

**KINGDOM OF CAMBODIA
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March 02, 2016

STATEMENT

INDIGENOUS PEOPLES AND FORESTRY NETWORK

We, the Indigenous Peoples and Forestry Network (IPFN) consisting of 27 organizations, wish to express our appreciation for the Royal Government of Cambodia's action to establish a National Committee for Forestry Crime Prevention and Suppression at a time when destruction and transport of timber are very active.

The Royal Government of Cambodia's current heavy-handed action clearly shows the will and stringent measures of the Royal Government of Cambodia, in preventing and suppressing forestry crime of exporting timber to Vietnam. However, we are disappointed that the existing legal mechanisms do not suffice to prevent forestry crime across Cambodia, making the establishment of the task force necessary in the first place.

At the same time, we, the Indigenous Peoples and Forestry Network (IPFN), are gravely concerned over the timber supply chain, which does not have clear data to specify the volume of timber taken from different sources, including community forest, private forest plantations and land, mining projects, hydropower dams, and especially, from economic land concessions related to buying timber from illegal timber traders around concession areas. Without a quick intervention, all these will lead to the loss of Cambodian forest in a short time. This will also affect the forest coverage restoration program, carbon credit program, underground water equilibrium, and in particular, local people's livelihoods which depend on forestry by-products for their daily life.

We do not object to development, but we request that it be compliant with laws, ensures equity of development projects, and mitigates environmental and social impacts.

Based on the description above, we would like to make the following request to the National Committee for Forestry Crime Prevention and Suppression, the Royal Government, the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries, the Ministry of Environment, the Forestry Administration, courts, and other relevant competent authorities:

1. That the National Committee for Forestry Crime Prevention and Suppression take measure and intervene immediately to prevent forest crime across Cambodia;
2. Make results of the suppression publicly available in terms of the quantity of timber seized, perpetrators, esp who set the fire, and sub-sequent actions on the seized timber;
3. To ensure long-term solutions, strengthen stringent and effective law enforcement by all law enforcement officials through indictment of ring leaders and accomplices;
4. Stop all forms of intimidation of forestry protection activists by the judiciary and competent armed forces;
5. Further empower local community people in forestry protection.

6. Accelerate the recognition of the existing communities, including Community Forestry, Community Protected Area, Fishery Community, and Communal Land Titling Registration as well as allocate proper national budget to enable them to help preventing forestry crimes, and to manage, use, and preserve forest resources in their area.
7. That the experience gained from this stringent measure be reflected against existing policies, laws, and regulations for amendment and improvement, e.g., the termination of granting economic land concessions because it is a main root cause of forestry losses.

For detailed information, please contact the following representatives of the IPFN National Committee:

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| 3. Mr. Em Sopheak, Community Legal Education Center (CLEC) | 012 978 935 |
| 4. Mrs. Dam Chanthy, Highlanders Association - Rattanakiri (HA) | 012 434 670 |
| 5. Mr. Kim Serey Kith, Development and Partnership in Action (DPA) | 017 279 868 |
| 6. Mrs. Yun Mane, Cambodian Indigenous People Organization (CIPO) | 012 317 368 |
| 7. Mr. Chhim Samuth, Cambodia Indigenous Youth Association (CIYA) | 012 960 515 |
| 8. Mr. Tek Vannara, Executive Director of The NGO Forum on Cambodia | 012 793 489 |

A list of civil society organizations (CSOs) and development partners supporting this Statement is as follows:

1. Action on Environment and Community (AEC)
2. Building Community Voices (BCV)
3. Cambodia Indigenous Youth Association (CIYA)
4. Cambodian Indigenous People Organization (CIPO)
5. Community Capacities for Development (CCD)
6. Community Economic Development (CED)
7. Community Legal Education Center (CLEC)
8. Development and Partnership in Action (DPA)
9. Environment, Health, and Education Organization (EHEO)
10. Environmental Protection and Development Organization (EPDO)
11. Highlanders Association - Rattanakiri (HA)
12. Indigenous Community Support Organization (ICSO)
13. Indigenous People Rights Active Members (IRAM)
14. Khmer Youth and Social Development (KYSD)
15. Mlup Baitong (MB)
16. My Village (MVi)
17. NGO Forum on Cambodia (NGOF)
18. Non-Timber Forest Products Exchange Programme (NTFP-EP)
19. Non-Timber Forest Products Organization (NTFP)
20. Organization to Promote Kui Culture (OPKC)
21. Peace and Sustainability-Community Peace-Building Network (CDPS-CPN)
22. Ponlok Khmer (PKH)
23. Promvihearhor Organization (PVT)
24. Rural Development Association (RDA)
25. Save Vulnerable Cambodians (SVC)
26. Ponleu Ney Kdey Sangkhum (PNKS)
27. Community Capacity for Development (CCD)