

### Box 11: The Logging Syndicate's Next Big Score

Breakthroughs such as the 2002 moratoria on cutting in logging concessions and transporting logs show that outside pressure can be effective in persuading the Cambodian government to act against illegal logging, even when the interests of politically influential groups are at stake. Unless the pressure is maintained, however, friends and relatives of the prime minister's family are rarely kept waiting long for the next lucrative deal. Seng Keang Company's rapid evolution from logging concession subcontractors to plantation developers following the moratoria is a case in point. Pheapimex's shift in focus from logging concessions to economic land concessions (ELCs) is another. (Pheapimex is profiled in Chapter IV.)

A little over a month after the shootings in Tumring, the Seng Keang Company began efforts to acquire an ELC inside the Prey Long forest.



Seng Keang request for a new economic land concession in Prey Long

Seng Keang wrote a letter to the governor of Kompong Thom Province requesting the assistance of "officials of concerned agencies to conduct a survey on 9,800 ha of degraded forest in Kleng, Koul and Tumring communes, Sandan District, Kompong Thom Province for investment and planting of fast-growing trees over a 70-year period in

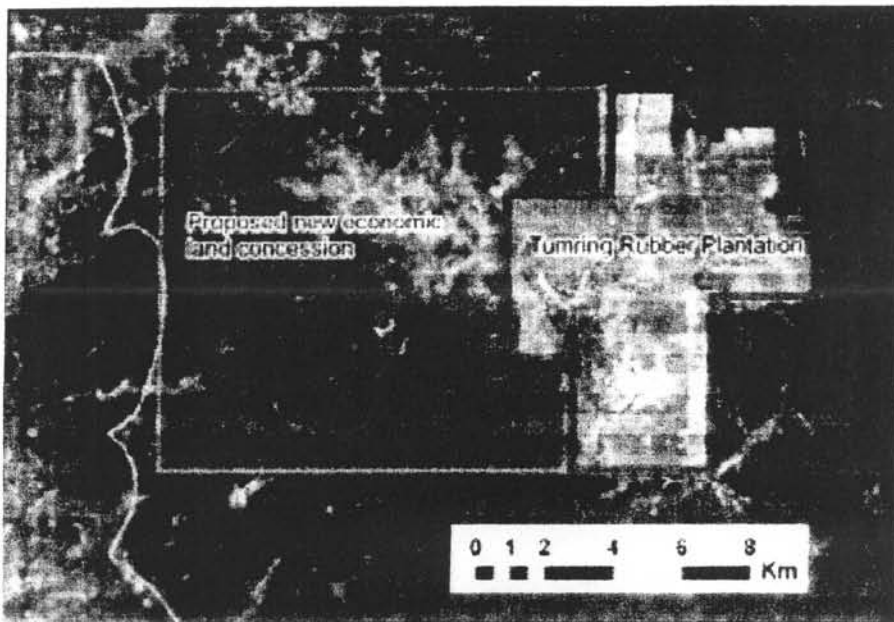
order to produce raw materials".<sup>232</sup> The letter goes on to describe the investment as "aimed at contributing to the restoration of the forests and development in Cambodia, and poverty reduction and the creation of employment for communities and people living in the area". Within a week of receiving her proposal, the Kompong Thom authorities had formed a commission of Forest Administration staff and other officials to survey the 9,800 ha of land. In September 2005 the commission went with Seng Kok Heang to inspect the site and found that it contained both commercially valuable evergreen forest and areas claimed by local residents as community forests.<sup>233</sup>

In September 2006 Global Witness learned from two well-placed sources that the Forest Administration had received proposals from Dy Chouch and Seng Keang to clear up to 10,000 ha of land in Preah Vihear Province for a new rubber plantation.<sup>234</sup> The land under consideration is reportedly not densely forested. However, it is said to be close to the boundaries of the Kulen Prom Tep Wildlife Sanctuary and the Cherndar Plywood forest concession. If these reports are correct, the ELC's proposed location would create opportunities for illegal logging in nearby valuable forests and then laundering of the timber as a by-product of the plantation development, just as Seng Keang Company has done in Tumring.

In March 2007 an official informed Global Witness that Dy Chouch and his cousin Hun To had requested two 2,000 ha sites as economic land concessions (ELCs) in Preah Vihear.<sup>235</sup> These proposed ELCs were described as being north of the road between the villages of Sra Em and Choam Khsan in Choam Khsan District, close to a Royal Cambodian Armed Forces base. Another well-placed source confirmed that Hun To had submitted

proposals for two new ELCs but said that they each covered 1,000 ha rather than 2,000 ha. This second source provided Global Witness with documents showing that the proposed ELCs are inside the Preah Vihear Protected Forest, in the An Ses area close to the border with Thailand.<sup>231</sup>

At the time this report was published it was not clear how many of these proposals for new ELCs had received official approval.



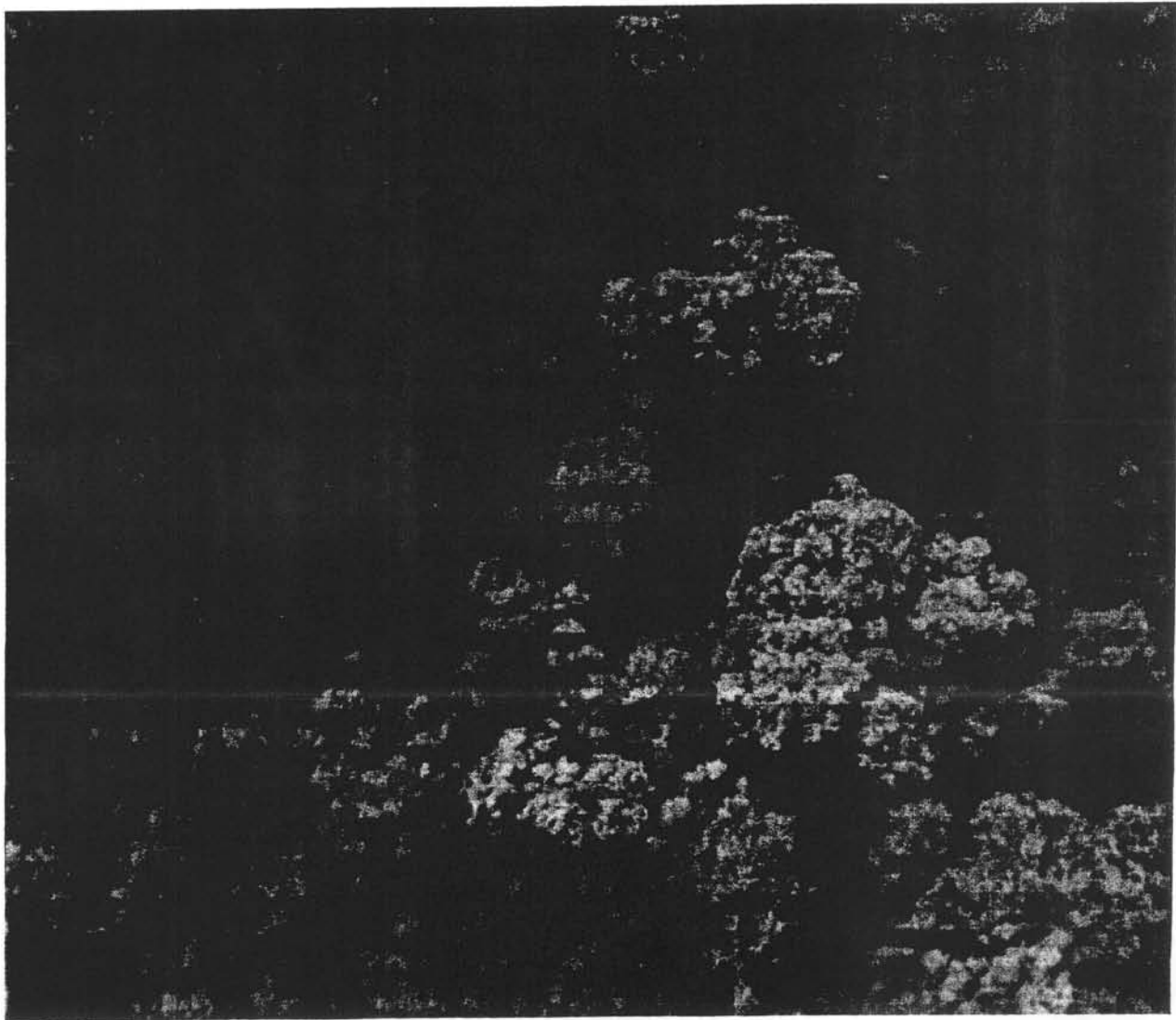
At the same time, there are indications that the government continues to view Prey Long as a timber quarry. According to NGO workers, from 10 to 13 January 2007, local officials and representatives of the Vietnam Rubber Plantation Company, some of them dressed in Vietnamese military uniform, carried out a survey in three communes – Sandan, Dong Kambet and Mean Rith – all of which are heavily forested. They did not carry out any consultations with local people; however a witness to their discussions reported that the firm was studying an area of 40,800 ha.<sup>236</sup> A Vietnamese general accompanying the party informed villagers that the company's proposed plantation concession covered 200,000 ha.<sup>236</sup>

The same sources report that the Vietnamese company returned to Prey Long on 21 February.<sup>236</sup> The firm is said to have requested that officials help it overcome local opposition to its proposed activities.<sup>236</sup> District and commune officials then convened a public meeting about the plantations on 23 February and brought with them a contingent of military police and soldiers. At this meeting the officials told villagers

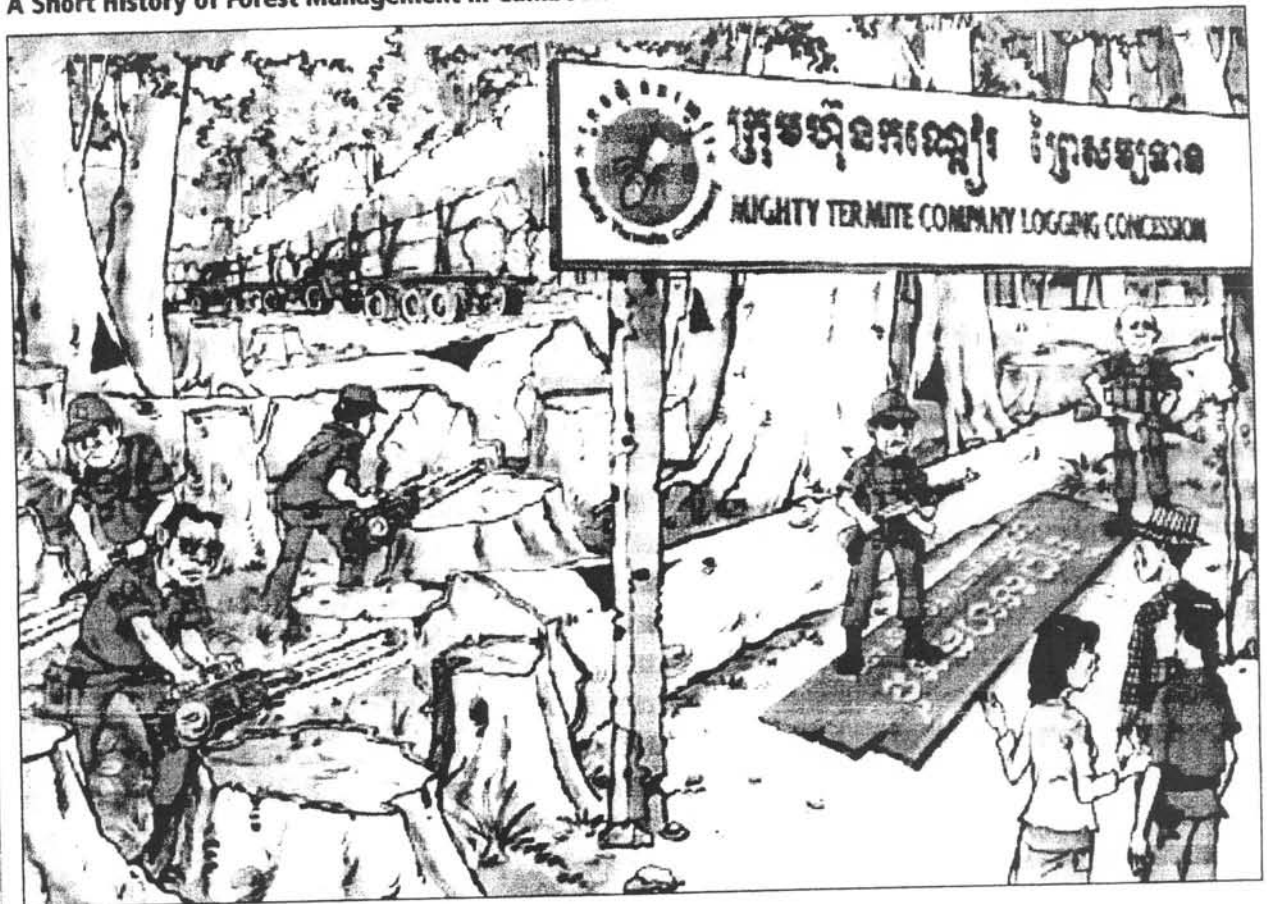
that the forest belonged to the government, that the government could do what it wanted with the forest and that local people should not cause any trouble.<sup>236</sup> One community leader is reported to have been threatened with arrest for encouraging people to oppose the Vietnamese company's plans for the area.<sup>236</sup>

Global Witness has written to Chan Sarun to ask him about the plans for a new rubber plantation in Prey Long but has not yet received a reply. The limited information available thus far does not point to a direct connection between the Vietnam Rubber Plantation Company and Seng Keang Company. However, past experience suggests that a deal to clear-cut tens of thousands of hectares of Cambodia's most valuable forest would almost certainly involve timber barons with close ties to senior officials in Phnom Penh.

The report thus far has focused primarily on illegal logging by members of elite families, with particular reference to Prey Long. The next chapter looks more closely at the role played by those state institutions responsible for stopping them.



