, is the general name of the Council's independent fact-finding and monitoring mechanisms that address either specific country situations or thematic issues in all parts of the world. Special Procedures' experts work on a voluntary basis; they are not UN staff and do not receive a salary for their work. They are independent from any government or organization and serve in their individual capacity.

UN Human Rights, country page – Cambodia:

<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Countries/AsiaRegion/Pages/KHIndex.aspx> and <http://cambodia.ohchr.org>

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