

Nick Kauzlarich

From: Nick Kauzlarich
Sent: Friday, May 18, 2018 12:13 PM
To: Nick Kauzlarich
Subject: Biz Landscape Worsens in Cambodia; U.S. Moves on Sanctions

Hello,

Below is a summary of recent news around the rapidly deteriorating state of democracy and human rights in Cambodia under the rule of Prime Minister Hun Sen's regime, the response of the international community, and the ongoing efforts of the Cambodia National Rescue Party (CNRP) to restore democracy in the country. Leaders with the CNRP are available to discuss developments.

- Brands and other private interests will soon begin withdrawing from Cambodia as trade agreements will falter, Cambodia's credit rating will plummet, and social unrest will grow in the current conditions. The Cambodian Confederation of Unions (CCU) released a statement this week outlining the tremendous risk for the garment industry, the backbone of Cambodia's economy – from sanctions to boycotts – without the reinstatement of the CNRP and free and fair elections in July. The EU, which receives 45% of Cambodia's garment exports, is currently reviewing Cambodian exports' tax-free status. Meanwhile, brands like VF, the parent firm of The North Face, Jansport, and Timberland, delivered a petition to Hun Sen expressing concern about the treatment of workers.
- The U.S. State Department called for the immediate release of CNRP President Kem Sokha after the UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention deemed Sokha's arrest and detention "politically motivated." The statement comes on the heels of a new bipartisan bill in Congress that would impose sanctions on Cambodian officials attacking Cambodia democracy.
- Amid rumors that the Cambodian government will force people to vote in the upcoming national elections, Sam Rainsy released a statement affirming every citizen's right not to participate in an election that denies them a real choice. The CNRP officially announced a boycott of the upcoming national elections after the Cambodian government denied the party from registering by the May 14th deadline.
- An independent Cambodian electoral watchdog group decided against monitoring the national elections due to new government restrictions on NGO activities. Last year, the Cambodian government closed a group of 30 NGO election monitors after accusing them of trying to promote a revolution.

Please let me know if you're interested in speaking with leaders of the CNRP.

Thanks,
Nick

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