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H.E. Ambassador and Head of Mission of the Kingdom of Cambodia to the EU
Mr. Thireak Chea

Brussels, 22 February 2018

Dear Ambassador,

I would like to bring to your attention the case of Cambodian human rights defender and Boeung Kak Lake community representative, Ms. Tep Vanny, whose appeal has been rejected by the Supreme Court on 7 February 2018, according to information released by The Observatory for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders. She was accused of “intentional violence with aggravating circumstances”, in response to her participation in a peaceful protest in 2013 calling for the release of activist Yorn Bopha.

Ms Tep Vanny has long been prominent figure in the fight against corruption and the defence of civil and human rights in Cambodia. She has campaigned for land rights, justice for the murder of political analyst Kem Ley and the release of other human rights defenders such as Ny Sokha, Yi Soksan, Nay Vanda, Ny Chakrya and Lim Mony; her unjust and arbitrary imprisonment is connected to her human rights activities and participation in weekly peaceful demonstrations that date back to 2012, and not to any incitement of violence as indicated by the sentence.

In this regard, I urge the Cambodian authorities to:

- i. guarantee, in all circumstances, the physical and psychological integrity of Ms. Vanny and all other human rights advocates and civil rights defenders in Cambodia;
- ii. immediately and unconditionally release her and all other persons arbitrarily detained for their human rights activities;
- iii. stop all forms of harassment, namely at the judicial level, against all human and civil rights defenders in order to ensure they can continue their work without interference or fear of reprisals;

*Best regards,
Ana Gomes*

Ana Gomes
Member of the European Parliament