



Press Release

SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ON HUMAN RIGHTS IN CAMBODIA VISITS COUNTRY

Phnom Penh, 22 January 1994

The Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Human Rights in Cambodia, Justice Michael Kirby (Australia), arrived in Cambodia yesterday on his first official mission, which takes place from 21 to 28 January 1994.

On his first day in Phnom Penh, Justice Kirby visited the Cambodia Field Office of the United Nations Centre for Human Rights where he was briefed by staff. He noted the success of last month's International Human Rights Day celebration in Cambodia and said he is encouraged that people here are embracing a culture of human rights.

Justice Kirby said he welcomes further developments in the protection and promotion of human rights. Among his top priorities are helping Cambodian organizations to strengthen their education and advocacy activities, and assisting the Government in its goal of national reconstruction based on peace and respect for human rights.

On Saturday morning Justice Kirby called on the offices of the Co-Prime Ministers H.R.H. Prince Norodom Ranariddh and H.E. Hun Sen. During his stay he will also meet with members of the Royal National Government, Cambodian human rights and civic organizations, court officials and members of the diplomatic community. Justice Kirby will visit several prisons and will make a trip to Battambang province. He is accompanied by Mr. J.L. Gomez del Prado of the United Nations Centre for Human Rights in Geneva.

Justice Kirby was appointed by the Secretary-General of the United Nations on 23 November 1993 in pursuance of resolution 1993/6 of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights entitled, "Situation of Human Rights in Cambodia."

According to the resolution, the Special Representative has the following mandate:

- * Maintain contact with the Government and people of Cambodia;
- * Guide and coordinate the United Nations human rights presence in Cambodia;

- * Assist the Government in the promotion and protection of human rights;
- * Report to the General Assembly at its forty-eight session and the Commission on Human Rights at its fiftieth session under the agenda item entitled, "Advisory services in the Field of Human Rights."

In accordance with this mandate, Justice Kirby submitted his first report to the General Assembly in December 1993. After his mission in Cambodia, he will prepare a report assessing the human rights situation in Cambodia and formulating recommendations to assist the Royal National Government in the promotion and protection of human rights. The report will be submitted to the Commission on Human Rights in February 1994.

Prior to arriving in Cambodia, Justice Kirby held consultations in Geneva with representatives of the States co-sponsoring resolution 1993/6, United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations active in the promotion and protection of human rights in Cambodia.

During his mission, and in the fulfillment of his mandate, Justice Kirby will be assisted by the Cambodia Field Office of the U.N. Centre for Human Rights, which was established in Phnom Penh on 1 October 1993, following resolution 1993/6.

The Centre has been entrusted with the important mandate of implementing in Cambodia, under the guidance of the Special Representative, educational and technical assistance programmes in the field of human rights, assisting the newly established Government and supporting Cambodian human rights groups. A wide programme of activities has been developed for this purpose, which will have to be financed through voluntary contributions to the United Nations Trust Fund for Human Rights in Cambodia. An appeal for funding was launched on 29 November 1993 by the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights, Mr. Ibrahim Fall.

Justice Kirby may be contacted by individuals, non-governmental organizations and associations during his visit to Cambodia through the Centre for Human Rights, tel: 015-91-3445/6/7.