



**Translation of letter sent by:** Mr Hans-Joachim Fuchtel, Parliamentary State Secretary at the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development

To: Mr Uwe Kekeritz, Member of the German Bundestag

Dated: 27 November 2014

**Your written question No.11/138 of 20 November 2014**

Dear colleague,

Regarding your question,

*“How does the Federal Government view the dramatically worsened human-rights situation in Cambodia, against the background of the most recent wave of arrests of land-rights and human-rights activists, along with opposition politicians, the sentencing of seven land-rights activists to a year’s imprisonment for obstructing traffic and the murder of the journalist Taing Try while investigating illegal logging; and what moves will Dr Friedrich Kitschelt, State Secretary at the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, make during his visit at the end of the month to improve the situation?”*

my answer is as follows:

The human-rights situation in Cambodia has not improved over the last few months. Amongst other things, freedom of opinion and assembly remain restricted.

The most recent arrests were the subject of a démarche by the EU ambassadors on 19 November 2014 to Cambodian Interior Minister Sar Kheng.



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Conflicting information is available regarding the circumstances leading to the murder of journalist Traing Try in the province of Kratie in October 2014 and regarding his role in connection with the illegal logging which he was investigating. According to human-rights organisations, the possibility that Traing was pursuing interests beyond those of journalistic research cannot be ruled out. Three suspects (two police officers and one former member of the armed forces) have been arrested and charged with murder.

The State Secretary at the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, Dr Friedrich Kitschelt, is in Cambodia from 25 to 28 November 2014. One of the main topics on this trip is Germany's development-policy commitment in the area of rural development. He will engage in an intensive political dialogue regarding land reform in Cambodia, particularly with Minister Im Chhun Lim from the Ministry of Land Management, Urban Planning and Construction and the Secretary of State there, Sar Sovann. Furthermore, State Secretary Dr Kitschelt will be accompanied during his visit by Mr Chhieng Yanara, Secretary General of the Council for the Development of Cambodia and Minister attached to the Prime Minister. The current human-rights situation will be emphasised in discussions with all interlocutors during the visit.

In addition, the German side will address fundamental challenges in the area of good governance, democratisation and achievement/protection of human rights in the framework of the political dialogue during the German-Cambodian intergovernmental consultations planned for 2 December 2014.



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German development-cooperation measures in Cambodia are designed to ensure that cooperation with both governmental and non-governmental actors encourages and supports improvements in all the areas mentioned.

Yours sincerely,

Sgd. Hans-Joachim Fuchtel