

From:

His Excellency Sar Kheng
Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior
Ministry of Interior
No 75 Norodom Blvd, Khan Chamkamon
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Date:

Dear Minister,

Nearly 150 families living on a land known as Group 78 near the Bassac River in Phnom Penh are facing eviction to a site lacking basic infrastructure such as sewage, sanitation, and drinking water. The families, many poor street vendors, but also some public servants, including teachers and officials, started moving into the area in 1983. Since then the number of families has grown and the area has become prime land in an exploding property market.

Since 2004, the families have applied for formal land titles several times. Despite extensive official documentation of the continuous possession for more than five years (as guaranteed by 2001 Cambodian Land Law), their applications have been rejected.

For almost two years now, Group 78 residents have lived in fear of being forcibly evicted. Five eviction notices have been issued by the Chamkar Morn District Office, none of them based on a court order as required by law. The most recent notice was issued on 4th November 2007 and did not set a date for the eviction.

We therefore urge you to end all forced evictions as a matter of urgency, including that of Group 78, and to introduce a moratorium on all mass evictions until legislative and policy measures are in place to ensure that evictions are only conducted when necessary and in full compliance with international human rights law and standards.

We urge you to ensure security of tenure for those living in Group 78 and protect them from forced eviction and other threats and harassment.

Furthermore we call on you to guarantee that, in case eviction is proved to be necessary, all those affected are ensured an effective remedy, including alternative accommodation, fair and just compensation to be developed with the genuine participation of all those who will be affected by the evictions from Group 78.

With regards,

Signature

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