



Special Representative of the Secretary-General  
for Human Rights in Cambodia

គំណាងពិសេសរបស់លោកអគ្គលេខាធិការទទួលបន្ទុកសិទ្ធិមនុស្សប្រចាំកម្ពុជា



COHCHR

**Mission of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for human rights in Cambodia  
28 November to 5 December 2005**

*Phnom Penh, 5 December 2005* -- The Special Representative of the Secretary-General for human rights in Cambodia, Mr. Yash Ghai, concludes his first mission to Cambodia today. During his visit, he was granted an audience by His Majesty the King and met senior representatives of the Royal Government of Cambodia, including the President of the Senate, and the Ministers of Women's Affairs, Foreign Affairs and International Co-operation, Interior, Education and Justice. He also met with court authorities, representatives of political parties, non-governmental and community organizations, trade unions, the Resident Coordinator of the UN and the UN Country Team, bilateral and multilateral development cooperation agencies and the diplomatic community. He was able to visit parliamentarian Cheam Channy in the Military Prison, and radio broadcaster Mam Sonando and trade union leader Rong Chhun in the prison of Prey Sar. He gave a public lecture on "Constitutions and Democratization" at the Royal University of Law and Economics. He discussed issues related to land and the administration of justice with provincial non-governmental organizations and community groups in Kompong Speu province. He also participated in a radio programme on the occasion of Human Rights Day.

During his mission, Mr. Ghai sought to understand the overall situation of human rights in Cambodia. He gave particular attention to Cambodia's Constitution, the justice sector, and to freedoms of association, assembly and expression. In this latter regard, many people expressed their concern about the use of the defamation, incitement and disinformation provisions of the transitional "UNTAC" law. He heard many complaints about the functioning of the legal and judicial system, the arrest and detention of eminent persons in politics, journalism and trade unions, and the lifting of parliamentary immunity of opposition party members. Many concerns were expressed about the difficulties rural communities are facing in sustaining their livelihoods as a result of losing land and access to natural resources. Non-governmental organizations told him of the constraints they face in the performance of their duties, and of increasing restrictions on their freedoms of association, assembly and expression. He will take up these matters with the Royal Government of Cambodia.

Following his mission, the Special Representative will prepare a report and his recommendations to the UN Commission on Human Rights.

5 December 2005