

Cambodia: Before crucial vote on Sunday, UN chief calls for 'pluralistic political process'

As Cambodians prepare to vote in general elections on Sunday, the United Nations Secretary-General issued a statement on Friday calling for “an inclusive and pluralistic political process” saying that it “remains essential for safeguarding the progress made by Cambodia in consolidating peace.”

Through his spokesperson, Stéphane Dujarric, he called on all political actors “to reduce tensions and political polarization.”

Prime Minister and leader of the Cambodian People’s Party, Hun Sen, has ruled the country for more than 30 years, and last November the rival Cambodia National Rescue Party was dissolved, by court edict, according to reports.

The UN independent expert appointed to monitor human rights in Cambodia, Rhona Smith, said at the end of April that there could be no “genuine” election process “if the main opposition party is barred from taking part.”

The UN chief on Friday called on the Cambodian government “to uphold international human rights standards and in particular to ensure guarantees for civil society actors and political parties to exercise their democratic rights.”

“He reiterates the continued commitment of the United Nations to support a peaceful and democratic Cambodia that fully respects the human rights of all its citizens,” concluded Mr. Dujarric.