



63rd regular session of the United Nations Human Rights Council
Interactive Dialogue with the Special Rapporteur the situation of human rights in Cambodia

3 October 2026

Oral Statement

The International Bar Association's Human Rights Institute welcomes the Special Rapporteur's recent visit to Cambodia and his report.

We are concerned at the ongoing criminal prosecution of journalists in Cambodia for legitimate reporting . The recent decision of the Cambodian Supreme Court to uphold the 14-year prison sentences imposed on journalists Phorn Sopheap and Pheap Pheara exemplifies this pattern. Such sentences are manifestly disproportionate and have a severe chilling effect on media freedom in Cambodia.

These intimidatory use of the law is exacerbated by physical threats against journalists, restrictions and censorship of the media. These measures violate journalists' right to freedom of expression and as well as international human rights standards. This has a wider impact on human rights more broadly in Cambodia: without a free independent media, human rights violations go unreported and unaddressed.

We are further concerned by the wider erosion of the rule of law, including the lack of an independent judiciary, attacks on lawyers, limits on civil society and the silencing of political opposition.

We call on Cambodia to immediate and unconditional release of all journalists arbitrarily detained.

And to this Council to keep monitoring the erosion of the rule of law in Cambodia, including attacks on media freedom.

This statement was delivered by:

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