

## Nick Kauzlarich

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**From:** Nick Kauzlarich  
**Sent:** Monday, July 30, 2018 10:23 AM  
**To:** Nick Kauzlarich  
**Subject:** CNRP Statement: Cambodia's Sham Election

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

July 30, 2018

## Cambodia National Rescue Party Denounces Sham Election

*Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen extends rule for another five years after banning opposition party from participating in national election*

On Sunday, Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen solidified his rule for years to come after winning a sham election marked by [voter intimidation](#), [bribery](#), and the absence of the Cambodia National Rescue Party (CNRP), which was banned from participating. In response to this illegitimate election, the CNRP and Cambodia National Rescue Movement (CNRM) leader Sam Rainsy issued the following statements, respectively:

### CNRP

29 July 2018 marked the death of democracy in Cambodia—a new dark day of its history. It was to be a celebration of democracy where people would have exercised their right to choose their own government. Unfortunately, that choice had already been made for them before polls opened. Until the very last moment, we have worked and hoped that there would be a reversal of the series of decisions from the past months to completely destroy the Cambodian democracy. The ruling party, however, moved ahead with a sham election in full breach of the Cambodian Constitution and the international commitments/obligations of the country. Subsequently, what was left of a democracy in name only has been replaced with an outright dictatorship. We resolutely reject this costly electoral circus and its dangerous consequences.

The results announced by the CPP-run NEC must be fully rejected by the international community, such as UN, ASEAN, EU, IPU or any democratic government and institution. The ban of the opposition and imprisonment of its leader, the shutdown of independent media and civil society, and threats on activists had made this election unacceptable before it even began.

Without the party of their choice, millions of Cambodian voters were left with no choice other than to boycott the election. They live in fear with constant threats and intimidation by the ruling party to coerce them to vote. Yet many bravely chose to keep their fingers clean.

29 July will be remembered as the day when the constitutional multi-party democracy was replaced illegally and unconstitutionally by a one-party rule where the basic principles of the Paris Peace Accords 1991, which define the political system of the country, have been blatantly breached, thus invoking regional security crisis. The regime unilaterally abrogated from a series of its international obligations, including the Trade Agreement with the European Union, which requires a functional democracy in Cambodia.

With these acts Hun Sen has directly abolished the existing conditions that led to the growths in Cambodia over the last 3 decades. History will mark 29 July as the day Hun Sen's regime invited sanctions and ultimately brought down the Cambodian economy with it. Illegitimate governments cannot sign legitimate agreements. Subsequently, we inform and alert governments and businesses across the world that the agreements, deals and accords signed as of today by Cambodia's de facto regime will have no legal validity and will be revised by the future democratic government of

Cambodia. There cannot and will not be ifs or buts about this, as there cannot be compromise about our basic principle of rule of law.

In view of the unilateral abrogation of the Cambodian regime from the Paris Peace Accords, we call on the co-presidents of the Paris Conference, Indonesia and France, to invoke the article of the Accords that calls for immediate convocation of the Conference. It is in that framework and through dialogue that the resolution of this dangerously escalating crisis can be averted.

Cambodia National Rescue Party (CNRP) cannot and will not be destroyed by a politically motivated ruling of an unjust court. Its leaders and martyrs may be imprisoned and exiled but will never be silenced. CNRP has been and will continue to be a party of the majority of Cambodians who believe in free and open society, in a government that serves the people, in an internationally integrated economy that benefits and enriches everyone, and in a Cambodia as part of the democratic community of nations that live up to their values.

CNRP will continue to stand by and for its people and fight against the totalitarian regime both within Cambodia and internationally.

### **Sam Rainsy**

A victory without a contest is a hollow one. That's the truth about the victory of Prime Minister Hun Sen in this Sunday's elections, an easy victory as he had dissolved the only party that could have beaten him, the Cambodia National Rescue Party (CNRP), well in advance.

This senseless victory does nothing to resolve the political crisis that Cambodia faces as a result of the regime's totalitarian drift over the last 12 months.

For the Cambodian people, unable to make a real choice because of the absence of the CNRP, the result of this false election conducted in a climate of fear is a betrayal of the popular will.

For the first time in the 25 years, since the elections organized by the United Nations in 1993, Cambodia lacks a legitimate government recognized by the international community. This means that the political crisis can only worsen.

Denied a real choice, the vast majority of the Cambodian people have refused to participate in this sham election. The participation rate announced by the authorities does not reflect reality for two reasons:

1. Many citizens were forced to take part against their will because of intimidation and threats. For example, some 700,000 workers who support the opposition and who the authorities prevented from voting in preceding elections when the CNRP took part, have this time – now that the CNRP has been dissolved – been strongly encouraged to vote. They have been given three days of extra paid holiday, but those who come back without proof of having participated – the index finger coloured by the ink that must be used to vote – are threatened with being fired.
2. The manipulation of voting in the polling stations, due to the complete control of the ruling CPP over voting operations from A to Z, caused serious distortion. In fact, the National Election Committee (NEC) is completely subservient to the CPP. Every credible national and international election-observing organization has refused to observe an election process that was falsified from the outset. The absence of the CNRP, the only serious rival to the CPP, meant that the election took part without some 46,000 opposition-affiliated observers who would have been able to oppose CPP electoral malpractice.

**Nick Kauzlarich**

O. 202.800.9010

[nick.kauzlarich@berlinrosen.com](mailto:nick.kauzlarich@berlinrosen.com)

Pronouns: He/Him/His

**berlinrosen**

New York • Washington D.C. • Los Angeles

berlinrosen.com

@berlinrosen

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