

Principles of Conduct for Free and Fair Elections in Cambodia

*The official copy of this document exists only in Khmer;
this translation is for information purposes only.*

Preamble

Free and fair elections are an essential part of democracy. Elections cannot be free and fair without the right to campaign. Everyone has this right, and the right to present their political opinions. But each person's right to campaign means supporting the same freedom for everyone else.

Cambodia's political parties endorse the Principles of Electoral Conduct set out below. These reflect international standards, and do not replace any (NEC) Regulations and Procedures. They are part of the law on election of members of the National Assembly and amendment to this law, and seek to express the core of democratic elections, while also dealing with impressions reported by the parties and issues which have previously arisen in Cambodia. Observance of these Principles would help bring about free and fair – and internationally approved – elections in the Kingdom.

Legal Framework

All party members, candidates and citizens are equally subject to the law. However, the activities of government and party must clearly be separate. Thus:

- Parties, candidates, and members may not use public funds or resources (e.g. offices, vehicles, etc.) to serve their own party interest. On the other hand, they must fulfill their public responsibilities until they leave office.
- Publicly funded broadcasting stations must provide fair and equitable access for the parties. They will ensure accuracy and impartiality in reporting, as well as political balance in editorial decisions such as selection, placing and comment on news items. The parties likewise agree to take all available steps to secure accuracy, impartiality, and balance on the part of privately owned media.
- Parties, candidates, and members will fully cooperate with, and provide all support to, the NEC and its subordinate bodies. It is most important that the Committee, and those bodies, function with neutrality, impartiality and transparency.
- Public employees, authorities at all levels, Royal Cambodian Armed Forces, National Police, and court officials have a limited right to campaign as set out in the election law, in the Electoral Regulations and Procedures. As regards the police and prosecuting authorities, they must ensure that their members behave in a non-partisan way and in strict compliance with the law.
- Upon a complaint being made the NEC may, if appropriate, send the matter to the proper authorities for possible disciplinary action against perpetrators and to deter future recurrence.

Electoral Conduct

- (1) Parties, candidates and members promise to promote free and fair elections and an overall climate of democratic tolerance. In particular, they undertake to:
 - give the widest publicity to these Principles among members and the electorate;
 - promote voter education campaigns;
 - emphasize that voting is secret;
 - fully instruct their candidates and members about these Principles and their responsibilities under them.
- (2) Parties, candidates and members will be condemned, according to the election law and other applicable laws, for any resort to violence or intimidations, from any quarter. In accordance with international election principles, parties, candidates, and individual citizens shall be strictly prohibited from carrying or displaying weapons of any kind at public meetings, rallies or other campaign activities.
- (3) Parties, candidates and members will take every step to eradicate all forms of electoral fraud before, during and after election day.
- (4) No party, candidate or member may offer any reward or bribe in exchange for any electoral favor, or as inducement to commit any act against a political party or other candidate.
- (5) Subject to international standards of freedom of expression, parties, candidates and members will not make defamatory or inflammatory allegations concerning any other party, candidate or person.
- (6) Parties, candidates and members will not remove, deface, or over-poster the posters or other campaign materials of other parties or candidates. Nor will they plagiarize their symbols, colors, or acronyms, or use graffiti.
- (7) Parties, candidates and members will do nothing to impede the right of any party to hold public rallies or meetings, to have access to all voters, to conduct voter education, raise funds, canvass the electorate, and otherwise clarify issues and seek support.
- (8) With respect to the role of women, the parties will:
 - facilitate full participation by women in all electoral matters, and:
 - ensure free access by women to all campaign events;
 - respect the right of women to communicate freely with political parties and candidates;
 - generally, refrain from forcing women to support a particular political party or candidate, or to engage in, or refrain from engaging in, any political activity otherwise than in accordance with their free choice;
 - support the universal concept of one-person-one-vote, and discourage proxy voting.
- (9) Parties shall be encouraged to participate in round-table meetings to discuss the implementation of these Principles, at any time, at the regional or national level. Such meetings will be organized during the election campaign by the NEC and its subsidiary bodies, as set out in the election law, and Electoral Regulations and Procedures. Civic organizations supporting election integrity may attend and monitor these meetings.
- (10) In accordance with the law on the election of members of the National Assembly income, sources of income and parties' campaign expenditures will be recorded in accounting books. The NEC may inspect the accounting book at any time, if necessary.
- (11) Parties, candidates and members shall accept the final outcome of elections lawfully administered and supervised by the National Election Committee.

