

Cambodia: UN human rights expert launches official country visit

GENEVA / PHNOM PENH (7 October 2016) – The United Nations Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Cambodia, Rhona Smith, will carry out an official visit to the country from 10 to 20 October 2016 to examine the general political situation and various aspects of discrimination.

“I will be focusing my mission on the current situation of human rights, and on following up on recommendations made to the Government. I aim to continue my examination of the theme of discrimination, with a focus this time on assessing the rights of ethnic minorities and marginalised groups” the Special Rapporteur noted.

During her 10-day visit, she will meet with a wide range of stakeholders, including senior members of the Royal Government, as well as representatives from civil society, and the diplomatic community. The independent human rights expert will also undertake field visits to gather first-hand information.

The UN Special Rapporteur undertakes regular visits to Cambodia and reports annually to the Human Rights Council. Since her appointment in March 2015, she has conducted official country visits in September 2015, as well as in March 2016. Ms. Smith will present her next report to the Human Rights Council in September 2017.

The Special Rapporteur will hold a **press conference** at the end of her visit, on Wednesday 19 October 3 p.m. - 4 p.m. at the UN Human Rights Office (OHCHR), 4 Street 271, Sangkat Phsar Doeum Thkov, in Phnom Penh. Access to the press conference is strictly limited to journalists.

(*) Check the Special Rapporteur’s reports on Cambodia:
http://ap.ohchr.org/documents/dpage_e.aspx?m=107

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Ms. Rhona Smith was appointed by the United Nations Human Rights Council in March 2015. Ms. Smith is a Professor of International Human Rights Law in the United Kingdom. She has also taught international human rights law as a visiting professor in China and Canada and spent time as a distinguished visitor in Vanuatu. Professor 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. To learn more, see: <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/SP/CountriesMandates/KH/Pages/SRCambodia.aspx>

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. Special Procedures mandate-holders are independent human rights experts appointed by the Human Rights Council to address either specific country situations or thematic issues in all parts of the world. They are not UN staff and are independent from any government or organization. They serve in their individual capacity and do not receive a salary for their work.

UN Human Rights, country page – Cambodia:

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

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You can access this media advisory in English and Khmer here:

<http://cambodia.ohchr.org/>.

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