<u>Press Releases: Arrest of Cambodian</u> <u>Opposition Leader</u>

Press Statement Heather Nauert

Department Spokesperson

Washington, DC September 3, 2017

We note with grave concern the Cambodian government's arrest of Kem Sokha, respected leader of the political opposition, on a number of charges that appear to be politically motivated. Kem Sokha has a long, distinguished, and internationally recognized commitment to human rights and peaceful democracy.

This government move follows a number of troubling recent steps, including the imposition of unprecedented restrictions on independent media and civil society. These measures undercut Cambodia's progress in recent decades and raise serious questions about the government's ability to organize credible national elections in 2018 which produce an outcome that enjoys democratic legitimacy.

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