Leaders of all parties duly registered for the elections of 27 July 2003 are invited to append their signatures to these Principles.

Leaders of all parties undertake to respect these Principles during the election campaign process, on election day, during counting, and upon the official announcement of the election outcome.

Leaders of all parties agree to actively participate to promote these Principles among their candidates and members and electorate throughout the country.

Leaders of all parties agree to make sure that these Principles are fully implemented.

The National Election Committee shall take steps to encourage all concerned parties to respect and implement these Principles in a strict and effective manner.

Signed in Phnom Penh: June 24, 2003
National Election Committee,
President
Signed
Im Sousdey

Have seen and agreed to abide by the above principles:

1. President or representative of National Solidarity Party
Signature: *Signed* Date: June 24, 2003
Name: Sim Sokhom
2. President or representative of Molinaka and the Khmer Freedom Fighter Party
Signature: *Signed* Date: June 24, 2003
Name: Khlok Prithy
3. President or representative of Khmer Helps Khmer Party
Signature: *Party withdrew* Date:
Name:
4. President or representative of Cambodia Free Independent Democratic Party
Signature: *Signed* Date: June 24, 2003
Name: Thoeung Thol
5. President or representative of Rice Party
Signature: *Signed* Date: June 24, 2003
Name: Chea Ratha
6. President or representative of Khmer Front Party
Signature: *Refused to sign* Date:
Name: Suth Dina
7. President or representative of Khmer Angkor Party
Signature: *Signed* Date: June 24, 2003
Name: Pov Phorn
8. President or representative of Cambodia Development Party
Signature: *Signed* Date: June 24, 2003
Name: Mao Bora
9. President or representative of Hang Dara Democratic Movement Party
Signature: *Signed* Date: June 24, 2003
Name: Seang Seng Hok

10. President or representative of Khmer Soul Party
Signature: *Absent* Date:
Name:
11. President or representative of Khmer Democratic Party
Signature: *Signed* Date: June 24, 2003
Name: Hor Meng Heang
12. President or representative of Khmer Citizen's Party
Signature: *Signed* Date: June 24, 2003
Name: Keo Sophun
13. President or representative of Indra Buddha City Party
Signature: *Refused to sign* Date:
Name: Luy Chanphal
14. President or representative of Khmer Nation Party
Signature: *Absent* Date:
Name:
15. President or representative of Norodom Chakrapong Proloeuung Khmer Party
Signature: *Signed* Date: June 24, 2003
Name: Pov Sith
16. President or representative of Khmer Unity Party
Signature: *Signed* Date: June 24, 2003
Name: Bou Sarin
17. President or representative of Cambodian People's Party
Signature: *Signed* Date: June 24, 2003
Name: Men Sam On
18. President or representative of Khmer Children Party
Signature: *Signed* Date: June 24, 2003
Name: Ty Chhin
19. President or representative of Cambodian Women's Party
Signature: *Signed* Date: June 24, 2003
Name: Noun Bunna
20. President or representative of Sam Raisy Party
Signature: *Signed* Date: June 24, 2003
Name: Kong Korm
21. President or representative of Liberal Democratic Party
Signature: *Signed* Date: June 24, 2003
Name: Tep Vichet
22. President or representative of Farmer's Party
Signature: *Signed* Date: June 24, 2003
Name: Pun Pisith
23. President or representative of FUNCINPEC
Signature: *Signed* Date: June 24, 2003
Name: Nhek Bun Chhay

Copies sent to:

- Cabinet of the Royal Palace
- Cabinet of the Senate
- Cabinet of the National Assembly
- Cabinet of the prime minister
- Constitutional Council
- Ministry of National Defense
- Ministry of Interior
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Ministry of Information
- Provincial/Municipal governors
- Provincial/Municipal Election Commission
- Signing Political Parties
- UNDP
- EU
- National and International Election Observers
- Document – Chronicle

If you would like to report on how political parties, candidates, or government officials are implementing or violating this Code of Conduct call one of the following numbers to record your observation:

012 452 844 012 459 792 012 410 836 012 452 793 012 410 837 012 457 982

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