



Registered in British Columbia, LICADHO Canada provides critical services to communities on the front lines of the Cambodian land-grabbing crisis in meaningful collaboration with LICADHO - *Cambodian League for the Promotion & Defense of Human Rights*.

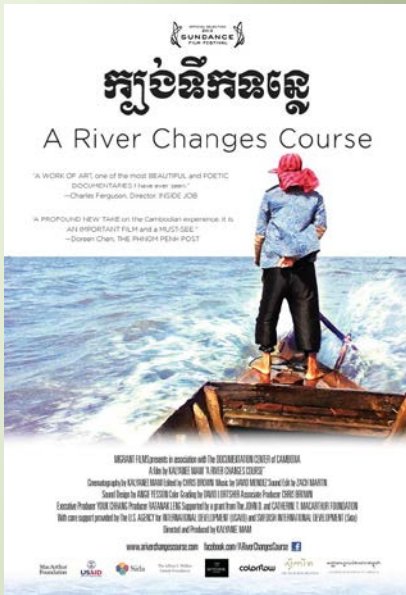
THE WHOLE WORLD IS WATCHING

January/February 2013

"In a time of universal deceit, telling the truth is a revolutionary act." – George Orwell.

Since LC's last newsletter, the international spotlight has been on Cambodia not only due to the funeral of the King Father Sihanouk but particularly for unjust judicial sentencing, creative community actions, Korean style dancing, revealing documentaries, and [Avaaz](#) petitions! Articles have been written in the [Global Post](#) and the [Telegraph](#), a scathing update in the Human Rights Watch [World Report](#), and a Cambodian documentary won Grand Jury Prize at [Sundance film festival](#) – the whole world IS watching!

"(Government) Crimes have targeted journalists, opposition party organizers, labor leaders, activists, and intellectuals—with the dead numbering in the hundreds. The crimes, and impunity for them, have characterized Hun Sen's rise and hold on power, and the surge of human rights violations in 2012 confirmed that he considers their perpetration as fundamental to his rule and to preventing popular and democratic challenges." **HRW Report Cambodia 2012**



A River Changes Course wins World Cinema Grand Jury Prize at the 2013 Sundance Film Festival.



Over 200 people gathered outside the National Assembly for a "Gangnam Style" action.

Gangnam Style Dancing to End Evictions

As part of Human Rights Day celebrations held between December 8-17, Cambodian organisers across the country gathered signatures on t-shirt petitions under the unifying slogan "We All Need Justice & Freedom!". This was part of a covert operation to do a "Gangnam-Style" action outside the National Assembly on Dec. 17, 2012. Over 200 organizers & volunteers [danced](#) to a land-rights themed rendition of "Gangnam-Style" in front of the National Assembly wearing the t-shirts which had been endorsed by over 11,000 Cambodians. Participants submitted the t-shirt petitions alongside over 40,000 signatures calling for an end to evictions in Cambodia coordinated by Amnesty International volunteers living in France, Germany, New Zealand, and South Korea.

Born Samnang and Sok Sam Oeun Cruelly Scapegoated Once Again

On Dec. 27, human rights were dealt another blow when an unexpected decision by the Appeals Court overturned a Supreme Court decision from Dec. 2008 to release Born Samnang and Sok Sam Oeun and instead upheld their original conviction of 20-years for the murder of trade union leader Chea Vichea. The Supreme Court had ordered a further investigation into the killing amid extensive evidence of their innocence, however the appeal hearing offered no new evidence of Sam Oeun and Samnang's guilt - as expressly ordered by the Supreme Court - and all the evidence from the defence was ignored.

