

## **CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS CALL FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE OF DETAINED CAMBODIAN SOLDIERS AND EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CEASEFIRE BETWEEN CAMBODIA AND THAILAND**

Phnom Penh, Cambodia – August 8, 2025

We, the undersigned civil society organizations, welcome the recent agreement reached during the Extraordinary General Border Committee (GBC) Meeting between Cambodia and Thailand on August 7, 2025, in Kuala Lumpur. The agreement marks an important step toward de-escalation, mutual understanding and the peaceful resolution of hostilities. We particularly welcome the reaffirmation of the ceasefire, the commitment to refrain from provocative actions, and the joint pledge to uphold international humanitarian law, including the humane treatment and immediate repatriation of captured soldiers in accordance with Article 118 of the Third Geneva Convention and Rule 128(A) of customary International Humanitarian Law.

The civil society organizations are concerning the situation of remained 18 Khmer soldiers who are captured by Thai army after cease fire announced. We wish to see the actual implementation of the agreement and would like strongly call as followings:

1. **Immediate and Unconditional Release:** We would like to congratulate the decisions of the Extraordinary General Border Committee (GBC) Meeting, but still call for the ***immediate, safe and smooth repatriation of all 18 remaining Cambodian soldiers*** currently held by Thai forces. Their capture and continued detention run counter to the spirit of the ceasefire. Given the reported treatment of at least two of the soldiers who have been released, we have significant cause for concern for their physical and psychological integrity.

In fact, those 20 Khmer Soldiers were not captured during war, they are captured during cease fire. It means they are captured illegally. Therefore, Thai authority shall release them immediately and unconditionally. It is a violation of Geneva Convention IV on article 147.

We would like to reiterate article 118 of the Third Geneva Convention, following the ceasefire, no further capture of enemy soldiers should occur, and those already in detention must be released and repatriated unconditionally and without delay (the article says: **“Prisoners of war shall be released and repatriated without delay after the cessation of active hostilities”**).

2. **Independent Investigation on torture allegation:** We urge a prompt, thorough, independent, and impartial investigation by credible international bodies, such as the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), UN Special Procedures mandate holders, and/or human rights mechanisms, into the reports of treatment that may amount to torture, and denial of the right to medical care for the detained Cambodian soldiers.
3. **Accountability:** Any Thai military personnel found responsible for *acts of torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment must be held accountable* in accordance with international and domestic law.
4. **Access for Independent Observers:** Immediate and unrestricted access must be granted to independent humanitarian and human rights organizations, including the International Committee of the Red Cross and OHCHR, to visit all detained Cambodian soldiers, assess their well-being, and monitor their treatment to ensure compliance with international humanitarian and human rights laws.

5. **Commitment to Humane Treatment of All Prisoners:** We still encourage both the Royal Thai Government and the Royal Government of Cambodia to reaffirm their commitment to the humane treatment of all individuals deprived of liberty—military, as agreed in the agreement 6 of the GBC on 7 August 2025 in Kuala Lumpur, and it is fully implemented.
6. **Protection of Witnesses and Whistleblowers:** We urge both governments to ensure the protection for individuals who report or document abuses related to the detaining of the soldiers and post-ceasefire events, including journalists, witnesses, and human rights defenders.

We reaffirm the importance of peaceful bilateral engagement and continuous conflict resolution based on respect for international law. The path to lasting peace and stability along the border requires mutual respect for international law and human dignity. We still stand in solidarity with the affected soldiers and their families and remain committed to advocating for actual justice and the protection of human rights for all, and a sustainable peace for both countries.

**Endorsed by:**

1. Cambodian Human Rights Action Coalition (CHRAC)
2. Community Legal Education Center (CLEC)
3. Federation of Free Trade Union of Workers of the Kingdom of Cambodia (FTUWKC)
4. People Center for Development and Peace (PDP-Center)
5. Independent Democracy of Informal Economy (IDEA)
6. Cambodian Tourism Workers Union Federation (CTWUF)
7. Empowering Youth for Equitable Society (EYES)
8. Transparency International Cambodia (TI Cambodia)
9. Cambodian Human Rights and Development Association (ADHOC)
10. Committee for Free and Fair Elections in Cambodia (COMFREL)
11. Independent Trade Union Federation (INTUFE)
12. Urban Poor Women Development (UPWD)
13. Cambodia Independent Trade Union Federation (CITUFED)
14. Cambodian Youth Network Association (CYN)
15. Cambodian Institute for Democracy (CID)
16. Cambodian Food and Service Workers of Federation (CFSWF)
17. Rural Women's Association for Agroecology (RWAA)
18. Cambodian Labour Confederation (CLC)
19. Phnom Tnaut Community Forestry, Kompot
20. Preay Peay Land Community, Kompot