



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Celebration of the World Press Freedom Day 2015
Journalism and Access to Information
4th May 2015
Cambodiana Hotel**

World Press Freedom Day was proclaimed at the UN General Assembly in 1993 following a recommendation adopted at the 26th session of UNESCO's General Conference in 1991. It is a day to encourage and develop initiatives in favor of press freedom, to assess the state of press freedom worldwide, and to remind governments of the need to respect their commitment to freedom of expression.

The theme of the World Press Freedom Day 2015 in Cambodia is *Journalism and Access to Information*. This year's celebration aims to provide a forum for media representatives and practitioners to discuss the challenges journalists face in accessing public information. What provisions in the upcoming Access to Information legislation can assist journalists to conduct their work thoroughly, independently, and in a timely manner? What practical barriers are currently in place that hinder journalists' reporting practices? A session will be dedicated to reflections on free speech and the recent tragic events of Charlie Hebdo.

The Day will be celebrated in cooperation with the United Nations Office of High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), Cambodian Communication Institution (CCI), Club of Cambodian Journalists (CCJ), Cambodian Association for the Protection of

Journalists (CAPJ), and the Department of Media and Communication (DMC) at the Royal University of Phnom Penh.

Access to information and freedom of expression cannot wait until sustainable development is achieved, as they play a catalytic role in rendering governments more open, transparent and accountable. A joint message from Ban Ki-Moon, Secretary-General of the United Nations, Zeid Ra-ad Al Hussein, United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, and the Director-General of UNESCO, Irina Bokova, on the occasion of the World Press Freedom Day underscores the importance of free press and high-quality journalism in meeting the developmental challenges of the 21st century: “For peace to be lasting and development to be sustainable, human rights must be respected. Everyone must be free to seek, receive and impart knowledge and information on all media, online and offline. Quality journalism enables citizens to make informed decisions about their society’s development.”

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