# A Short History of Forest Management in Cambodia



1. The Logging Concession System







3. The 'Restructuring' Process





## CHAPTER III: INSTITUTIONALISED CORRUPTION IN PREY LONG

Dy Chouch, Seng Keang and Khun Thong have been able to log Prey Long with impunity because of the high levels of corruption within those state agencies responsible for combating forest crime. As set out in Article 78 of the Forest Law, these institutions include the Forest Administration (FA), police, Royal Cambodian Armed Forces and local government.

In forest crime hotspots like Prey Long, impunity for illegal loggers and corruption in the state apparatus feed off each other in a vicious circle. Logging by a group of 'untouchables', such as Dy Chouch, Seng Keang and Khun Thong, creates opportunities for state agencies to make money by 'protecting' their operations. These opportunities attract more officials to the area, many of whom pay their superiors in order to make the transfer. As well as accepting handouts from the principal timber barons, these corrupt officials have an incentive to tolerate other illegal logging ventures by less powerful groups, because this enables them to extort extra money. The corruption and the illegal logging both escalate and the assault on the forest intensifies. According to one military officer, Kompong Thom Province is seen as a choice posting for civil servants and members of the security forces because of the scope for making money from the illegal timber and bush meat trades.<sup>237</sup>

The consequence in Prey Long has been a concentration of officials who have a remit to tackle forest crime. This is particularly pronounced in the case of the Forest Administration and the military police.



After the inauguration of the rubber plantation kicked off a frenzy of illegal logging, the FA maintained not one, but two offices (division and triage) in Tumring. At the same time, the military police established a string of new checkpoints around the plantation and along roads running out of the area. Both institutions quickly proved adept at uncovering cases of forest crime in the locality and identifying those responsible.<sup>238</sup> However, through an inverted system of governance they used this capacity as basis for extortion rather than law enforcement.

This corrupted system is not run by rogue elements, however. Members of the FA and the military police in Kompong Thom describe paying a high proportion of their illegal earnings to their superiors at either national or provincial level.<sup>239</sup> The fact that a generous cut of the profits flows up the chain of command, rather than remaining in the pockets of the officials on the ground, suggests that both institutions exercise considerable control over their staff and the acts of extortion that they commit.

The losers in all this are those whose livelihoods depend on the diminishing forest reserves and those least able to afford payments to corrupt officials, who extort not only from illegal loggers, but also those exercising their legal rights as forest users. In areas like Prey Long, the vast majority of the local population falls into both categories.

### 1. Forest Administration

As the institution directly responsible for managing the exploitation and policing of one of Cambodia's most valuable natural resources, the FA offers significant opportunities for corruption.

As with other government agencies responsible for enforcing the law or collecting fines or taxes, notably the police, customs, and the Ministry of Economy and Finance Department of Taxation, the FA tends to attract applicants intent on enriching themselves through abuse of public office.<sup>240</sup> Entry into and promotion within the FA is dictated largely by payment rather than competence.<sup>241</sup> This 'market' system of job-buying has the effect of sidelining those staff with greater professional integrity and rewarding those most adept at generating money.

The pricing of jobs within the FA is determined not only by rank, but also by geographical location. Outside of its Phnom Penh headquarters, the more expensive positions are those in areas where there is a rich and accessible forest resource or along key transport arteries for the timber trade, such as major roads and rivers. According to one insider, positions in Kompong Thom command the highest price of any province, followed by those in Siem Reap, Kandal and Koh Kong provinces.<sup>242</sup> Box 12 describes the FA job auction organised by the Minister for Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries Chan Sarun and FA Director



## Box 12: Chan Sarun and Ty Sokhun's Forest Administration Job Auction

Up until 2003 the institution responsible for exploiting and regulating Cambodia's production forests was MAFF's Department of Forestry and Wildlife (DFW). The 2002 Forest Law called for DFW's reconstitution as a more autonomous body however, and in August 2003 MAFF Minister Chan Sarun issued a *prakas* converting DFW into the FA. The new FA featured a hierarchical structure incompatible with that of other state institutions, blurring the lines of accountability between FA staff and other government officials. The World Bank observed that:

"By having frequently deviated from forest boundaries in favour of administrative boundaries, the new FA structure has created a worst of both worlds situation where local FA staff are internally accountable to national supervision in respect of areas otherwise locally administered. Moreover, the FA structure has been devised in isolation from serious examination of budgetary realities and other constraints. This will leave operational units of FA chronically short of resources with inadequate oversight, support and a lack of accountability."<sup>243</sup>

While the restructuring of DFW may have had its limitations as an exercise in administrative reform, it appears to have made a lot of money for both Chan Sarun and Ty Sokhun. Global Witness has interviewed four individuals with close links to the FA who have provided credible accounts of the manner in which the two men took the opportunity to auction off most, if not all the jobs in the FA. Based on the information provided by these sources, it appears that the main elements of this process were as follows:

- Any DFW staff member wanting to become the head or deputy head of an FA office at any of the four new hierarchical levels – inspectorate, cantonment, division or triage – had to pay a bribe. This applied even to officials seeking a position equivalent to the one they already held under the DFW structure.<sup>241</sup>
- The bribes for the positions at the upper three levels of inspectorate (4 offices), cantonment (15

offices) and division (55 offices) were paid to Chan Sarun. Bribes for positions at Triage level (170 offices) were paid to Ty Sokhun.<sup>244</sup>

- Each FA office chief has at least one deputy (in practice there are sometimes several). These deputy chief positions were also put up for sale. This means that there may have been upwards of 500 FA jobs for sale at the time of the restructuring.
- The prices of the jobs varied according not only to rank, but also location. Jobs affording the greatest opportunities for extortion cost more than equivalent posts elsewhere.<sup>241</sup>
- Thus while one insider has put the standard cost of a head of cantonment post at less than US\$10,000, Global Witness has received reports of cantonment chiefs paying far more than this for the same rank.<sup>241</sup>
- In the words of another source "The people interested in the positions spend around US\$5,000 to US\$15,000 for the highest rank; for other positions they need to spend around US\$5,000 to US\$8,000. To get these positions they approach different people, first in their department and after that they go to chiefs at the ministry level."<sup>242</sup>
- The lowest estimate Global Witness has received for any position is US\$2,000 and the highest US\$30,000. Global Witness does not have any figures for the price of jobs in the thirteen departments at headquarters level, however.<sup>241</sup>

Given the variations in the pricing it is hard to know precisely how much Chan Sarun and Ty Sokhun made from these transactions. Based on the available data it seems likely that each received a total running into the hundreds of thousands of dollars or even more. MAFF officials estimated Chan Sarun's share at around US\$2.5 million.<sup>245</sup>

The cost of their new positions has left many FA staff heavily in debt, creating an even greater incentive for them to use their positions to extort money. Indeed the job auction may be the single biggest factor driving the corruption prevalent in FA operations across the country.<sup>246</sup>



The FA has expanded its on-the-ground presence across Cambodia since its restructuring in 2003. This has increased its efficiency in detecting illegal activity. It has not brought about a reduction in forest crime however, as apprehension of perpetrators is generally followed by demands for payment rather than referral to the courts.<sup>247</sup>

After purchasing positions, FA officers must still make regular payments to their superiors in a 'pyramidal' system whereby revenues generated at the lowest echelons are fed upwards and accumulate at the top of the institution's hierarchy. Inside sources estimate that FA field offices typically pay around 50% of their illicit income to their patrons and superiors within the FA. This may take the form of regular monthly payments or periodic 'gifts'. The remaining 50% is distributed internally, sometimes according to what some FA officers term the 3-2-1 system. This involves dividing the money into six parts, with the station chief retaining 3/6, the deputy keeping 2/6 and junior officers receiving the remaining 1/6.<sup>248</sup>

#### *Relations with the logging syndicate*

The fact that Dy Chouch, Seng Keang and Khun Thong were able to undertake the largest illegal logging operation in Cambodia under the noses of the branch of government most responsible for preventing forest crime speaks for itself. Rather than enforcing the law, the Forest Administration instead protected the Seng Keang Company operation by projecting a false impression of the situation in Prey Long – one in which there was no illegal logging bar low-level infractions by unruly peasants.<sup>249</sup> Global Witness investigations in the area, including several interviews with FA officials, revealed that the logging syndicate engineered this outcome through a winning combination of coercion and bribery.

After a group of FA staff and military police confiscated a truck carrying luxury timber for Seng Kok Heang in late 2004, some of them were dismissed or transferred out of the area. Early in 2005, Seng Keang and her entourage visited the FA office in Kompong Thmor, which is on the main route for timber traffic going south from Tumring.<sup>250</sup> Having thanked the FA staff for looking after her business, she informed them that both her logging operations and the Chup Rubber Plantation Company belonged to the family of Prime Minister Hun Sen. According to Seng Keang this meant that her activities were legal and that any FA officers interested in keeping their jobs should not interfere.<sup>250</sup>

The message appears to have sunk in. In separate interviews with Global Witness in 2005, two Forest Administration staff in Kompong Thom Province stated that the FA was fully aware of Seng Kok Heang's illegal logging in Prey Long. According to these officials, they could not stop him because he represented Seng Keang, who had the support of Hun

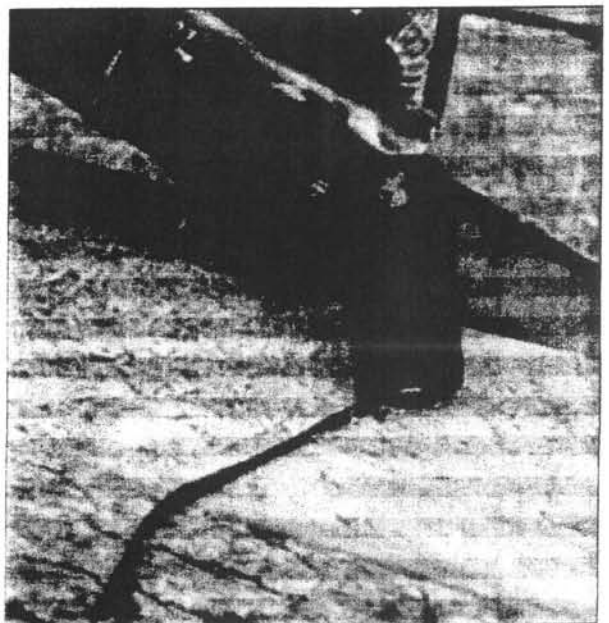
officers afraid and so they turned a blind eye to his activities.<sup>251</sup>

FA complicity in the logging syndicate's activities may not be solely driven by fear, however. Officials in Tumring claim that in 2005 the FA office *sangkat* (triage) office in Khaos village was receiving a monthly allowance from Seng Keang of several hundred dollars, for "food, accommodation and fuel costs".<sup>252</sup> Local officials also claimed that Seng Kok Heang was paying the FA staff additional sums according to the amount of wood that the Seng Keang Company factory was processing each month.<sup>253</sup> They told Global Witness that, through these payments and additional money levied from other illegal loggers, the FA office enjoyed a monthly income of several thousand dollars.<sup>253</sup>

#### *Other sources of income*

Global Witness gained a further insight into the FA's revenue generation through interviews with logging crews in Prey Long in November 2005. One of these groups described how their boss paid US\$100 per month per chainsaw to the Forest Administration *phnaik* (division) office in Tumring and additional bribes to the FA depending on the volume of timber that they cut. The loggers added that FA staff periodically came to the forest to forewarn them if people from Phnom Penh were coming to visit the area.<sup>254</sup>

Global Witness has found additional evidence of FA officials taking a direct role in illegal logging in Prey Long and extorting money not just from timber traders, but also from local people engaged in legitimate activities.<sup>255</sup> As described in Box 13, the FA is regarded as the most predatory of several institutions practicing this kind of extortion.



Illegal logging operation outside the Tumring plantation boundaries, November 2005. The loggers told Global Witness that they paid the



## 2. Military Police

Cambodia's military police are also known as the gendarmerie. They comprise a paramilitary force of nearly 8,000.<sup>256</sup> National Military Police Director General Sao Sokha is former bodyguard of Hun Sen who trained in Vietnam during the 1980s.<sup>257</sup> He reports on a day to day basis to the Royal Cambodian Armed Forces command and the Ministry of Defence. On politically sensitive issues he takes his orders from Hun Sen directly, however.<sup>258</sup>



Sao Sokha is something of a high-flier. In December 2006 he was appointed head of the Cambodian Football Federation and in January 2007 he became a four star general. Previous Global Witness investigations have revealed that Sao Sokha is directly involved in the illicit timber trade and that forces under his command are active in illegal cutting, transportation, protection and extortion.<sup>259</sup>

The head of the military police in Kompong Thom Province is Dy Phen, who is the brother of Dy Chouch.<sup>260</sup> Officers under Dy Phen's command are heavily implicated in the activities of Seng Keang Company, which has been known to pay some military police as much as US\$500 per month for their services.<sup>261</sup> Many military police are also active as illegal loggers in their own right. In Prey Long, Global Witness has found Dy Phen's subordinates cutting trees and selling them to the Seng Keang Company sawmill and other timber traders, providing protection services to timber convoys, extorting money, trading wildlife and selling off pieces of forested land.<sup>262</sup>

Like the Forest Administration, the military police rapidly expanded its presence in Prey Long following the establishment of Tumring Rubber Plantation. Sources in the military police claim that Dy Phen purposely created five new posts around Tumring and on roads leading out of the forest in order to make money from illegal timber transports. He placed control of these checkpoints (numbered 601, 603, 102, 104 and B6) in the hands of relatives or close allies, some of whom paid him several thousand dollars for their positions.<sup>263</sup> Local officials told Global Witness that through these new posts and activities such as illegal logging, transporting of timber and smuggling of other



Sao Sokha receiving the Moha Sereiwath medal from Hun Sen, January 2007

goods, Dy Phen was able to earn between US\$10,000 and US\$30,000 per month.<sup>263</sup> Dy Phen is sensitive to scrutiny of these activities. In June 2005 he informed his associates that an unnamed group was spying on his business and offered US\$20,000 to anyone who could get rid of the problem for him.<sup>264</sup>

