



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

តំណាងពិសេសរបស់លោកអគ្គលេខាធិការទទួលបន្ទុកសិទ្ធិមនុស្សប្រចាំកម្ពុជា



23 February 2001

PRESS RELEASE

SRSGHRC completes second official visit to Cambodia

Phnom Penh - The Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Human Rights in Cambodia, Peter Leuprecht, completed today Friday 23 February, his second official visit to the country.

During his second visit Mr. Leuprecht met with key state officials and political leaders of several political parties - both at the central level in Phnom Penh and in Battambang Province. He also had meetings with several national and international non-governmental human rights organizations including those working on electoral matters, as well as with representatives of international organizations and agencies, the diplomatic community and donors.

The Special Representative was updated on the latest developments in the process for the establishment of a Special Tribunal to try those responsible for the crimes during the Democratic Kampuchea Regime. He was also informed about the findings of an investigation of 20 alleged torture cases by the Battambang Provincial Police, which had been confidentially presented to the government by the Cambodia Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (COHCHR) last November.

Mr. Leuprecht discussed other important human rights related matters such as the implementation of government reform policies and programmes, preparations for the commune elections and the role of NGOs in this context, recent cases of political violence and intimidation, continuing obstacles in the administration of justice, conditions of detention, the problem of trafficking of human beings and violence against women and children, land related disputes and the relations between the government and human rights NGOs. Obstacles for visits by family members and lawyers to prisoners accused of terrorism, were also issues discussed with relevant authorities

Mr. Leuprecht visited two detention centres, *Correctional Centre One (CC-1)* and *Battambang Provincial Prison* where he met with persons in detention, including several women in detention in the Battambang prison who are accompanied by their small children, as well as with minors in both centres. At his request, Mr. Leuprecht and his delegation had confidential interviews with four leaders of the *Cambodian Freedom Fighters (CFF)* currently on pre-trial detention for their presumed involvement in an armed attack that took place on 24 November 2000. With the support of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Special Representative will continue to monitor the legal and human rights conditions of all those in detention.

As part of his mandate, Mr. Leuprecht will present his recommendations in a written report and an oral statement to the 57th session of the Commission on Human Rights to be held in Geneva, Switzerland from 19 March to 27 April 2001. Professor Leuprecht will conduct a third visit to the country in May or June of this year.

- end -