

Geneva, 25 April 2014

Mr. Samdech Hun Sen
Prime Minister
Phnom Penh, Kingdom of Cambodia
Sent by email to ocm@cambodia.gov.kh

IndustriALL Global Union Calls on Government of Cambodia to Drop Criminal Charges against Union Activists in SL Garment Dispute

Dear Prime Minister,

I am writing to you on behalf of [IndustriALL Global Union](http://www.industriall-union.org), which represents more than fifty million workers throughout the manufacturing chain, including textile and garments sectors, in 140 countries worldwide, to call on your government to ensure that any cases arising out of the SL Garment conflict be dropped immediately. As you may recall, I have already contacted you on 12 November 2013 urging you to intervene at SL Garment to put an immediate end to the violence against workers and to encourage dialogue among the parties so that they could find a fair and peaceful solution.

Earlier this month, criminal charges were levelled against Ath Thorn, President of CCAWDU, which is affiliated to IndustriALL Global Union, and General Secretary of the Cambodian Labour Confederation, related to the SL Garment Processing Ltd. dispute. Management of SL Garment has filed charges of incitement to commit a felony against Ath Thorn and union activist Ms. Pav Phanna. However, the company and the union signed an agreement on 3 December 2013 (attached) that provides, among other commitments, that no further legal charges would be filed between the parties. This agreement was reached under the auspices of His Excellency Sat Sakmut, Deputy Secretary of State of the Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training, and was witnessed and signed by him.

Even in the absence of such an agreement, we believe the case has little legal merit, as there is no evidence of a violation of Articles 494, 495, and 496 of the Criminal Code of the Kingdom of Cambodia. Indeed, we are concerned that this case may be aimed at frustrating the unions' legitimate efforts to advocate for a higher minimum wage and for the release of the 21 prisoners.

Furthermore, we are also disturbed by the serious restrictions imposed on Ath Thorn on 8 April, which constitute a clear violation to his right to free association. In addition, we find the court's order demanding that Ath Thorn pay bail of US\$ 25,000 not only exorbitant but also unjust.

Therefore, I call on your government to drop all charges and lift restrictions against Ath Thorn and Pav Phanna immediately.

I anticipate your quick reply and action.

Sincerely,



Jyrki Raina, General Secretary