Washington D.C., 8 May 2013

**MAIN POINTS RAISED BY CAMBODIA’S OPPOSITION LEADER SAM RAINSY (\*)**

1. Cambodia’s political landscape has dramatically changed with the recent formation of a united democratic opposition. The country, where the same (former communist) party and the same prime minister (Hun Sen) have been in power for more than 30 years, is ready for a democratic change. National elections are scheduled for 28 July 2013.

2. My gratitude goes to U.S. President Obama and Secretary of State Clinton as well as U.S. Congressmen (\*\*) for their statements calling for election reforms and the safe return of opposition leader Sam Rainsy, in line with recommendations from the United Nations.

3. Based on NDI findings (\*\*\*), the way the elections are currently organized is unacceptable: Voter disenfranchisement (10-15% of electorate) to reduce votes for the opposition; ghost or phantom voters (10% of voter list) to inflate votes for the ruling CPP; voter impersonation (absentees’ names used by illegitimate voters recruited by the CPP and representing up to 20% of electorate).

4. An election reform associated with a political compromise and leading to the adoption of appropriate technical measures is still possible if international pressure is maintained/increased until voting day. This could imply a postponement of the election for a few months.

5. If there is no reform/change whatsoever before voting day, political consistency requires the following measures: Condemnation, delegitimization and isolation of the Hun Sen regime; sanctions not hurting ordinary people; international support for democratic opposition. Such prospects of international reaction should push Mr. Hun Sen to implement the U.N. recommendations now.

6. When prospects for free and fair elections make a regime change unavoidable, negotiations would be held to establish a transitional period and to allow a safe and honorable way out for Mr. Hun Sen. This could imply: Coalition government between CPP and CNRP with relevant guarantees based on past experiences; political amnesty; moratorium on the implementation of the anti-corruption law for a period of time; joint control of the armed forces.

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(\*) Sam Rainsy is the president of the Cambodia National Rescue Party (CNRP) representing the country’s united democratic opposition whose two components collected 31 percent of the popular vote at the local elections in June 2012, despite the fact that those elections were rigged.

(\*\*) Senators: Patrick Leahy, Joseph Lieberman, Barbara Boxer, Richard Durbin, John McCain. Members of Congress: Jim McDermott, James McGovern, Laura Richardson, Michael Honda, Raul Grijalva, James Moran, John Olver.

(\*\*\*) Voter Registry Audit conducted by the Washington-based National Democratic Institute for International Affairs.