



# CAMBODIA-AMERICA ALLIANCE

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**\*\*\*For Immediate Press Release\*\*\***

## **CAA Does Not Support a Complete Embargo or Sweeping Sanctions on any Cambodian Industry**

The Cambodia America Alliance recognizes the importance of a healthy labor market and striving garment industry in Cambodia. As the Kingdom enters what may be their Industrial Revolution, any attempt to disrupt commerce to an extreme capacity such as a complete embargo on the garment industry will prove to hurt the growing labor force that is the backbone of Cambodia's working class who for the first time in decades, experiencing some economic growth and a different quality of life.

There is still much more work to be done as corruption is rampant and labor rights are limited by a repressive government. Hundreds of thousands of Khmer workers still flock to other countries and dependent on their labor market for survivability and livelihood. Migrant workers who are fortunate to have proper documentation may find employment in other countries and those who are not are forced to cross borders illegally to perform menial jobs in order to support their families at home. Regardless, as we've seen in Malaysia, China and Thailand, Khmer workers are not afforded the same protection or unaware of their laws and many succumb to extreme abuses. Fact is many Khmers leave their families behind because of an unstable and insufficient labor market in Cambodia.

The Hun Sen regime's failure to responsibly address institutionalized corruption has stalled reforms and diminished opportunities for progress. Their repressive policies and crackdown on opposing ideas, views and beliefs has drawn ire and condemnation from the international community. However, we should not punish those who are trying to make an honest living to better their situation and lives which is exactly what a complete embargo on the garment industry would unfortunately accomplish.

Our initiative with U.S. lawmakers is to have specific sanctions targeting business owners and individuals who are complicit in human rights abuses, labor violations, unfair labor practices and corruption. It is not within CAA's intent or purpose to promote a blanket policy that would harm the innocent and disrupt any progress law abiding businesses make on behalf of the Kingdom. We will continue to fight for a better Cambodia and lobby Congress to push for specific sanctions, but we will also encourage the U.S. to promote and help develop honest businesses.

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