

U.S. Department of State

Diplomacy in Action

Visa Restrictions on Individuals Responsible for Undermining Cambodian Democracy

Press Statement

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As the White House stated in a November 16, press statement, the United States is taking concrete steps to respond to the Cambodian government's actions that have undermined the country's progress in advancing democracy and respect for human rights. These actions—which run counter to the Paris Peace Agreements of 1991 that ended a tragic conflict and accorded the Cambodian people democratic rights—include the dissolution of the main opposition political party and banning of its leaders from electoral politics, imprisonment of opposition leader Kem Sokha, restriction of civil society, and suppression of independent media.

In direct response to the Cambodian government's series of anti-democratic actions, we announce the Secretary of State will restrict entry into the United States of those individuals involved in undermining democracy in Cambodia. In certain circumstances, family members of those individuals will also be subject to visa restrictions.

We call on the Cambodian government to reverse course by reinstating the political opposition, releasing Kem Sokha, and allowing civil society and media to resume their constitutionally protected activities. Such actions could lead to a lifting of these travel restrictions and increase the potential for Cambodia's 2018 electoral process to regain legitimacy.

We will continue to monitor the situation and take additional steps as necessary, while maintaining our close and enduring ties with the people of Cambodia.

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