

សម្ព័ន្ធភាពដើម្បីសេរីភាពបញ្ចេញមតិ នៅកម្ពុជា

**Alliance for Freedom of Expression
in CAMBODIA (AFEC)**



PRESS INFORMATION

King of Cambodia showed solidarity with persecuted civil rights activists – AFEC has handed over petition with 127,154 thumbprints

Phnom Penh, January 23rd, 2006

The Alliance for Freedom of Expression in Cambodia (AFEC) expresses its gratitude to His Majesty King Norodom Sihamoni for having given a sign of solidarity to the human rights defenders, labor unionists, journalists and politicians that were accused of criminal defamation by the Government of Cambodia. Today, a delegation of the AFEC was received in the Royal Palace for handing over a petition with 127,154 thumbprints that demands the withdrawal of all lawsuits or judgments that are aimed at silencing the Cambodian civil society. "We wanted to meet the King because he is the highest guarantor of the fundamental political freedoms enshrined in the Cambodian Constitution. His Majesty spoke with me for about 15 minutes. His Majesty expressed the deep concerns of the King Father, of the King Mother and of his own. He said that his heart is with the activists and their families and that he will bring the petition to the Royal Government", reported Ou Virak, General Secretary of the AFEC after the audience by the King.

The AFEC is a network of now 27 Cambodian human rights organizations, labor unions, institutions that strife for a democratic development, youth movements and other groups. Since November 2005 the AFEC has distributed more than 100,000 Yellow Ribbons that symbolize the need and the support for Freedom of Expression in Cambodia. This campaign will be continued as long as the violations of fundamental civil and political rights are going on in Cambodia.

For all questions and interviews please call Ou Virak, General Secretary of the AFEC, Tel. 012-404051.

Contact address:

Secretariat of the Alliance for Freedom of Expression in Cambodia, c/o Cambodian Center for Human Rights (CCHR),
42, Street 242, Sangkat Chak Tomuk, Khan Daun Penh, Phnom Penh, Cambodia.
Phone: (855-23) 991 844, Fax: (855-23) 218 843, E-mail: afec@cchr-cambodia.org