



គណបក្ស សម រង្ស៊ី
SAM RAINSY PARTY
PARTI SAM RAINSY
សមរង្ស៊ី សម្បជ័យ យុត្តិធម៌

Paris, November 18, 1998

attn: Elizabeth Wright

Letter to the Editor
The Cambodia Daily
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(For publication)

The *Daily* reported on Wednesday that CPP Vice President Hun Sen has "guaranteed the safety of opposition figure Sam Rainsy and all other members of parliament." I wish I could agree. We have to get beyond the threats and manipulations and put the country onto the path to political reform, the rule of law, and economic progress.

Unfortunately, Hun Sen and his spokesmen seem unable to stop equivocating on this point. It should be easy for them to say, "Rainsy and the SRP Members of the Assembly have no charges against them and will not be arrested."

But instead they make roundabout statements, full of loopholes that can easily be exploited by a legal system that is completely under their control. Like the election commission's notable failure to account for the four million ballots left over from the election, this equivocation raises suspicions that ought to be needless.

The suspicions they raise have a purpose: to send us a clear message that the ruling party would prefer the SRP members not to return in any capacity, and that it retains the ability to limit our freedom.

It is the same strategy the ruling party used to keep the opposition out of the country for nearly two months—meanwhile blaming the opposition for the food shortages caused by its own failures and for the hold-up in aid and investment caused by its own refusal to follow Constitutional procedures and to allow an independent judiciary.

We expect to be able to participate in the National Assembly at its November 25 meeting, as free and conscientious representatives of the people. We hope that the leaders of the CPP will demonstrate the good faith necessary so that together we can begin to address the pressing issues that face Cambodia.

Sam Rainsy
President
Sam Rainsy Party