The table below provides a breakdown of the payments received by just one of Dy Phen's new checkpoints. Checkpoint 102 is located near the base of the 'Hun Sen Trail', which runs from Baksna logging camp south of Tumring to the junction with main roads to Phnom Penh and Kompong Cham. Most of the timber cut in and around Tumring passes along this route. The information comes from interviews with military police officers manning the post. These military police stated that the monthly takings for the post's 'black box' varied from US\$5,500 to US\$10,000. The checkpoint chief, Seong Kim Ran,<sup>265</sup> would then pay his brother-in-law Dy Phen a share of between US\$5,000 and US\$6,000.<sup>261</sup>

### Earnings of military police checkpoint 102

Bribes paid by	By month	By day
Seng Keang	US\$500-US\$750	
Seng Kok Heang	US\$500-US\$750	
El Dara plywood factory management	US\$350-US\$500	
Management of Kompong Thomor sawmill	US\$100-US\$200	
Other timber traders		US\$150-US\$500

### 3. Royal Cambodian Armed Forces Kompong Thom Provincial Military Sub-Operation



Kompong Thom's Provincial Military Sub-Operation has had a close association with illegal logging over several years. Many of those soldiers Global Witness found working with the Seng Keang syndicate or running their own logging operations in Prey Long previously worked as guards or subcontractors for the companies holding concessions in the province: Colexim Enterprise, GAT International, Mieng Ly Heng and Pheapimex-Fuchan.<sup>266</sup>

One example is the activities of a 17-strong unit commanded by a lieutenant colonel and deputy commander of the military sub-operation headquarters named Seng Meas.<sup>267</sup> Seng Meas' role in providing security for Mieng Ly Heng and other concessionaires from the late 1990s enabled him to build a close relationship with Dy Chouch and Seng Keang. After the suspension of the logging concessions and the creation of Tumring Rubber Plantation, Seng Meas and his unit switched to working for the syndicate as suppliers of timber. Their logging operations have centred on the former GAT concession south of Tumring, as well as parts of the Colexim concession to the north and east of the plantation.<sup>268</sup>

Local officials and residents in Tumring interviewed by Global Witness accused the provincial sub-operation soldiers based around the plantation of colluding with the foresters in the extortion of money from small-scale loggers operating in the area. According to these sources, soldiers would seize chainsaws and take them to the FA offices in Khaos where the machines would be impounded until the owner paid a US\$100 bribe.<sup>268</sup>



### 4. Royal Cambodian Armed Forces Military Region II

Military Region II covers four provinces in eastern and north eastern Cambodia and abuts Kompong Thom Province, which falls within Military Region IV. A group of Military Region II troops led by Sath Chantha and Uy Kear has been involved in illegal logging in Prey Long over several years.<sup>269</sup> In 2004 and 2005, Global Witness found evidence of Sath Chantha's involvement in illegal logging in areas west and south of Tumring.<sup>270</sup> Sath Chantha and Uy Kear have previously supplied Dy Chouch, Seng Keang and Khun Thong with logs illegally cut in the Timas Resources concession.<sup>269</sup>

### 5. Military Intelligence

Another branch of the security forces involved in illegal logging in Prey Long is the RCAF military intelligence department, also known as Bureau No. 2. Military Intelligence head Major General Mol Roep<sup>271</sup> is a close ally of Hun Sen whom one political analyst describes as the architect of 'dirty tricks' campaigns against the prime minister's political opponents.<sup>272</sup>

While Military Intelligence plays an important, albeit shadowy role in Cambodian political life, its officers are also involved in various types of organised crime, including illegal logging. Global Witness investigations in Aural Wildlife Sanctuary in 2004 revealed how Military Intelligence operatives ran their own timber trading and extortion rackets. In Prey Long Global Witness found evidence of Military Intelligence illegally logging and selling timber to Seng Keang Company, as well as extorting money from other loggers.<sup>209</sup>



### Box 13: Bearing the Burden of Corruption

*"Law enforcement doesn't discriminate between the company and the villagers. They all have equal rights before the law. We implement the law equally, and there are few checkpoints along the roads in this area."* MAFF Minister Chan Sarun on law enforcement in Prey Long, 2006<sup>144</sup>

In 2005 and 2006 Global Witness interviewed a number of people in and around Tumring about their interactions with those branches of state responsible for combating forest crime. There was a consensus among the interviewees both that corruption was a serious problem and that extortion weighed most heavily on those without the power and connections to resist. Many singled out the Forest Administration as being particularly predatory.<sup>273</sup>

Global Witness interviewed several groups transporting various types of forest products along one of the two logging roads running south from Tumring to Kompong Thmor town. These interviewees



Cart used by wood waste collectors



O'Kampub Ambel Forest Administration and Royal Cambodian Armed Forces checkpoint, September 2006



'Mango tree wood', November 2005

reported encountering between 11 and 20 checkpoints run by FA staff, Royal Cambodian Armed Forces, military police, police and environment officers in the course of a single journey.<sup>273</sup>

Timber traders transporting illegally-logged wood were not the only ones being forced to hand over money. People exercising their legal rights as forest users also reported frequent demands for payment from officials. Carpenters gathering wood waste left behind by illegal logging operations, for example, reported that FA staff "depending on their mood" demanded bribes worth half the value of the wood waste, or alternatively confiscated the material and sold it.<sup>168</sup>

Global Witness visited O'Kampub Ambel, a combined FA and RCAF station identified by the wood waste collectors as one of those they had to pay off. Asked to describe his work, one of the RCAF officers stated that his team never intercepted the trucks carrying wood from the Seng Keang Company factory and only ever stopped *pracheachon* (the people). Asked why, he said that he did not know; he was only following instructions from the FA staff who were not interested in looking at the logging syndicate's trucks.

The soldier was keen to show off the impressive haul of timber that his team had confiscated and stacked within their compound. However, when Global Witness asked permission to photograph a vehicle loaded with luxury grade square logs, the soldier refused, explaining that this wood belonged to him. In separate interviews other soldiers and FA officers working at the O'Kampub Ambel post informed Global Witness that the major timber traders made monthly payments directly to senior FA officials in Phnom Penh and did not need to stop and pay each time they used the road. These interviewees said that their checkpoint still made US\$2,000-US\$4,000 per month through bribes extracted from less well-connected loggers and timber traders.<sup>274</sup>

Further down the same road, Global Witness investigators observed security personnel at a checkpoint near Baksna pull over a line of ox carts carrying dead branches for firewood. Firewood collection is an entirely legitimate activity. As officials questioned the firewood collectors, a convoy of small covered trucks escorted by a pickup and two armed soldiers passed the checkpoint unimpeded. Global Witness staff were later able to inspect a second convoy of these covered trucks as they stopped near Kompong Thmor. Each vehicle was loaded with two metre sections of commercial grade timber, which the convoy supervisor attempted to pass off as "mango tree wood". Soldiers escorting the trucks attempted to photograph members of the Global Witness team who carried out the inspection.



## 6. Police

A Center for Social Development survey of public attitudes towards corruption found that Cambodians rank the police as the third most corrupt institution in the country after the judiciary and customs and taxation authorities.<sup>275</sup> The police are frequently implicated in forest crime and border police units played a lead role in the massive illegal logging of the Virachey National Park in Ratanakiri in 2003-2004.<sup>276</sup> The National Director General of the police is Hok Lundy, a close ally of Hun Sen.

Global Witness investigations in Prey Long have uncovered substantial evidence of police collusion in illegal logging, but also occasional, albeit unsuccessful, attempts to combat forest crime.

In February 2005, Kompong Thom National Assembly member Nguon Nhel<sup>277</sup> designated a special police operation involving 100-200 men under the command of Om Pyly,<sup>278</sup> the deputy provincial police commissioner. This team was tasked with rooting out lawlessness – particularly kidnapping, banditry and illegal logging – across three communes (Baksna, Balaing and Krava) in Baray District, Kompong Thom Province.<sup>279</sup>

Shortly after commencing its operation, Om Pyly's team intercepted a convoy of large green military trucks full of timber at Baksna. A policeman involved in the operation later told other officials and local residents how, within hours of impounding the vehicles, Om Pyly was recalled by his headquarters in Kompong Thom to take a phone call. On returning to Baksna later the same day, Om Pyly explained to his subordinates that the caller was Seng Keang, who had



phoned from Singapore to tell him that she was married to the prime minister's cousin, that all her activities were legal and that Om Pyly should therefore release the trucks. Seng Keang added that she could provide his team a monthly allowance of US\$375-US\$500 to cover their food costs; an offer which Om Pyly accepted. Seng Keang's trucks were allowed to continue their journey.<sup>279</sup>

Local officials and villagers claim that, for the remainder of their four month operation, Om Pyly's group colluded openly with Seng Keang Company and the provincial military sub-operation troops and military police transporting timber out of Prey Long. Some people accused the police of carrying out logging operations themselves and extorting payments from timber traders.<sup>279</sup>



Head of the Cambodian Police General Hok Lundy



Kompong Thom deputy provincial police commissioner Om Pyly. His team was tasked with rooting out lawlessness in Kompong Thom Province



## 7. Local Government

The local authorities in Kompong Thom are heavily complicit in the illegal logging in Prey Long. A close association between local government and logging goes back to the 1980s when some provincial departments owned and operated their own sawmills. In the early



Member of the National Assembly for Kompong Thom Province  
Nguon Nhel

1990s these assets were sold off to well-connected individuals.<sup>280</sup> It remains the case that some senior provincial officials expect to benefit from logging in the province, whether or not the activity is legal.

Kompong Thom National Assembly member Nguon Nhel was the driving force behind the laudable but unsuccessful police operation against illegal logging in the first half of 2005. The parliamentarian's credentials as a defender

of the forests are somewhat tarnished however, by his family's involvement in illegal logging and receipt of corrupt payments. One well-placed local official informed Global Witness that Nguon Nhel's wife, Nhem Sophanny,<sup>281</sup> was receiving monthly payments from military police and Forest Administration checkpoints extorting money from timber traffic.<sup>253</sup> According to residents of Sokchet Commune meanwhile, Nhem Sophanny's brother Nhem Buntha<sup>282</sup>



Sign marking the Pren village Community Forest east of Tumring

is a timber trader responsible for illegal logging of luxury timber in their area.<sup>168</sup>

Nguon Nhel is not the only Kompong Thom National Assembly member whose family are involved in illegal logging, however. Fellow parliamentarian Un Noeung<sup>283</sup> is widely perceived to be the main protector of the Ta Aok sawmill, which is located in Prasat Sambour District between the Mieng Ly Heng concession and Boeung Per Wildlife Sanctuary.<sup>284</sup> This sawmill is run by Men Pha<sup>285</sup> and Chet Ra<sup>286</sup> who are described by industry sources as nephews of Un Noeung.<sup>287</sup> Global Witness has found the Ta Aok sawmill processing illegally-logged wood on several occasions over the past five years.<sup>288</sup>

In conclusion to this section, those arms of the Cambodian state responsible for combating forest crime are well represented in Tumring and the wider Prey Long area. They have been ineffective, however, in thwarting forest crimes by Seng Keang Company and other illegal loggers because so many officials and military officers have a stake in these activities. The following section examines in more detail the operations of one particular Royal Cambodian Armed Forces unit – Brigade 70 – which has been involved in illegal logging not only in Prey Long but across the country as a whole.



Timber trader Nhem Buntha (facing the camera) is the brother-in-law of National Assembly member Nguon Nhel



...which turns out to be the site of a logging operation run by a

## CHAPTER IV: THE BRIGADE 70 CONNECTION

*"On behalf of the Royal Government of Cambodia and myself, may I extend my deep gratitude and appreciation to you all, the officers and soldiers of the Brigade 70 as well as those of the RCAF, for your sacrifices and efforts to overcome all the challenges and difficulties for the cause of national reconciliation and peace for our motherland of Cambodia."* Prime Minister Hun Sen, 2004 <sup>289</sup>

*"Most commanders in Brigade 70 have very good connections with top government officials, [elite] families and police groups. They also have strong connections with all provincial governors, because Brigade 70 provides them with bodyguards and convoy escorts. Brigade 70 has also been involved in protecting illegal activities and has committed serious crimes such as killing, smuggling, illegally arresting people and violating people's personal property."* Former Brigade 70 officer <sup>290</sup>

In the past few years, Hun Sen has expressed strong support for the US-led international 'War on Terror'. This has helped to improve his government's relations with officials in Washington and the Royal Cambodian Armed Forces (RCAF) are now poised to receive renewed training and equipment supplies from the USA. Cambodia's military already benefits from various forms of military assistance from Australia, China, Vietnam and other countries.<sup>291</sup> This foreign assistance risks providing legitimacy to a military apparatus which, as this chapter shows, is heavily

involved in the theft of public assets.

Article 78 of the 2002 Forest Law calls on the security forces to combat forest crime and Hun Sen has praised the army for its presumed role in stopping 'anarchic' logging.<sup>289</sup> At the same time, revenues from the illegal timber trade sustain the military component of Cambodia's shadow state. This is amply demonstrated by the activities of the elite RCAF Brigade 70, which runs an illegal timber and contraband trafficking operation worth between US\$2 million and US\$2.75 million per year. The Brigade 70 case highlights the direct linkage between Hun Sen's build-up of loyalist military units and large-scale organised crime.

### 1. Brigade 70 and the Bodyguard Unit – a Private Army for the Prime Minister

Brigade 70 is a special unit of 2,000 soldiers headquartered in Cham Chao on the outskirts of Phnom Penh. Its commander is Major General Mao Sophan.<sup>292</sup> It acts as a reserve force for Hun Sen's 4,000 strong Bodyguard Unit and Mao Sophan takes his orders from Bodyguard Unit chief Lieutenant General Hing Bun Heang.<sup>293</sup> Hing Bun Heang's commanding officer is General Kun Kim,<sup>294</sup> one of four deputy commanders-in-chief of the RCAF and Hun Sen's chief of cabinet.<sup>258</sup> In January 2007 Hun Sen promoted Kun Kim to four star General, the most senior rank in the Cambodian armed forces.



