



Seattle City Council

January 7th, 2016

Ministry of Interior
275 Preah Norodom Blvd.
Chamkarmon, Phnom Penh, Cambodia 12301

RE: Cambodian Families Being Broken Apart & Displaced By US Deportation

Dear Honorable Officials of the Cambodian Ministry of Interior,

As Seattle City Councilmembers, we are writing in support of the Cambodian-American community's request to revise the current Repatriation Agreement between Cambodia and the US. The current Repatriation Agreement has created an inhumane deportation system that has had a traumatic impact on Cambodian American people, families, and communities.

The US-Cambodia Repatriation Agreement runs contrary to the federal government's stated priority to prioritize their deportation actions towards individuals with *serious* criminal convictions. Unfortunately, under this agreement, people are being deported who have only minor convictions or who have fulfilled their sentencing requirements for convictions that are decades old. Cities and other local jurisdictions have a keen interest in reducing deportations that result in harm to children with full citizenship who are left behind in our cities when their parents are removed for minor or old offenses, leaving them with no parental guidance or care and a highly unstable financial and social situation.

The City Council passed Resolution 31539 "prioritizing family unity and urging President Obama and Congress to replace the enforcement oriented federal immigration system with an immigration policy that keeps families together and respects the right of all workers to support their families." In this resolution the Seattle City Council specifically called for the suspension of further deportations of people who do not have serious criminal convictions.

As a supporter of Cambodian communities in the US, we urge you to meet with Cambodian-American community members and advocates in Phnom Penh sometime between January 9th and January 25th, 2016. This would be a critical opportunity to hear directly from community leaders and consider the specifics of their proposal to revise the Cambodia-US Repatriation Agreement.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Councilmember Kshama Sawant in black ink.

Councilmember Kshama Sawant

Handwritten signature of Councilmember M. Lorena González in black ink.

Councilmember M. Lorena González

Handwritten signature of Councilmember Lisa Herbold in blue ink.

Councilmember Lisa Herbold

Handwritten signature of Councilmember Debora Juarez in black ink.

Councilmember Debora Juarez

City Hall, 600 Fourth Avenue, Floor 2, PO Box 34025, Seattle, Washington 98124-4025
(206) 684-8888 Fax: (206) 684-8587 TTY: (206) 233-0025

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