

Joint Statement

Civil Society Organizations Unite to Celebrate the 114th Anniversary of International Women's Day under the Theme: "Empowering Women and Girls for Equality, Economic Stability and Social Justice"

Phnom Penh; 08 March 2025

We, a group of civil society organizations including organizations, associations, independent trade union confederations, and federations, youth networks, local communities and citizens working in various sectors as listed below, have come together to celebrate the 114th Anniversary of International Women's Day on March 8 under the Theme: "Empowering Women and Girls for Equality, Economic Stability and Social Justice."

On this occasion, we call on the Royal Government of Cambodia and/or relevant ministries, employers and brands to take concrete, effective and urgent measures to eliminate gender-based violence and harassment, address [wage theft](#) in the garment supply chain, and ensure stronger economic and social protection for women workers. According to the report "[Stitched Under Strain](#)," 91 percent of garment workers are in debt, with 70 percent of workers experiencing [increased debt](#) since the COVID-19 pandemic. Women workers are forced to borrow at high interest rates, which has pushed them deeper into debt. Furthermore, brands and suppliers have not paid wages and benefits owed to garment workers from during the COVID-19 pandemic, leaving thousands of workers' families in debt and struggling to make ends meet.

We recognize the achievements that the Royal Government of Cambodia has made in protecting and promoting women's rights and gender equality throughout its more than seven mandates. However, we have observed that gender-based violence and harassment, discrimination, and labor exploitation, especially against women in the garment supply chain, continue to occur in all forms and everywhere, such as in the workplace, in public places, homes and online.

In March 2024, on the occasion of the 113th International Women's Day, civil society organizations issued a [joint statement](#), raising 16 demands for the government to address. However, we have observed that the government has not yet fully and effectively addressed all 16 demands. Therefore, on the occasion of the 114th International Women's Day, we reaffirm these 16 demands, with updates to Demands 03, 04, 10, 11, 14 and 16, urging the government to fulfill them effectively. Additionally, we present the demands for brands and suppliers:

To the Royal Government of Cambodia and/or relevant ministries:

- Demand 1: Increase the number of community kindergartens and daycare centers and strengthen existing institutions to improve their quality in communities and workplaces.
- Demand 2: Amend the Law on the Prevention of Domestic Violence and the Protection of Victims and create safe havens for women victims /survivors of domestic violence, domestic workers, migrant workers, and at-risk women in communities.
- Demand 3: Enforce strict legal action against all forms of violence and harassment against women and girls, particularly poor women in urban and rural areas, while ensuring the protection of girls and women vulnerable to gender-based violence.

- Demand 4: Implement specific administrative measures and end all forms of violence and intimidation against citizens, including women human rights defenders, land rights activists, labor rights advocates, and environmental activists, when they voice concerns about challenges in their communities.
- Demand 5: Reform and strengthen safety standards of means of transport for workers in the textile, garment and footwear sectors.
- Demand 6: Improve working conditions and strengthen mechanisms to protect domestic workers.
- Demand 7: Strengthen mechanisms to protect the rights of migrant workers against labor exploitation, human trafficking and modern slavery.
- Demand 8: Strengthen and expand the scope of the NSSF membership card through inspections and promote registration and payment of NSSF contributions among employers, especially workers in the construction sector as well as garment and textile factories that work on a subcontract basis.
- Demand 9: Ensure that workers in the construction and brick kiln sectors have health and safety equipment that is in accordance with the law, are not working in debt bondage, and that enterprises and establishments are registered as NSSF members.
- Demand 10: Stop all evictions and work towards providing additional land titles to impoverished communities in both urban and rural areas to enhance security of tenure and support adequate housing. Additionally, include and recognize smallholder farmers, especially women farmers, in rural areas within social protection policies, while also supporting skills training and providing capital grants.
- Demand 11: Provide designated spaces for small street vendors and ensure that these spaces are affordable, including in markets, beaches, and tourist areas. Additionally, improve community infrastructure by providing electricity for street lighting to protect women and girls from harassment.
- Demand 12: Strengthen the quality of public education, increase the number of scholarships for higher education, and provide free housing, especially for girls from rural areas.
- Demand 13: Provide services to help women, especially women with disabilities, access health, mental health, and legal services.
- Demand 14: Amend the Law and Prakas of the National Social Security Fund, adjusting conditions to require employers to contribute every nine months so that pregnant workers receive 70% of contributions and holiday benefits. Additionally, ensure that workers who experience unsuccessful pregnancies (pregnancy loss before seven months) are also entitled to holidays and 70% of contributions.
- Demand 15: Expand the local labor market and develop new skills, including accelerating the implementation of policies that provide allowance during periods of income loss or unemployment, especially for women and youth.
- Demand 16: Expedite the registration of informal economy workers by repealing Inter-Ministerial Prakas No. 404 and requesting the removal of Condition 3 in Notification No. 005/25 NSS, dated January 15, 2025, to facilitate the registration of self-employed individuals.