Brigade 70 insignia



Hun Sen Bodyguard Unit insignia





#### Box 14: General Kun Kim and Lieutenant General Hing Bun Heang

As key lieutenants to Prime Minister Hun Sen, Kun Kim and Hing Bun Heang's responsibilities extend beyond security issues. Kun Kim previously took a close interest in the operations of the Malaysian GAT International logging company, visiting its plywood factory near Sihanoukville and its Baksna logging camp in Kompong Thom on a number of occasions in 2001.<sup>295</sup> Hun Sen cancelled GAT's two concessions in 2002 after Global Witness exposed persistent illegal logging by the company and Kun Kim is now head of a committee to stop illegal clearance of forests.<sup>296</sup>

Hing Bun Heang, meanwhile, was appointed in September 2006 to the position of Supreme Consultant to Cambodia's Senior Monk Assembly, a body established as a 'supreme court' to adjudicate in disputes involving Buddhist monks. The lieutenant general informed journalists that he would be advising the Supreme Monk Assembly on matters relating to conflict resolution.<sup>297</sup>



Kun Kim receiving a fourth general's star from Hun Sen, January 2007



Lieutenant General Hing Bun Heang

In the words of a former member of United Nations Office of the High Commission for Human Rights (UNOHCHR) staff, "The term bodyguard is a misnomer ... the Prime Minister's bodyguard unit is a substantial military elite unit equipped with modern weaponry and many of its members have received special training abroad."<sup>256</sup> The Bodyguard Unit and Brigade 70 are central to Hun Sen's strategy of cultivating special units to protect his interests from potential challengers inside and outside the CPP.<sup>293</sup> The latent threat of violence is integral to the prime minister's hold over the population as a whole, moreover. Hun Sen responds even to muted criticism by declaring that attempts to remove him will cause the country to fall back into conflict and instability.<sup>298</sup> Cambodians take these threats extremely seriously. The fact that the prime minister has developed what is essentially a private army is surely one of the reasons why.

Hun Sen's military capability is rarely commented on by the international community, despite the evident danger that it poses to democracy in Cambodia. It perpetuates a situation in which military units are controlled by individual politicians rather than the state; the same conditions that enabled Hun Sen to unseat his co-prime minister Norodom Ranariddh in a violent *coup d'etat* in July 1997. Human rights organisations accuse Hun Sen's Bodyguard Unit of playing a leading role in mounting this coup.<sup>299</sup>



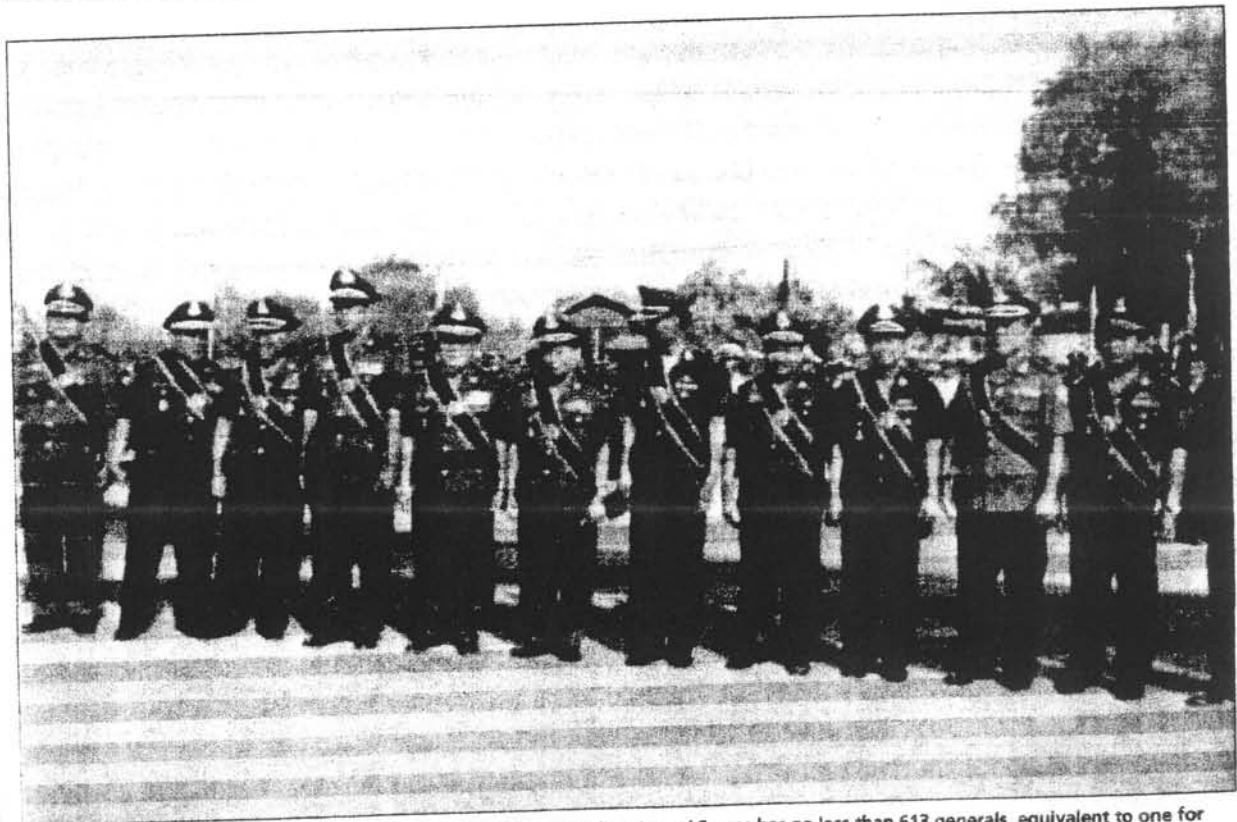
**Box 15: Illegal Logging and Royal Cambodian Armed Forces Loyal to Hun Sen**

Hun Sen's efforts to build up loyalist military units date back to 1994 when disaffected elements within his political party attempted a coup against him. At this point he relocated to the heavily defended 'Tiger's Lair' compound in Takhmau south of Phnom Penh and established the Bodyguard Unit.<sup>258</sup>

According to an analyst of Cambodia's military,

the core forces loyal to Hun Sen include not only the bodyguards and Brigade 70 but also the military police, Military Region II and Military Region III. This analyst describes these units as "a force of last resort" should Hun Sen come under threat.<sup>258</sup> All of Cambodia's five military regions and many of the RCAF's special units are involved in illegal logging to a greater or lesser extent. Those most closely identified with Hun Sen are no exception:

Commanding Officer	Unit	Illegal logging
General Kun Kim Lieutenant General Hing Bun Heang	Bodyguard Unit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Members of the Bodyguard Unit have worked as subcontractors to forest concessionaires responsible for massive illegal logging, notably Pheapimex-Fuchan and Hero Taiwan.<sup>300</sup></li> </ul>
Major General Mao Sphan	Brigade 70	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Brigade 70 operates an illicit timber trafficking service that spans Cambodia and encompasses exports to Vietnam.<sup>301</sup></li> </ul>
General Sao Sokha	Military Police	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The military police are heavily involved in forest crime, notably in illegal logging hotspots such as the Cardamom Mountains and Prey Long.<sup>302</sup></li> <li>As well as running their own logging operations, they provide protection and transportation services to major timber traders and extort money from less well-connected operators.<sup>302</sup></li> </ul>
Major General Choeun Sovantha <sup>303</sup>	Military Region II	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Senior Military Region II officers are involved in illegal logging not only within MR II but also in MR IV.<sup>190</sup></li> <li>Battalion 204, based in Kratie, is responsible for much of the illegal logging in the Snuol Wildlife Sanctuary as well as violent attacks on villagers who have tried to stop them.<sup>304</sup></li> </ul>
Major General Keo Samuon <sup>305</sup>	Military Region III	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>MR III is the driving force behind the illegal timber trade in the Cardamom Mountains, notably Aural Wildlife Sanctuary.<sup>306</sup></li> <li>Much of the money generated through the illegal logging, protection and extortion activities undertaken by MR III soldiers ends up in the pockets of senior commanders.<sup>307</sup></li> </ul>



Senior generals at military parade, January 2007. The Royal Cambodian Armed Forces has no less than 613 generals, equivalent to one for

## 2. Hak Mao

According to a number of Brigade 70 soldiers and other well-placed sources within Royal Cambodian Armed Forces, the driving force behind the brigade's dubious business ventures is an officer named Hak Mao.<sup>308</sup> Global Witness first became aware of Hak Mao in 2004, when investigators discovered that soldiers under his command were transporting illegally-logged timber from Aural Wildlife Sanctuary and other parts of the Cardamom Mountains.<sup>309</sup>

Hak Mao's colleagues claim he began his career running retail outlets in Phnom Penh's Olympic market. In the mid 1990s he purchased the rank of major in Brigade 70 for US\$5,000 and began managing the unit's illicit transportation services.<sup>310</sup> In March 2005 he was promoted to the rank of (one star) Brigadier General.<sup>311</sup>

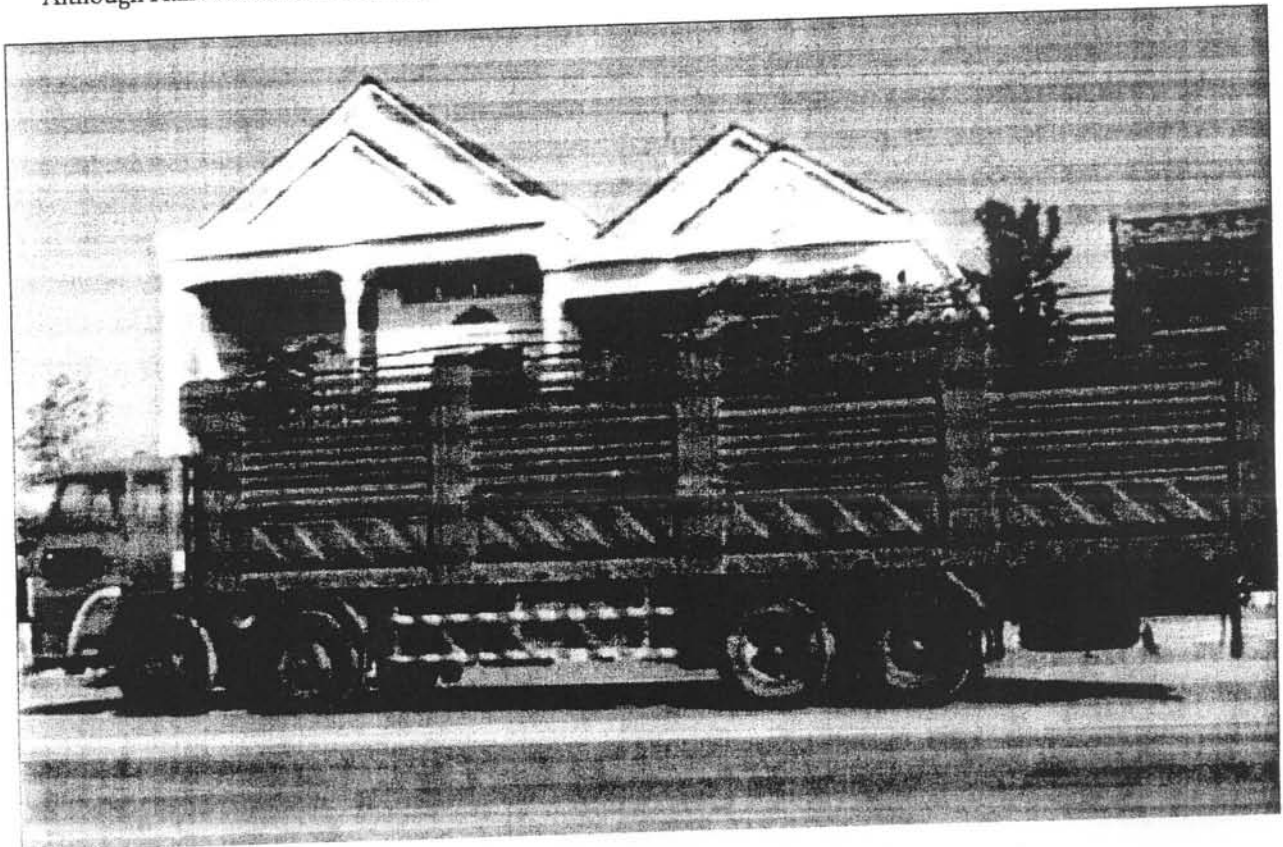
The businesses Hak Mao runs for Brigade 70 are transportation services that use large military green trucks and Brigade 70 soldiers as drivers and guards. Hak Mao personally owns 16 trucks, each capable of carrying 60 m<sup>3</sup> or more.<sup>312</sup> In the second half of 2006, twelve out of his fleet of 16 were in active use.<sup>313</sup> Hak Mao's vehicles sometimes, but not always, display a plaque with the number '70' against their windscreens.<sup>314</sup> Two other groups that use similar vehicles are 'Long Meng', which labels its trucks 'LM' and whose activities are detailed in Box 20, and Mong Reththy Group, whose trucks are tagged with an 'MRT' logo.<sup>315</sup> Mong Reththy is profiled in Box 18. Although Hak Mao is not the overall commander of

Brigade 70, his pivotal role in raising funds gives him a stature that transcends his rank. According to one close associate, he has direct lines of communication with senior officers close to Hun Sen, notably Hing Bun Heang and Sao Sokha, the director general of the military police.<sup>316</sup> This source informed Global Witness that Hak Mao and Hing Bun Heang liaise with Sao Sokha ahead of any major transportation operations so that the military police can ensure that the road is open to the Brigade 70 convoys.<sup>316</sup>

Hak Mao also has close connections with the wife of General Meas Sophea,<sup>317</sup> the commander of the RCAF infantry forces.<sup>316</sup> Mrs Meas Sophea<sup>318</sup> runs her own transportation enterprise and sometimes calls upon Hak Mao's staff to repair her vehicles.<sup>316</sup> She is also a key player in RCAF patronage politics, holding a fearsome reputation among her husband's subordinates on account of her frequent demands for money.<sup>319</sup> RCAF sources have told Global Witness that military officers sometimes bribe Mrs Meas Sophea in order to increase the chances of her husband giving them a promotion.<sup>319</sup>



