



## **PRESS RELEASE**

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### **ILO STATEMENT ON APPEAL HEARING FOR MURDER OF CHEA VICHEA**

GENEVA (ILO News) – The ILO issued today the following statement concerning a decision of the Cambodian Appeals Court on 12 April 2007:

“The International Labour Organization (ILO) expresses its grave concern regarding the decision of the Appeals Court on 12 April to uphold the convictions against Born Samnang and Sam Sok Oeun.

These two men have been imprisoned for the murder of the Cambodian trade union leader Chea Vichea since January 2004 based on confessions allegedly elicited under police torture, allegations which neither the Appeals Court nor the State Prosecutor challenged.

In 2004, immediately following the ruthless assassination of Chea Vichea the ILO intervened with the Government urging it to establish an independent and transparent investigation.

In 2006, in the light of important allegations that the investigation of the murder and the prosecution of Born Samnang and Sam Sok Oeun were marked by numerous procedural irregularities, the ILO Committee on Freedom of Association expressed its serious misgivings as to the regularity of the trial and deplored the absence of information from the Government on any attempts to carry out a thorough, independent and impartial inquiry to determine the perpetrators and the instigators of the crime. It urged the Government to reopen the investigation into Chea Vichea’s murder.

The ILO expresses its deep concern at the lack of Government action in this regard, despite repeated appeals, and at the injustices observed in the proceedings before the Appeals Court which upheld the convictions of Born Samnang and Sam Sok Oeun.

The ILO deplores the absence of clarity around the murder of Chea Vichea which can only promote an atmosphere of impunity that reinforces a climate of violence and insecurity extremely damaging to the exercise of trade union rights and basic civil liberties and calls upon the government to take immediate steps to rectify this injustice through a full, independent and impartial inquiry.”