



## សម្ព័ន្ធអង្គការសង្គមស៊ីវិលប្រឆាំងអំពើពុករលួយ

### Coalition of Civil Society Organizations Against Corruption

**Statement by the Coalition of Civil Society Organizations Against Corruption  
During  
The Press Conference on The Million Signatures Campaign Update  
June 09, 2008  
Phnom Penh Hotel**

A five-month period of the campaign by the Coalition of Civil Society Organizations against Corruption, to collect 1 million signatures/thumbprints of voting-age Cambodians who want to demonstrate their will and their demand for the immediate passage of the international standard anti-corruption law, is generally over since the end of last April.

However, the petition remains open to all Cambodians of voting-age who have not yet signed or given their thumbprints and wish to do so. The number of signatories subsequently continues to grow. Though the growth is not as substantial in number and as fast as it was before, when we sent out network members directly to the local areas to do the work, this continued increase of people's support comes out of their strong commitment and at their personal expense.

Therefore, this presents a strong evidence of serious concern of Cambodian people about corruption in the society that has happened almost everywhere and every time, without any sign to believe that it will be reduced unless serious actions are taken and proper mechanisms are in place to address it.

The failure for more than a decade to pass an international standard anti-corruption law to tackle corruption worries more and more citizens and civil society, especially about the efficiency and the speed of poverty alleviation, since it is clearly understood that, as long as corruption is as pervasive as it is today, the economic growth, - regardless of how great it is- would mean nothing but to benefit and enrich only a handful of people and not the majority who are mostly the poor. This does not take into account other socio-economic implications and other forms of social injustice.

The civil society has been actively playing their role by educating citizens about what corruption is and its impact to their daily lives and their children's future, and in return, generating active support and participation from the citizens, as explained by the huge number of people signing and giving thumbprints to the Anti-Corruption Petition. However, education alone is not efficient to combat corruption. To be efficient in the fight against corruption, a systematic measure must be taken and that means an effective law must be in place in order to prevent corrupt acts, and to carry out punishment so that people would be scared of taking risk of committing such illegal acts.

The Coalition of Civil Society Organization against Corruption, which is composed of 49 local, national, and international organizations, has therefore initiated the Million Signature Campaign with two main objectives:

- To help the Royal Government of Cambodia conduct public awareness/education on the forms of corruption, their impact on the present society and the future, and how reduced corruption will benefit them and their children...etc.
- To collect their signatures/thumbprints to be the evidence of their voices, as Cambodian voters, to the National Assembly and to the Government about their concern and their demands for a real commitment by the Government and the National Assembly to tackle corruption by setting up immediately a serious and systematic mechanism to address corruption issues, and especially the enactment of the international standard anti-corruption law in a few months of the new government's mandate.

In the meantime, the civil society has also observed that the present draft anti-corruption law has not yet met international standards to which the Government agreed with the donors during the Consultative Group meeting in December 2004. Therefore, the Coalition would like to urge that the Government and the National Assembly review and address the following points before passing the Law:

1. **Definition of Corruption**
2. **The independence of the Anti-Corruption Body, esp. The Secretary General's executive power**

