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Statement


**CCIM calls for a complete drop of all charges against
two former RFA reporters**

Phnom Penh, Cambodia – August 22, 2018, The Cambodian Center for Independent Media (CCIM) welcomes the release on bail of two former reporters of Radio Free Asia (RFA Khmer service), Mr. Oun Chhin and Mr. Yeang Sothearin on August 21, 2018. While CCIM considers this as a positive move, CCIM strongly believes that more could have been done. CCIM therefore would like to calls for a complete drop of all charges against Chhin and Sothearin.

Chhin and Sothearin were arrested and taken into custody on November 14, 2017. The two were charged with espionage and production of pornography. After spending nine months on murky pre-trial detention without hearing, no evidence has been found against the two. Clearly, the charges are unrealistic.

The court on August 21, 2018 ruled to released Chhin and Sothearin on bail. Chhin and Sothearin, however, are still being closely monitored by the court and the two must periodically report to the police, while their confiscated passports are granted back yet. Obviously, Chhin and Sothearin can be re-arrested at any time.

CCIM firmly believes that the court decision to release Chhin and Sothearin evidently vindicates that the two are absolutely innocent. CCIM is strongly convinced that Chhin and Sothearin should have been granted complete freedom as ordinary citizens.

As a civil society organization working to promote freedom of press, self-expression and independent media, CCIM would like to appeals for a complete drop of all charges against Chhin and Sothearin. 

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