General Meas Sophea, Commander of the Royal Cambodian Armed Forces infantry. His wife is reported to have close connections with Hak Mao





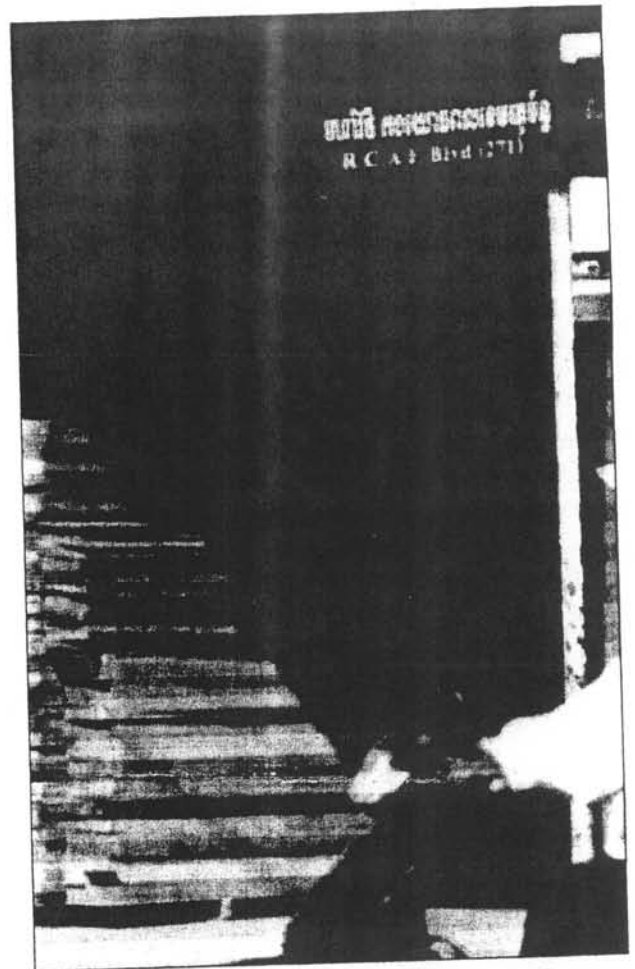
### 3. Timber Trafficking

Under Hak Mao's direction, Brigade 70 acts as a specialist provider of transport and protection services to the most powerful of Cambodia's timber barons. The legacy of Hun Sen's crackdowns on 'anarchic' logging is a streamlined illegal timber sector monopolised by entrepreneurs and kleptocratic networks loyal to him. These different groupings often work closely together; Brigade 70's collaboration with the Seng Keang Company in the illegal logging of Prey Long is just one example.

In the past three years Global Witness has uncovered evidence of Brigade 70 transporting illegally-logged wood from Koh Kong, Kompong Speu, Kompong Thom, Kratie, Mondulhiri, Oddar Meanchey, Preah Vihear and Siem Reap – provinces that span the main forested regions of the country.<sup>315</sup> These timber trafficking activities continue all the year round, through both wet and dry seasons. According to one timber dealer in Phnom Penh, Hak Mao is able to deliver logs of all types according to order.<sup>320</sup> Although some of his commissions involve moving timber directly from the forest to the client, in many cases the Brigade 70 teams first bring the wood to Phnom Penh where they store it temporarily in depots that Hak Mao owns or rents.<sup>321</sup>

Global Witness has identified two of Hak Mao's depots on Street 2002, a small road running off Royal Cambodian Armed Forces Boulevard. Hak Mao employs approximately 60 Brigade 70 soldiers as drivers, guards, mechanics and administrators at these sites and pays their wages out of his own pocket.<sup>311</sup> He delegates aspects of day-to-day management to a colonel named Kong Horm.<sup>322</sup> Hak Mao is also said to own two additional properties close to the Olympic Market; however Global Witness has not been able to confirm this.<sup>311</sup>

The depots on Street 2002 are Brigade 70's main timber storage facilities. Hak Mao owns the compound



Timber stored on Royal Cambodian Armed Forces Boulevard, Phnom Penh

on the north side of the road and rents another on the south side.<sup>323</sup> The road has a public right of way; however Hak Mao has set up a checkpoint manned by Brigade 70 troops and installed a metal barrier to control vehicle access.<sup>324</sup> The depot on the south side of the road is used primarily for larger volumes of commercial grade wood, with the compound on the north side generally holding stocks of luxury grade timber of 100 m<sup>3</sup> or less.<sup>156</sup>



### Box 16: The Royal Cambodian Armed Forces Get a Helping Hand from the US Government

The US government suspended military assistance to Cambodia in the wake of the July 1997 coup. Since then, RCAF has continued to operate more as an extended organised crime syndicate than as a defence force. However, a spokesman for the US Embassy in Phnom Penh informed Global Witness in March 2007 that the Cambodian military was now eligible for direct US funding, because Cambodia had signed an Article 98 agreement with



Will US taxpayers be buying Brigade 70 more trucks like these?

In the second half of 2006, Hak Mao was using seven out of his 12 active vehicles for transporting timber.<sup>313</sup> Based on surveillance, interviews with Brigade 70 officers and accounts from people living around Hak Mao's compounds, Global Witness estimates that these seven trucks were all making an average of three round trips each week.<sup>326</sup> Each vehicle's capacity is around 60 m<sup>3</sup>, indicating that the fleet was collectively transporting an average of approximately 1,260 m<sup>3</sup> per week.<sup>315</sup> If legally harvested and taxed at the US\$54 per

the US – in other words a commitment not to send US nationals to the International Criminal Court – and because it had improved its performance in tackling human trafficking.<sup>325</sup>

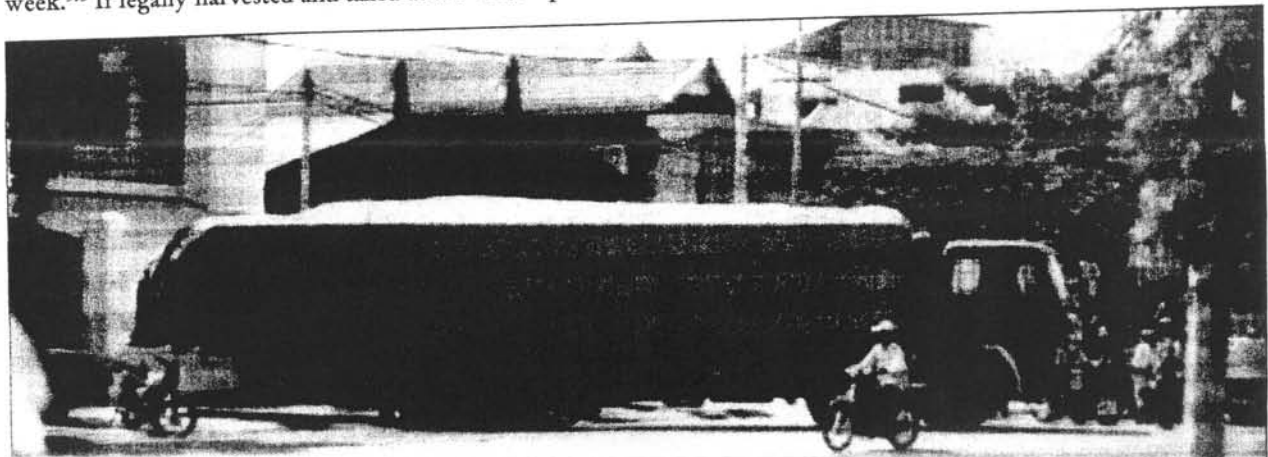
Other factors that may have influenced the change in policy include Hun Sen's cooperation in the 'War on Terror', US competition with China for influence in mainland Southeast Asia, and US firm Chevron's imminent exploitation of a large share of Cambodia's offshore oil deposits.

So far, the US government has committed around US\$1 million in assistance to the Cambodian military in fiscal year 2006 and projects a further half million dollars for 2007.<sup>325</sup> While these sums may not be especially large by international standards, they are highly significant in political terms; conferring legitimacy on an institution which is integral to Hun Sen's hold on power.

According to the US Embassy, just under a third of the funds committed in fiscal year 2006 will be used for trucks, spare parts and training.<sup>325</sup> Whether Brigade 70, which makes particularly heavy use of trucks in its trafficking operations, will be receiving some of the new American vehicles is not clear. The embassy says that it has not yet decided which military units will be benefiting. It insists, however, that the US government will not be supporting units or individuals that have committed gross human rights violations.<sup>325</sup>

cubic metre rate applied to grade II wood, this volume of timber would net the Cambodian treasury around US\$3.5 million per year. As it is, the profits are split between timber traders and Hak Mao.

The rates Hak Mao charges his clients for transporting timber vary according to the length of the journey. A source in Brigade 70 reports that for collection of timber in more remote provinces, such as Koh Kong, Pailin, Preah Vihear and Ratanakiri, the standard rate is US\$1,500 per truck per journey.



Transportation from Kompong Thom, by contrast, may cost only US\$700.<sup>327</sup> These fees do not include the costs of fuel or food for the one driver and two guards assigned to each truck, for which the client has to pay additional charges. Assuming an average return of US\$1,100 per truck per journey and seven trucks in operation, timber-related activities could be netting Hak Mao approximately US\$23,100 per week or around US\$1.2 million annually.

An integral part of the service that Hak Mao provides is preventing timber confiscation by law enforcement agencies. Brigade 70 trucks bringing timber from Kompong Thom typically have an escort of soldiers in one or two pickups.<sup>156</sup> Within Phnom Penh, meanwhile, Global Witness investigators have observed Brigade 70 trucks moving timber between locations at night accompanied by armed motorcycle outriders.<sup>156</sup> The escort teams act as a deterrent and, when required, negotiate payments to checkpoints along the road, in order to ensure that the trucks do not have to stop. They budget for these payments at US\$10-US\$20 per checkpoint.<sup>311</sup>

Hak Mao often smoothes the path of his timber convoys through the use of illegal permits signed by senior military officers.<sup>328</sup> Permits of this type are one of the main tools of the trade for Cambodia's major timber dealers. They generally take the form of a document that authorises illegal logging activities and bears the signature of politicians or generals who have no jurisdiction over the forest sector. Their purpose is to invoke not a law but the name of somebody powerful. One such case involving Hak Mao and Commander-in-Chief of the Army General Pol Saroeun<sup>329</sup> is outlined below. Police interviewed by Global Witness reported that on occasions that they had intercepted Brigade 70 trucks transporting timber, the drivers claimed they were following mission orders from General Sao Sokha of the military police, Lieutenant General Hing Bun Heang of the Bodyguard Unit, RCAF head of procurement General Moeung Samphan,<sup>330</sup> or Major General Mao Sophan of Brigade 70.<sup>328</sup>



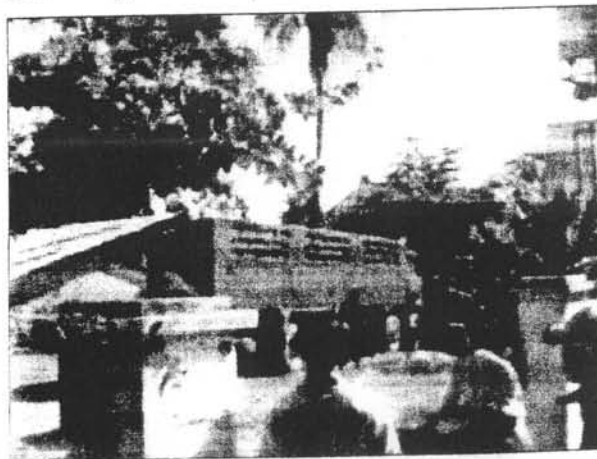
Hak Mao's staff claim that they transport timber throughout Cambodia with impunity except for parts of the Cardamom Mountains where international NGOs support law enforcement teams of Ministry of Environment rangers, Forest Administration officials and military police. These teams have previously impounded Brigade 70 trucks carrying illegally-logged wood and Hak Mao has experienced difficulties securing their release.<sup>311</sup>



General Moeung Samphan

Overall, such cases are the exception rather than the rule, however, and Brigade 70 trades on a reputation for speediness and efficiency. Hak Mao's drivers have orders to turn off their phones before starting each journey in order to avoid distraction, and instructions not to stop under any circumstances, even if they hit another vehicle or people along the road.<sup>331</sup> According to police interviewed by Global Witness in two districts on the outskirts of Phnom Penh through which Brigade 70 convoys regularly pass, Hak Mao's trucks have hit motorists or pedestrians on several occasions. The policemen claim that Brigade 70 compensates injured victims with payments of US\$50-US\$150 and pays the families of those that die between US\$100 and US\$300. Sometimes they just give the police US\$100 and tell them to settle the matter on the unit's behalf.<sup>332</sup>

A source close to the Brigade 70 reported that in October 2006 one of the convoys became involved in a shooting incident in Koh Kong Province.<sup>333</sup> Unhappy at the attention this drew to the brigade's activities, Bodyguard Unit commander Hing Bun Heang ordered Hak Mao's teams to cease carrying weapons during their transportation operations.<sup>333</sup> Global Witness wrote to Hing Bun Heang in March to ask him to comment on this report. As this publication went to print, Hing Bun Heang had not responded.





### 3.1 Exports

Global Witness investigations have found that Brigade 70 is involved not only in the distribution of illegally-logged wood within Cambodia but also in the export of significant volumes to Vietnam. According to officials in Kandal and Prey Veng provinces, timber transported by Hak Mao often passes through Neak Loeung, a port on the Mekong River.<sup>198</sup> Here the wood is stored temporarily in warehouses before being loaded into large boats that carry it across the border at the Ka'am Samnor checkpoint. These boats make their journeys to Vietnam in groups of between two and four every week to ten days, with each vessel carrying at least 400 m<sup>3</sup> of timber.<sup>334</sup> Alternatively, Hak Mao's trucks proceed directly through Neak Loeung along Route 1 to the border crossing at Bavet. Taking the timber over the border by road usually involves using a permit signed by a high-ranking official.<sup>335</sup>

One Brigade 70 officer interviewed by Global Witness stated that the unit was not only transporting timber to Vietnam, but also exporting containers packed with wood through sea ports on Cambodia's south coast.<sup>336</sup> Two businessmen who provide services to Hak Mao's group have also told Global Witness about this activity.<sup>337</sup> These different reports corroborate claims made by officials working at Oknha Mong Port in Koh Kong Province. These port officials told Global Witness that they were prevented from inspecting certain sealed containers delivered by Brigade 70, but were told by the drivers that some contained plywood, luxury wood furniture and pieces of grade I timber.<sup>338</sup> Global Witness investigators have observed trucks carrying sealed shipping containers leaving the two Brigade 70 depots on Street 2002 but have not been able to verify their contents.