The International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH/OMCT) sent an [open letter](#) to Prime Minister Hun Sen saying *"It is widely acknowledged that their original convictions were based on coerced confessions and plagued by political interference, intimidation of witnesses, and other violations of international standards, which led to the decisions by the Supreme Court to release both men from prison in December 2008."*



Sok Sam Oeun (front) and Born Samnang (behind) led out of the Appeal Court. (Picture courtesy of The Phnom Penh Post)

LC/LICADHO and partners will restart a campaign for the two innocent men and support their grieving families who have been re-traumatized by the verdict. *“It’s an absolute disgrace,”* said Bradley Cox, the director of [Who Killed Chea Vichea](#). *“Shame on the Cambodian government for this travesty of justice, and shame on us for allowing it to happen over and over and over again.”*

Amnesty International Declare Bopha and Sakmony Prisoners of Conscience

After 113/114 days respectively in pre-trial detention Yorm Bopha and Tim Sakmony finally had their trials on Dec. 26 and 27. Hundreds of supporters were blocked from accessing the court by over 100 mixed police including riot intervention police. Both women were [denied justice](#).

Sixty-four year old, Tim Sakmony was found guilty of fraud but was handed a 6-month suspended sentence and released that evening. The following day the Phnom Penh Municipal Court convicted Yorm Bopha on a trumped up charge and sentenced to three years imprisonment. The real cases against Bopha and Sakmony were crystal clear; they and the rest of the community land activists are thorns in the side of the authorities. They needed to be silenced.

In a [statement](#) LICADHO Director Naly Pilorge noted *“With this three year sentence comes yet another stark warning to grassroots activists who dare to challenge the powers that be – shut up or we will lock you up”*.

LC/LICADHO Milestone!

LC is thrilled to announce that in January 2013 LC/LICADHO YouTube page showed more than half a million views from 174 countries!

When [LC YouTube](#) channel started in 2007 most videos were produced by a filmmaker partner in cooperation with LC. In 2009, LC and LICADHO began producing all our own videos tools with editing support by WITNESS and in cooperation with community activists.

LC sends a big thank you to all friends who spend time sharing our video links to social media sites and to others helping to raise Cambodia’s international profile and calls out for justice and freedom in Cambodia. This milestone of success is shared with all of you!

You Can Help Too!

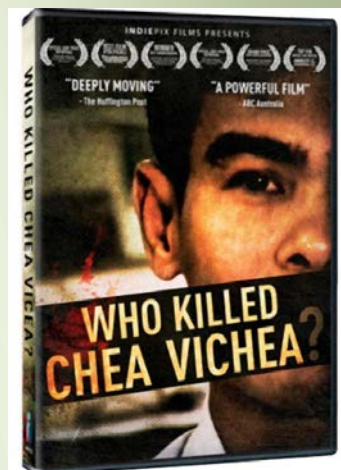
Educate, advocate and/or donate. Those are the best ways to support Cambodians struggling for rights and justice at this time.

LC has super cool partners; donate to your area of interest (unions, students groups, communities, HR groups/LICADHO), sign up for their/our newsletters, participate in petitions, ‘like’ LICADHO’s [Facebook](#) page, follow us on [Twitter](#), spread the word back at your office, write LC a letter, visit LC’s website, watch LC/LICADHO [videos](#).

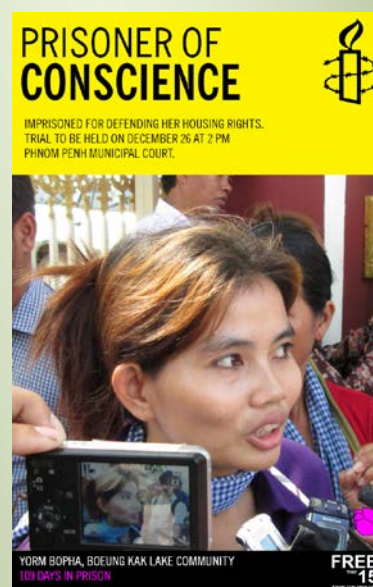
There is so much YOU can do to show Cambodia that you are paying attention.

www.licadho-cambodia.org

www.licadhocanada.com



This documentary investigates the 2004 assassination of Cambodian union leader Chea Vichea and the framing of two innocent men by police.



Prior to Bopha’s arrest she was threatened, harassed, intimidated and blatantly told by police she would be “in trouble soon”.



Please sign Avaaz [petition](#) to investigate land-grabbers in Cambodia and remove their trade privileges.