To Brands and Suppliers:

1. End labor exploitation such as forced and unpaid overtime and wage theft in the garment supply chain, close the gap between the minimum and [living wage](#) and payment of termination benefits to workers including severance pay.
2. Engage in negotiations with workers and unions to resolve wage theft and loss of benefits during COVID-19, particularly in cases of factory closures.
3. Integrate international labor standards and best practices including, ILO C190 and R206 and the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises on Responsible Business Conduct by signing enforceable agreements with unions, employers, and brands to prevent and eliminate gender-based violence and harassment and all forms of discrimination in factories /workplaces.
4. Respect workers' right to Freedom of Association, in line with international labor standards including ILO C87 and 98 and the Constitution of Cambodia (Article 36 and Article 42), the Cambodian Labor Law (Article 266 and Article 267), and the Trade Union Law (Article 5, and Article 6).

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Civil Society Organizations and local communities endorsing this joint statement:

1. Cambodian Federation of Food and Service Workers' Unions (CFSWF)
2. Cambodian Confederation of Trade Unions (CATU)
3. Centre for Labor and Human Rights Alliances (CENTRAL)
4. Cambodian Youth Network (CYN)
5. Samakum Teang Tnaot (STT)
6. Equitable Cambodia (EC)
7. Independent Democratic Association of the Informal Economy (IDEA)
8. Cambodian League for the Promotion and Defense of Human Rights (LICADHO)
9. Youth Resource Development Program (YRDP)
10. Cambodia Tourism Workers' Union Federation (CTWUF)
11. Cambodian Human Rights and Development Association (ADHOC)
12. Klahaan
13. Cambodian Center for Human Rights (CCHR)
14. Cambodian NGO Committee on the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (NGO-CEDAW)
15. Youth Education for Development and Peace (YEDP)
16. Gender and Development for Cambodia (GADC)
17. Cambodian Workers' Rights Support Union of Nagaworld (LRSU)
18. Committee for Free and Fair Elections in Cambodia (COMFREL)
19. Rural Women's Association for the Environment (RWAA)
20. Cambodian Human Rights Action Coalition (CHRAC)
21. Cambodian Institute for Democracy (CID)
22. Cambodian Center for Independent Media (CCIM)
23. Community Legal Education Center (CLEC)

24. Banteay Srei
25. Asian Floor Wage Alliance (AFWA)
26. Federation of Free Trade Union of Workers of the Kingdom of Cambodia (FTUWKC)
27. Federation of Labor Unions (FULI)
28. Federation of Independent Trade Unions (INTUFE)
29. Cambodian Independent Trade Unions (CITU)
30. Tourism Workers Union of SOFITEL Phnom Penh Phokeethra Hotel (TWUSPH)
31. Tourism Employees Union of Les Jardins Du Bassac Apartment (TEUJB)
32. Tourism Workers Union of Baitong Hotel & Resort Phnom Penh (TWUBHRP)
33. Tourism Workers Union of Sunway Hotel Phnom Penh (TWUSP)
34. Tourism Workers Union of Cambodiana Hotel (TWUCH)
35. HCC Group Company Employee Union (HCCGCEU)
36. Tourism Workers Union of Raffles Le Royal Hotel (TWURRH)
37. Brave Women's Community
38. Prek Ta Kong 60 Meter Community
39. Pung Ror Sen Chey Community
40. Smor San Community
41. Stung Kambot Community
42. Chhmar Eut Community
43. Thlan 100 Community
44. Prey Peay Community
45. Phnom Tnaot Forest Community
46. Veal Intri Community
47. Pung Ror Kong Chey Lak Community
48. Lor Peang Community
49. Rasmey Samaki Community
50. Mean Chey Community
51. Samaki Chek Meas Community
52. Samaki Romeas Hek Community
53. Prek Khsach Community
54. Thmor Sar Samaki Community
55. Kuy Indigenous Community, Preah Vihear Province
56. 197 Land Community (Koh Kong)
57. Chi Kha Kraom Land Community (Koh Kong)
58. Kouy Indigenous Community in Prame Commune (Preah Vihear)
59. Phnom Krom Community (Siem Reap)
60. Ta Ni Land Community (Siem Reap)
61. Klaing Toek 78 Community (Siem Reap)
62. Kouy Indigenous Community (Preah Vihear)
63. Samaki Sangkae Pir Mean Rith (Preah Vihear)
64. Kbal Kla Forestry Community (Kampong Thom)
65. Prey Lang Community Network (PLCN)
66. Kuy Indigenous Community in Ngan commune (Kampong Thom)
67. Boeung Pi community (Battambang)
68. Land Community (Pailin)
69. Rattanak Rokha Forestry Community (Oddar Meanchey)
70. Srae Prang Land Community (Tboung Khmum)

71. Bos Snor Community (Tbong Khmum)
72. Community to Protect Nature (Pursat)
73. Thnaot Chum Land Community (Pursat)
74. Dak Por Community (Kampong Speu)
75. Phum Seila Khmer Land Community (Banteay Meanchey)
76. Andong Trabek Land Community (Svay Rieng)
77. Prey Chher Pech Changvar Laor Chhert Community (Kampong Chhnang)
78. Trapeang Chan Forestry Community (Kampong Chhnang)
79. Sre Ampel Water Fall Tourism Forestry Community (Kampong Chhnang)