### 3.2 The Clients

Brigade 70's timber transport service caters primarily to major timber barons who have close links to elite families. Some of the unit's more prominent clients include the following:

#### **Dy Chouch, Seng Keang, Khun Thong and Seng Kok Heang**

As described in Chapter II, Brigade 70's transportation services have been a major component of this syndicate's illegal logging activities in Prey Long forest. Seng Kok Heang, the group's operations manager, is himself a Brigade 70 officer. His sister, Seng Keang, collaborates with the unit not only in timber ventures, but also other aspects of her business. According to local inhabitants, in 2006 Seng Keang enlisted Brigade 70 officers to help her intimidate rival claimants to land she is attempting to acquire in Trapeang Svay on the outskirts of Phnom Penh.<sup>339</sup>

#### **Khai Narin<sup>340</sup>**

Khai Narin owns a sawmill on Route 5 in the outskirts of Phnom Penh and is described by timber industry insiders as a close associate of Dy Chouch.<sup>341</sup> Her company is listed, along with Seng Keang Company, as the owner of timber stockpiles in Tumring in a 2003 log transportation plan prepared by Colexim Enterprise.<sup>159</sup>

In December 2003, Global Witness discovered Khai Narin's sawmill processing illegally-sourced timber and reported the case to SGS, the new independent monitor of forest law enforcement. SGS subsequently attempted an inspection of the site, only to be, in the words of its project manager, "chased away by a man with a big stick".<sup>342</sup> Global Witness





Brigade 70 truck at Khai Narin sawmill, April 2005

wrote to SGS in February 2007 to ask the company to comment on this episode. SGS replied as follows:

“At this time the project had only been in operation for 11 days and was still in the inception phase awaiting the formal mandate from the RGC [Royal Government of Cambodia] to enter all relevant forest and processing areas. Thus it was not possible at the time to insist on access to the mill which was denied by the security guard. Even so, the SGS team spoke with local villagers and was able to establish that some illegal logging had occurred in the area. This was reported to the Forest Administration and it is understood that they closed this operation down. Subsequent inspections of the mill from the river in January and February 2004 revealed no evidence of any further logs being delivered or milling activities taking place. This incident was reported in full on pages 13 to 14 of the first SGS Quarterly Report which was made publicly available.”<sup>167</sup>

In April 2005 Global Witness investigators visited the sawmill again and found it to be well stocked with 100 m<sup>3</sup> of protected luxury grade wood (*beng* and *neang nuon*) as well as grade I and grade II species. Two Brigade 70 trucks were observed unloading additional timber supplies. A few weeks later, Global Witness saw one of the same trucks (number plate *Khor Mor* 0.5314) in Kompong Thom Province, travelling along the ‘Hun Sen Trail’ – the road which carries timber illegally cut in Prey Long. People living close to Khai Narin’s compound informed Global Witness that Brigade 70 trucks were coming to deposit logs at the sawmill on average three times a week.<sup>143</sup> During an aerial survey in September 2006, Global Witness observed stocks of logs in the Khai Narin sawmill compound. Over four years into a cutting and log transport ban it is highly unlikely that this wood

Choeng Sopheap, also known as Yeay Phu<sup>144</sup> Yeay Phu and her husband, CPP senator Lao Meng Khin, own Pheapimex, arguably Cambodia’s most powerful company. Yeay Phu is a close friend of Hun Sen’s wife Bun Rany and regularly travels abroad with the prime minister’s entourage. Lao Meng Khin has been a CPP senator since 2006. Pheapimex is one of a small number of firms with ties to Hun Sen that act as joint venture partners to powerful Chinese firms moving into Cambodia. The company appears rarely to commit significant capital to these partnerships itself.<sup>145</sup>

Within Cambodia, the name Pheapimex is synonymous with illegal logging and over the past decade Global Witness has repeatedly uncovered evidence of the company cutting illegally both inside and outside its three logging concessions. Since the suspension of logging concession operations in 2002, Pheapimex’s Kompong Thom concession has become a centre for illicit sawmill operations run by military units and one of the company’s subcontractors.<sup>146</sup> Global Witness published details of these activities in





Yeay Phu keeping up appearances

June 2004. While Pheapimex made no comment, Prime Minister Hun Sen publicly attacked the report, telling journalists that “Global Witness has lied before and today they are lying again”.<sup>347</sup>

Pheapimex has a wide range of other interests beyond forests. These include salt iodisation, over which the government granted it a monopoly, iron ore extraction, bamboo cultivation, pharmaceutical imports and hotel construction.<sup>348</sup> In recent years, the company has increasingly focused on economic land concessions (ELCs) and has partial or complete control of at least five.<sup>348</sup> Through its ELCs and logging concessions Pheapimex controls 7.4% of Cambodia’s total land area.<sup>19</sup>

Three of the Pheapimex ELCs are joint ventures with the Chinese company Wuzhishan LS and Kong Triv, another tycoon who is a senator for the CPP.<sup>348</sup> Two of these concessions, in Pursat and Mondulkiri provinces, have been the scene of serious human rights abuses against local people.<sup>349</sup> After eight protestors against the Pheapimex-Wuzhishan ELC in Pursat were wounded in a hand grenade attack by unknown assailants in November 2004, King Norodom Sihamoni wrote a letter to the prime minister to express his concern. In his response to the king, Hun Sen defended the company, arguing that “the grenade attack was only aimed at blaming the government or the local authorities, because according to the technical examination by the competent officials, the purpose of the grenade attack (in which some people were injured and nobody died) was just aimed to make their propaganda voices louder.”<sup>350</sup>

In 2004 Global Witness investigators found a group of large green military trucks, closely resembling those used by Brigade 70, transporting logs cut in the

2005, one of Hak Mao’s subordinates confirmed to Global Witness that Yeay Phu had made extensive use of Brigade 70’s transport service.<sup>352</sup>

In a further expansion of its business empire, Pheapimex publicly announced in November 2006 that it was forming a joint venture with Chinese firm Jiangsu Taihu International to set up a new 178 ha Special Economic Zone near Sihanoukville.<sup>348</sup> Pheapimex claimed that the two companies would spend US\$1 billion developing the area.<sup>353</sup> Under Cambodian law, companies developing SEZs are granted a nine year tax holiday, as well as exemptions on VAT and import and export duties.<sup>354</sup> A Chinese official from Jiangsu Province told journalists that the Pheapimex deal sprang from a visit to China by Hun Sen.<sup>355</sup> Global Witness is not aware of the government conducting any public bidding for the rights to this SEZ concession and does not know what criteria it used to evaluate the Pheapimex proposal.

In January 2007 Hun Sen presented Yeay Phu with the *Moha Sereiwath* medal – a decoration reserved for individuals who have made a particularly generous contribution to Cambodia’s development.<sup>356</sup> The following month, Pheapimex emerged at the centre of yet another deal involving a valuable slice of public property. On February 6 Phnom Penh Governor Kep Chuktema signed away 133 ha of the Boeung Kak Lake area on a 99 year renewable lease to a previously obscure firm called In Shukaku, whose director is Yeay Phu’s husband Lao Meng Khin.<sup>348</sup> The Housing Rights Task Force (HRTF), a coalition of local and international NGOs, and the Cambodian Center for Human Rights (CCHR), report that the site is home to at least 4,252 families. According to the NGOs, none of these





Yeay Phu receiving the Moha Sereiwath medal



Mayor of Phnom Penh Kep Chuktema. In February 2007 he signed away 133 ha of the Boeung Kak Lake area to a company directed by Yeay Phu's husband Lao Meng Khin

CCHR have stated that "If these families are forcibly removed from their homes, following recent precedents by the Municipality and the poor track record of In Shukaku's director Lao Meng Khin, this would mark the largest single displacement of people in Cambodia since the privatization of land in 1989."<sup>357</sup>

Pheapimex's illegal logging has robbed the Cambodian people of a valuable public asset and Global Witness has repeatedly made the case for prosecuting the company and stripping it of its concessions. The firm's other activities have also caused widespread damage to the livelihoods of ordinary Cambodians. Whether in terms of taxes paid or jobs created, there is little evidence that handing over enormously valuable public assets to Pheapimex has contributed in any way to Cambodia's development. What is not in doubt is that the company's owners and their political patrons have profited handsomely. The question of why Hun Sen continues his vigorous promotion of Pheapimex's interests remains unanswered, however. In February 2007 Global Witness wrote to the prime minister and his wife to ask them whether they hold a private stake in Pheapimex. As this report went to print, neither

### Che Lain<sup>358</sup>

Che Lain is the wife of naval commander Yim Saran, the nephew of Senate President and CPP President Chea Sim.<sup>359</sup> Timber trade insiders describe Che Lain as a forceful character who is given to shouting down the phone at MAFF Minister Chan Sarun when he fails to comply with her demands.<sup>359</sup>

Global Witness first found evidence of Che Lain's involvement in illegal logging while investigating a boat-building racket in 2004. This inventive scam involved tricking monks into signing letters stating that their pagodas needed giant *koki* logs to build racing boats so that they could compete in the annual Water Festival races in Phnom Penh.<sup>360</sup> Having secured their signatures, Che Lain and other fixers presented the letters to senior officials and persuaded them to sign permits authorising the cutting of *koki* trees. The fixers then used these documents as the pretext for logging the Seima Biodiversity Conservation Area in Mondulkiri and selling the wood to timber dealers.<sup>361</sup> The more fortunate monks received a small portion of the wood originally promised, others received bags of cement and some never heard from the fixers again.<sup>360</sup> Global Witness has obtained copies of the letters and permits relating to a number of these cases.

Timber traders interviewed by Global Witness in 2004 named Che Lain as a major player in the logging of protected luxury timber species around Anlong Veng and Trapeang Prasath along Cambodia's northern border with Thailand.<sup>362</sup> These sources described her hiring Brigade 70 to transport square logs and sawn wood to Neak Loeung, a river port in Prey Veng Province and a key transit point for timber shipments to Vietnam. These accounts were confirmed by a senior member of the security forces in Neak Loeung who has close connections with the timber business.<sup>363</sup>



### Hak Leng<sup>364</sup> and Siem Touch<sup>365</sup>

Hak Leng and Siem Touch have a long-established timber trading operation in Neak Loeung which includes a sawmill and at least one warehouse.<sup>366</sup> Global Witness has previously uncovered evidence of their involvement in the 'koki logs for monks' racket outlined on the previous page.<sup>361</sup>

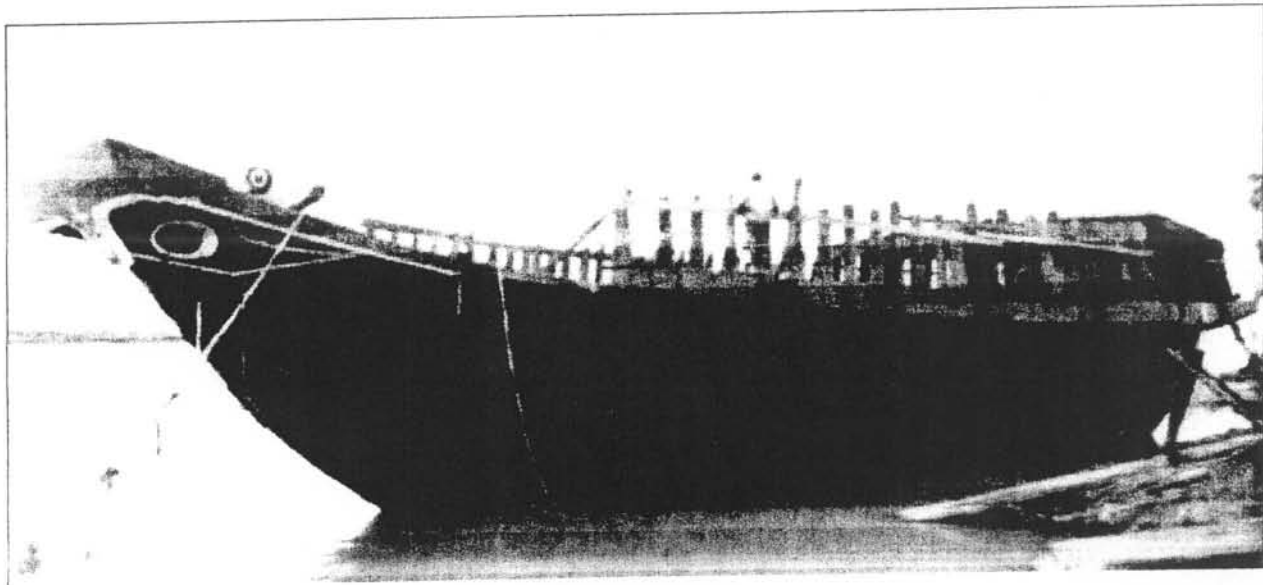
A senior member of the security forces in Neak Loeung told Global Witness that Hak Leng and Siem Touch regularly coordinate the transportation of illegally-logged luxury timber with Hak Mao's teams and provide temporary storage facilities for the wood within the town. This officer claims that the couple

are also instrumental in shipments of illegally-sourced timber down the river to Vietnam.<sup>363</sup>

