



NYC Bar presses PM on reports of lawyer intimidation, threats
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July 30, 2009

Hun Sen told to investigate reports that lawyers are being threatened with criminal charges.

The New York City Bar Association has urged Prime Minister Hun Sen to investigate reports that lawyers defending opposition members and calling for an investigation into corruption allegations at the Khmer Rouge tribunal are being intimidated and harassed.

In a letter addressed to the prime minister dated July 17 and obtained by the Post Wednesday, the association outlined concerns that attorneys working in Cambodia, including three international lawyers, were being threatened with criminal charges.

"The Association is alarmed by recent criminal charges levied against attorneys in Cambodia following their public commitments to provide legal services to certain individuals," said Patricia Hynes, the association's president.

"We urge you to take appropriate action to guarantee that those lawyers ... are not subjected to threats, intimidation, prosecution or disciplinary action for practicing their profession," she added.

The association said the lawyers facing particular harassment included those "offering legal assistance to opposition members of the National Assembly and to indigenous communities disputing land claims", as well as international lawyers representing former Khmer Rouge leader Nuon Chea at the Khmer Rouge tribunal who have repeatedly called for an investigation into kickback allegations at the court.

"We ... request that you immediately investigate these reports of intimidation and harassment to ensure that all lawyers are free to represent their clients," Hynes said.

Defense team 'troubled'

Andrew Ianuzzi, a legal consultant for the Nuon Chea defense team, said he hoped the prime minister responds to the letter, which he said addressed serious claims.

"Like the New York City Bar, we're troubled by the recent increase in the use of the Cambodian judiciary ... to silence legitimate criticism of the current government," he

said.

Council of Ministers spokesperson Phay Siphon said Wednesday that he had not seen the letter and was unable to comment.