

## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **EU Election Observation Mission Issues Recommendations On Elections**

**Phnom Penh, 14 October 2008** – The Chief Observer of the EU Election Observation Mission to Cambodia 2008, Mr Martin CALLANAN, presented his final report on Cambodia's recent National Assembly elections at a press conference today. The report contains concrete recommendations to ensure that Cambodia's election framework is brought in line with international standards for democratic elections. On Monday the Chief Observer had already presented his report to the Minister of Foreign Affairs H.E. Mr HOR Namhong, and to the Chairman of the National Election Committee (NEC), H.E. Mr IM Suosdey. During his current visit, Mr Callanan will also meet with leaders of all political parties represented in the National Assembly and representatives of Cambodian civil society to present the report and its recommendations.

"This report marks the end of our mission," said Martin Callanan, "but its recommendations should also constitute a starting point. Some of our key recommendations concern the need to ensure the independence and impartiality of Cambodian election authorities and the Cambodian media. The report also includes recommendations for improving the legal and regulatory framework for elections, as well as voter registration and voter education. I thank our Cambodian friends for their invaluable contributions to our work and I urge them to continue building the institutions of Cambodian democracy."

The report contains detailed recommendations including, notably, the following:

- The government of Cambodia must take steps to ensure that the NEC operates as a fully independent institution, to enhance its credibility and acceptance among the political parties and electorate.
- The legal and regulatory framework, particularly the NEC Regulations and Procedures, should be simplified and consolidated.
- The use of the Form 1018 should be abolished prior to any future election.
- The Ministry of Interior should increase the ID card distribution rate and improve monitoring of the process.
- The Village Chiefs should not be allowed to take a major part in the distribution of Voter Information Notices (VINs).
- The Government of Cambodia and the NEC should launch a consultation process on options for simplifying and improving the voter registration procedures.
- A free and impartial media environment must be enacted through the establishment of an independent broadcasting regulatory authority.
- Government institutions, including NEC and civil society organisations should prioritise comprehensive and targeted civic education initiatives.

The full report will be made available online at [www.eueomcambodia.org](http://www.eueomcambodia.org). The EU EOM will host a seminar with election stakeholders on 15 October, to discuss its findings and recommendations.

#### **Background**

For more information on the EU Election Observation Mission see: [www.eueomcambodia.org](http://www.eueomcambodia.org).

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