An associate of Siem Touch describes her as being a friend of both Hun Sen's wife Bun Rany and Koeung Chandy, the wife of General Kun Kim, Hun Sen's chief of cabinet.<sup>367</sup> Hak Leng, meanwhile, is reported to make regular payments to Kun Kim's brother-in-law, Koeung Vannak,<sup>368</sup> a provincial Forest Administration official, to ensure his protection of the couple's business.<sup>369</sup> According to several residents of Neak Loeung whom Global Witness interviewed in September 2006, Hak Leng has recently been given the honorific title *okenha*.<sup>370</sup>



Koki logs on the river bank close to Hak Leng and Siem Touch's sawmill, September 2003



Sean Leang Chhun, also known as Yeay Chhun<sup>371</sup> Yeay Chhun is one of the most prolific illegal loggers in north-eastern Cambodia. She is particularly active in Kratie and Monduliri provinces and transports much of her timber to Neak Loeung or to Vietnam.<sup>372</sup> Global Witness has been gathering information on Yeay Chhun's activities for more than five years. Officials report that her involvement in the illegal timber trade goes back more than a decade.<sup>335</sup>

In 2001, following a major crackdown on forest crime in Monduliri Province the previous year, Yeay Chhun acquired a permit to collect the logs that officials claimed the illegal loggers had left scattered in the forest.<sup>373</sup> The granting of this permit contravened Hun Sen's 1999 declaration on forest sector reform, which banned old log collection licences because of their persistent misuse as a cover for illegal logging. In 2003, Chan Sarun authorised Yeay Chhun to establish a sawmill in O'Reang District, Monduliri Province, in order to process the 'old logs'.<sup>374</sup> Yeay Chhun proceeded to use these permits as the pretext for illegally cutting and processing over a hundred trees from the Seima Biodiversity Conservation Area in Monduliri in 2004.<sup>375</sup>

In May 2004 Global Witness published a short report outlining three cases of illegal logging by Yeay Chhun: the cutting in the Seima Biodiversity Conservation Area, unlawful harvesting in the Snuol Wildlife Sanctuary in Kratie and more illegal felling in a forest in Snuol District outside the wildlife sanctuary boundaries. During the last of these operations one of the trucks carrying Yeay Chhun's timber fell through a public bridge near Snuol town.<sup>376</sup> A Brigade 70 officer told Global Witness that this convoy included vehicles provided by Hak Mao, but that the truck which collapsed the bridge belonged to Yeay Chhun. The officer said that Yeay Chhun regularly hired Hak



Timber trader Yeay Chhun; one of the most prolific loggers in north-eastern Cambodia

Mao to transport her timber between 2002 and 2004 but that their partnership ended following the attention generated by the bridge destruction in Snuol.<sup>377</sup>

A timber trade insider subsequently told Global Witness that Yeay Chhun was upset by the public exposure of her activities because it meant that she had to pay larger than usual bribes to persuade officials to turn a blind eye.<sup>378</sup> The added expense did not permanently derail her business, however. Not long after Global Witness released its report, Yeay Chhun was seen arriving at the Forest Administration office in Phnom Penh for a meeting with Deputy Director General Chea Sam Ang<sup>379</sup> and leaving with a new sheaf of timber transport permits.<sup>380</sup> Chea Sam Ang, the Project Director for the World Bank's Forest Concession Management and Control Pilot Project, refused to explain his actions to journalists who called him for comment; however FA Director General Ty Sokhun declared that the permits were legitimate.<sup>381</sup>

Global Witness has obtained information from sources in the Snuol area that Yeay Chhun was continuing to transport illegally-logged timber from Kratie to Neak Loeung between July and September 2006.<sup>382</sup>





### Pol Saroeun

Pol Saroeun is the Commander-in-Chief of Cambodia's army. According to officers in Brigade 70 and other Royal Cambodian Armed Forces units, between 2003 and 2005 the general contracted Hak Mao to supply him with protected luxury wood and grade 1 timber to build a house in Svay Rieng Province.<sup>383</sup> Pol Saroeun provided Hak Mao with signed permits approving the wood's delivery, despite having no legal authority to do so. Hak Mao then used the documents repeatedly as a pretext for transporting much larger volumes of luxury timber; much of it supplied by Dy Chouch. Brigade 70 reportedly exported around 80% of this wood to Vietnam.<sup>383</sup>

### Preap Tan<sup>384</sup>

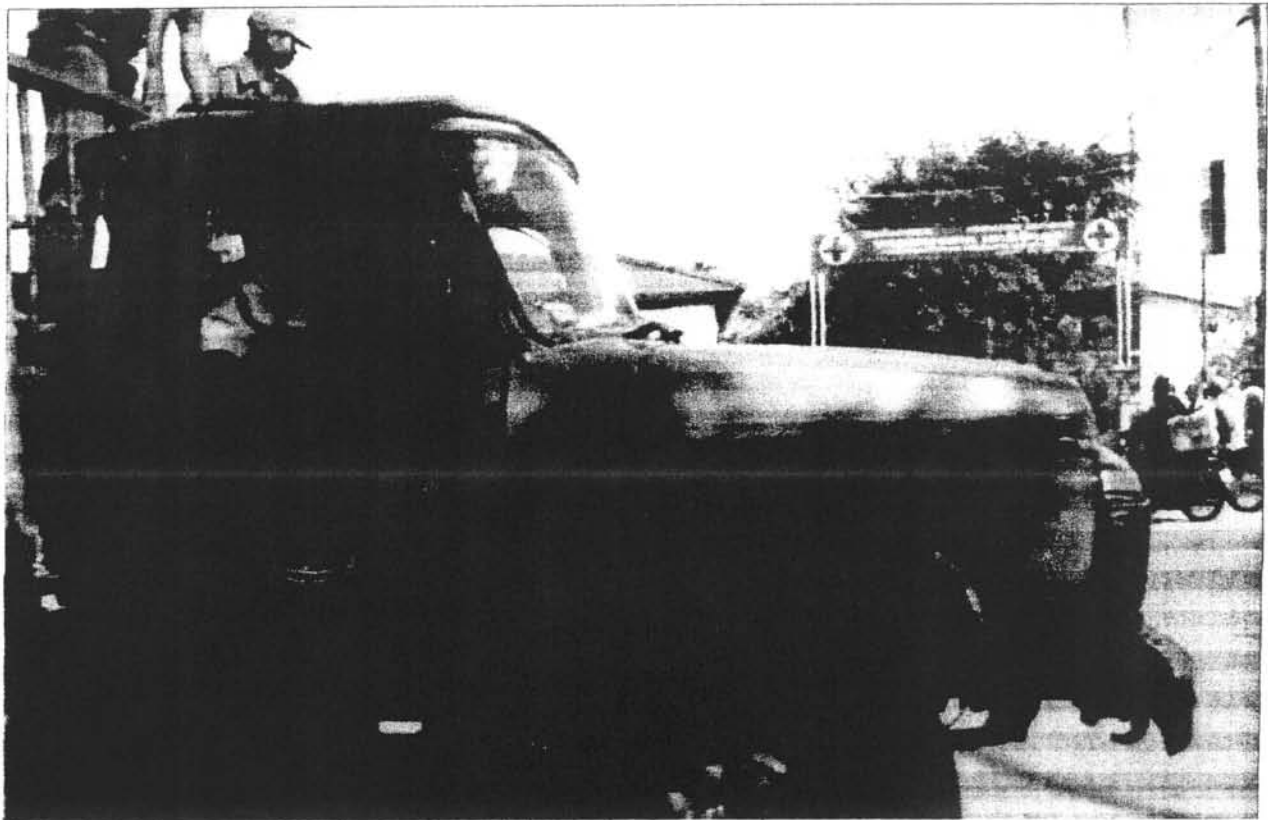
Preap Tan is the governor of Preah Vihear Province. According to a source in Brigade 70, in July 2006 he commissioned Hak Mao to transport 185 *koki* logs from three locations in Preah Vihear to Phnom Penh.<sup>313</sup>

Global Witness has previously obtained documents signed by Preap Tan and Hun Sen Bodyguard Unit commander Hing Bun Heang concerning procurement of wood from Preah Vihear Province for the construction of four boats. Hing Bun Heang described the boats as being for "Bodyguard Unit activities, undertaking missions for the Prime Minister and his wife ... and distributing gifts to villagers in provinces affected by natural disasters".<sup>385</sup> Global Witness does not know whether the boats were actually built and, if so, from where the wood was sourced.

Preap Tan's own bodyguards also appear to have interests in the timber sector. In September 2004 Forest Administration staff in Tbeng Meanchey District in Preah Vihear Province temporarily closed their office, saying that the governor's bodyguards had fired shots at their compound following a dispute over some wood. According to the FA, Preap Tan acknowledged his bodyguards were at fault and "educated them not to do it again".<sup>386</sup>



Commander-in-Chief of Cambodia's army, General Pol Saroeun. He is reported to have contracted Hak Mao to supply him with timber to build his house



#### 4. Transportation of Smuggled Goods by Brigade 70

Global Witness' initial interest in Brigade 70 related to its role in Cambodia's illegal timber trade. Field investigations, surveillance and extensive interviews with Brigade 70 officers have yielded additional information on the unit's transportation of smuggled merchandise, however.

Brigade 70 picks up smuggled goods on behalf of its clients as the items arrive in Cambodia. This enables the clients to evade import duties. Import duties are a potentially important source of revenue for the Cambodian treasury but corruption ensures that levels of tax evasion are extremely high. According to the IMF's most recent Article IV report on Cambodia, "revenue collection continues to be well below what is needed to support the government's expenditure objectives".<sup>387</sup> Hun Sen periodically announces crackdowns on smuggling, yet military trafficking operations remain a major money-spinner for some of his closest advisors.

Through interviews with Brigade 70 officers and businessmen, Global Witness has been able to build up a picture of the range of commodities the unit transports. These include beer, spirits, cigarettes, perfume, electronic goods, construction materials, clothes, sugar, pharmaceuticals, and products destined for supermarkets including ice cream.<sup>388</sup> Hak Mao runs the transportation of these goods out of depots in Phnom Penh, including one of the compounds on Street 2002.<sup>389</sup> According to soldiers and local residents, Brigade 70 distributes items such as alcohol, perfume and luxury foods within Phnom Penh using a fleet of small ice cream and soft drinks trucks.<sup>390</sup> Global Witness investigators have observed these types of vehicles coming in and out of the depots on Street 2002, but have not been able to inspect their contents.

Who is hiring Hak Mao to transport smuggled goods? Customs officers interviewed by Global Witness claimed that the group's clientele included high-ranking officials and their families. Amongst these, they singled out the wives of Minister of Defence Tea Banh<sup>391</sup> and his



Minister of Defence Tea Banh. His wife is reported to have contracted

brother Tea Vinh,<sup>392</sup> who is a naval commander in Koh Kong.<sup>393</sup> Both these men have a history of involvement in illegal timber exports.<sup>394</sup>

The same customs officials also alleged that Hak Mao was delivering smuggled products for some of Cambodia's most prominent tycoons and companies.<sup>395</sup> This claim is echoed by a

prime minister, who told Global Witness that most of the contraband that Brigade 70 transported belonged to the Attwood Import Export Company.<sup>40</sup> Attwood is profiled in Box 17. Global Witness wrote to Tea Banh, Tea Vinh and Attwood in February 2007 to ask whether they had ever enlisted the services of Brigade 70. As this report went to print, none of them had replied.

#### Box 17: Attwood Import Export Co. Ltd

Attwood Import Export Co. Ltd is the official distributor in Cambodia for Hennessy cognac and well-known brands of whisky and beer. Attwood's Managing Director Lim Chhiv Ho<sup>396</sup> is described by a well-connected source in Cambodia's commercial sector as one of a quartet of politically powerful women who do business deals together.<sup>396</sup> The other three members of this quartet are said to be Yeay Phu of Pheapimex; the wife of National Customs and Excise Department Director Pen Simon<sup>397</sup>; and Tep Bopha Prasadh,<sup>398</sup> who is married to Minister of Commerce Cham Prasadh<sup>399</sup> and holds the position of Director of Administration at the ministry.<sup>396</sup> Tep Bopha Prasadh is reported to own 10% of Attwood's shares – a stake worth US\$1 million.<sup>400</sup> Lim Chhiv Ho's daughter is married to the son of Yeay Phu.<sup>396</sup>

Attwood has received concessions from the government to develop three Special Economic Zones (SEZs) near Sihanoukville, Phnom Penh and Bavet on the Vietnamese border.<sup>401</sup> These deals



Hennessy billboard in Phnom Penh

give the company generous tax holidays and duty exemptions. Global Witness wrote to Lim Chhiv Ho in February 2007 to ask how Attwood went about obtaining these SEZs but has not yet received a reply.



Minister of Commerce Cham Prasadh's wife is reported to own 10% of Attwood's shares



National Customs and Excise Department Director Pen Simon. His wife is described as doing business deals with

Information from Brigade 70 soldiers suggests that the rates Hak Mao charges for transporting smuggled goods are roughly comparable to those for delivering illegally-logged timber.<sup>402</sup> As Box 19 shows, however, for certain very expensive goods the fees can be a great deal higher.

A member of Hak Mao's staff told Global Witness that Brigade 70 sometimes transports truckloads of sugar overland from Thailand via the Poipet border crossing in Banteay Meanchey Province.<sup>403</sup> Global Witness investigators found loaded Brigade 70 trucks crossing the border at Poipet in September 2006 but were unable to obtain information about what goods they were carrying. Observations and interviews suggest that the major entry points for the smuggled items Brigade 70 transports are on Cambodia's south coast, however.<sup>404</sup>

#### 4.1 Smuggling Through Sre Ambel Port

In the early stages of Hak Mao's career with Brigade 70, most of the contraband his teams handled entered Cambodia through the port at Sre Ambel in Koh Kong Province.<sup>405</sup> Here Brigade 70 unloaded boatloads of high value goods smuggled from Thailand, notably international brand cigarettes and alcohol, and paid customs officials only 5-15% of the duties owed.<sup>406</sup> Hak Mao told anyone who asked questions that the smuggled goods belonged to Tea Banh and Tea Vinh.<sup>407</sup> Local officials recall that the Sre Ambel District governor made efforts to clamp down on these activities but was not successful.<sup>407</sup>

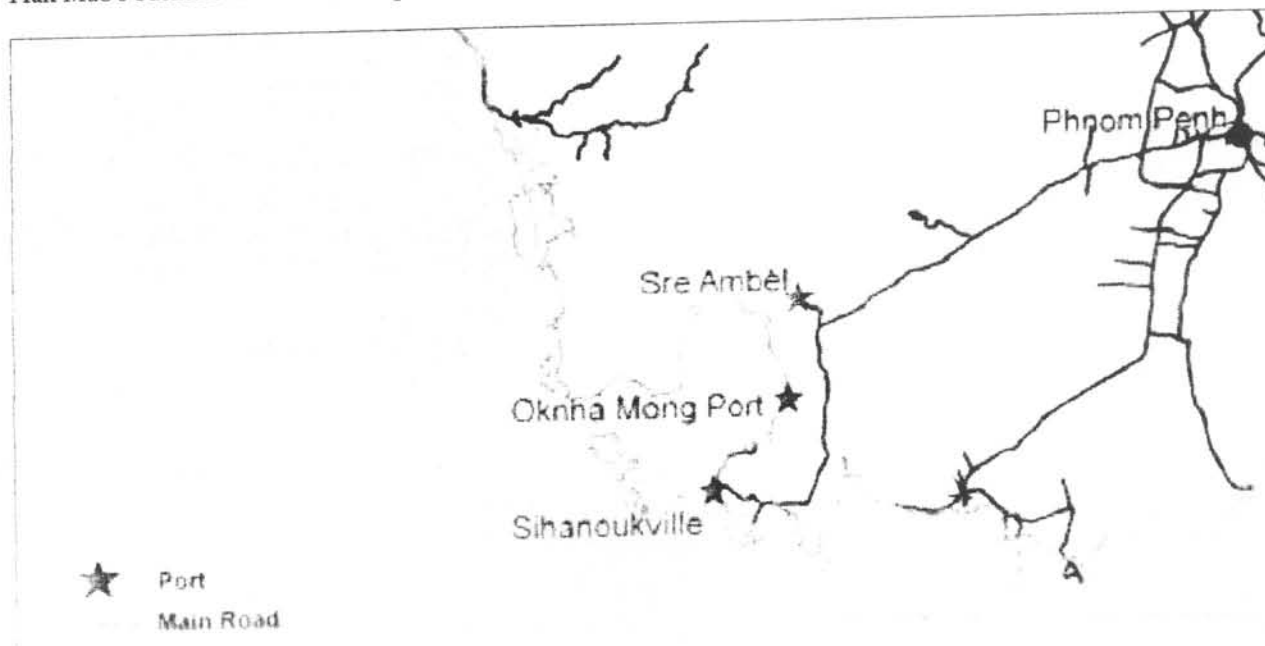
From Sre Ambel, Brigade 70 transported the goods either to Phnom Penh, or along the coast to Sihanoukville port. Goods transferred to Sihanoukville were then packed into shipping containers and re-exported.<sup>408</sup> Following Hun Sen's coup in July 1997 Hak Mao's business at Sre Ambel expanded. Brigade 70

began importing increased volumes of contraband while shipping consignments of luxury grade wood in the other direction.<sup>409</sup>

As Hak Mao's enterprise blossomed, other agencies laid a claim to a share of the profits, sparking a violent stand-off on at least one occasion. An official based in Sre Ambel described to Global Witness an incident in which a combined law enforcement team of customs officials, economic police and military police intercepted three large military trucks as they headed north from Sre Ambel.<sup>407</sup> The trucks were carrying cigarettes, whisky and Hennessy<sup>410</sup> cognac and the checkpoint team demanded that the drivers pay them a bribe. The truck drivers refused, saying that the goods belonged to Tea Banh, Tea Vinh and prominent tycoon Teng Bunma.<sup>411</sup> A standoff ensued. Two hours later Hak Mao himself arrived with 20 armed troops, threatened the law enforcement team and directed his trucks to smash their way through the checkpoint barrier. The two groups then began shooting at each other, the customs officers, police and military police retreated and the trucks pulled away.<sup>407</sup>

Having regrouped, the law enforcement team contacted the Military Region III command to request that they intercept the Brigade 70 convoy as it headed along Route 4 towards Phnom Penh. This plan foundered on the close ties between Hak Mao and MR III however. When the MR III troops eventually arrived on the scene, it was to disarm the checkpoint officials rather than to back them up. In the aftermath, some members of the law enforcement team were fired from their positions.<sup>407</sup> It appears to be on the strength of this and similar incidents that local people began calling Brigade 70 the 'Samurai' group.<sup>412</sup>

By the end of 2004, Hak Mao had largely ceased using Sre Ambel and had shifted his operation to Mong Reththy's new Oknha Mong port at Keo Phos village, closer to Sihanoukville.<sup>412</sup>

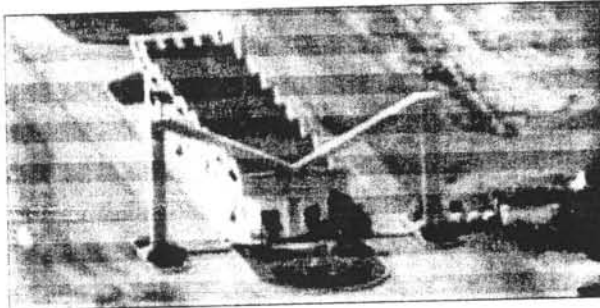




## 4.2 Smuggling through Oknha Mong Port

*"There are no longer any barriers between nations ... The world has become one huge market."* Mong Reththy, 2007<sup>426</sup>

Oknha Mong Port is the brainchild and private business holding of tycoon and CPP senator Mong Reththy. Located just 45 kilometres from Cambodia's main commercial port at Sihanoukville, the creation of the new facility has the explicit backing of Hun Sen, who inaugurated it in December 2004 and hailed it as a means of fostering greater economic competition. Despite this optimistic prognosis, there are indications that the port is effectively exempt from official regulatory structures and acts as a gateway for large-scale smuggling.



Entrance to Oknha Mong Port

When Oknha Mong Port was first announced to the media earlier in 2004, it was described as coming equipped with its own customs, police and military police.<sup>427</sup> This description may be rather too literal; indeed sources at the port say that the approximately 15 customs officers stationed there are answerable only to Mong Reththy and may not submit a report to their head office in Phnom Penh unless the tycoon first authorises it.<sup>428</sup>

Hak Mao's teams began using Oknha Mong Port soon after it opened for business, transporting goods to and from Phnom Penh. Brigade 70 is also known to take deliveries from Oknha Mong Port along the coast to the seaport at Sihanoukville.<sup>428</sup>

Dock workers and local residents have remarked on the heavily armed escorts accompanying some of the sealed shipping containers Hak Mao's men deliver for export via Oknha Mong Port. Asked by Global Witness what they thought was in these containers, some of the workers joked that they probably contained narcotics or counterfeit dollars.<sup>429</sup> Such a possibility is taken seriously by some members of the diplomatic community, who have privately expressed concerns that drugs are being trafficked through the port.<sup>430</sup>

As at Sre Ambel before, Hak Mao's men pay the customs officials at Oknha Mong Port no more than 5-15% of the required import tariffs.<sup>408</sup> An eyewitness to some of these transactions claims that the officials have no choice but to accept these poor terms given Brigade 70's capacity for violence and the risk of being fired by

### Box 18: Mong Reththy

*"It should be mentioned also that Mr Oknha [Mong Reththy] has been doing a great deal for the country"* Prime Minister Hun Sen at the opening of Oknha Mong Port, 2004.<sup>413</sup>

*"I will bulldoze the homes of [residents] who refused money"* – Mong Reththy commenting on his demolition of the Royal University of Fine Arts campus, 2005.<sup>414</sup>

Mong Reththy is one of Cambodia's most prominent tycoons and a close ally of Hun Sen. In 2006 he became a senator for the CPP.

Plantations, commodities trading, cattle farming and real estate development are just some of Mong Reththy's interests. His eclectic business portfolio has also encompassed illegal logging in Bokor National Park and an economic land concession in Stung Treng which at 100,852 ha is more than ten times the size permitted by the Land Law.<sup>348</sup> This ELC is sited on the cancelled Macro Panin logging concession in violation of the sub-decree on Forest Concession Management. Chan Sarun signed off on the deal in November 2001, three months after the passage of Land Law limiting ELCs to 10,000 ha.<sup>415</sup> When Global Witness wrote to Chan Sarun to question the legality of his decision, the minister responded with the argument that the government was obliged to give Mong Reththy the concession because he had asked for it before the Land Law was ratified.<sup>416</sup> In December 2006 Global Witness received reports from a human rights worker that Mong Reththy's company had begun clearing parts of the Green Sea ELC close to the Lao border.<sup>417</sup>

Mong Reththy has also been at the forefront of the recent rash of land-swap deals in which ownership of public buildings has been transferred to tycoons with links to the CPP. His land-swap acquisitions have included Cambodia's Supreme Court, Appeals Court, Phnom Penh Municipal



Mong Reththy receiving a medal from Hun Sen

Court and Justice Ministry buildings.<sup>348</sup> He has also flattened the historic Royal University of Fine Arts campus in Phnom Penh and forcibly evicted local residents in order to make way for a development he has named 'China Town'.<sup>418</sup>

The government's decision to give the green light for Oknha Mong Port demonstrates considerable confidence in a man previously subject to allegations of drug trafficking. Claims that there was more to Mong Reththy's import-export business than met the eye first surfaced in April 1997, when officials in Sihanoukville seized seven tons of marijuana from containers labelled as rubber.<sup>419</sup> Newspapers reported that documents taken during the seizure bore stamps and seals of a company belonging to Mong Reththy.<sup>420</sup> In media interviews Mong Reththy denied any involvement.<sup>421</sup>

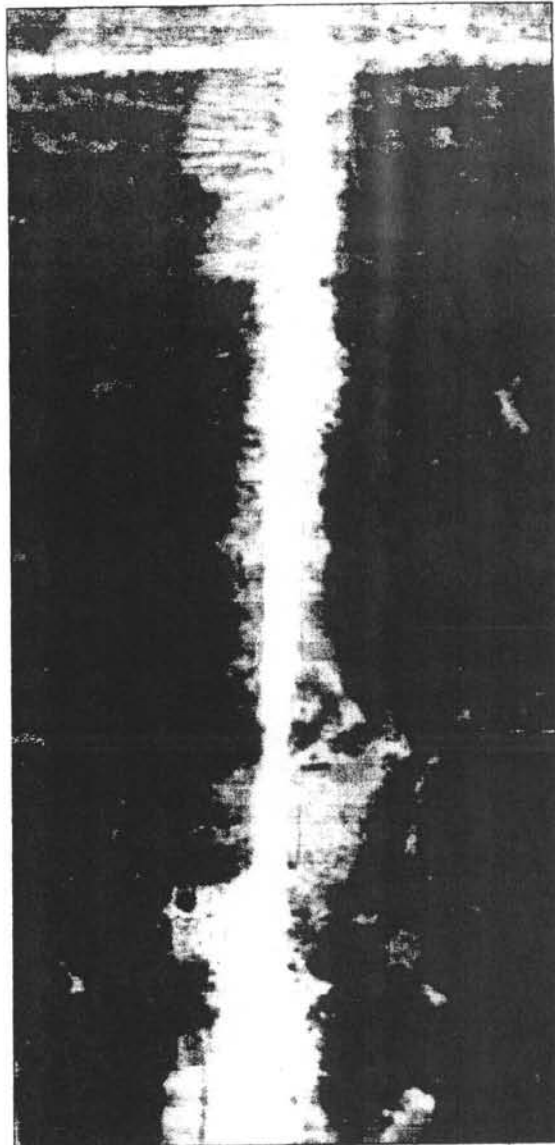
Secretary of State at the Ministry of Interior Ho Sok, a member of the CPP's Funcinpec coalition partner, led the investigation into Mong Reththy's alleged connection with the marijuana. His announcement that a court was preparing an arrest warrant for the tycoon prompted Hun Sen to comment that anyone attempting to arrest Mong Reththy had better "wear a steel helmet".<sup>422</sup> In July 1997, during the coup in which Hun Sen ousted his Funcinpec co-prime minister Prince Norodom Ranariddh, Ho Sok was detained by CPP forces and murdered.<sup>423</sup> The investigation into Mong Reththy's dealings proceeded no further.

Mong Reththy has continued to deny any connection with drug trafficking. In an interview with a local newspaper in 2004, he said "I was accused of planting and smuggling marijuana. I have tried to ignore it. I have never even smoked a cigarette in my life, so how could I do business like that? I only do what is legal".<sup>424</sup>

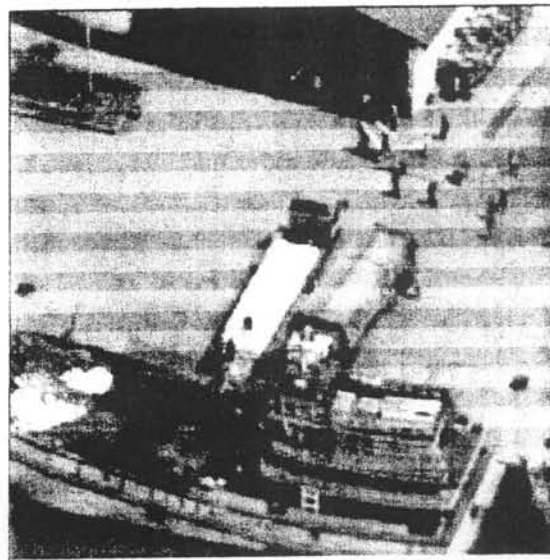
Global Witness wrote to both Mong Reththy and Hun Sen to ask them for their comment on the reports of drug trafficking. As this report went to print, Hun Sen had not replied, however Mong Reththy's lawyer responded by e-mail as follows:

"We have received the inquiry from your office related to Mr Mong Reththy and he is pleased to receive it. Mr Mong has asked us to inform you that he is unable to give Global Witness a written statement BUT he is willing to interview with a Global Witness representative in Phnom Penh or in London. If you have any further inquiry, please do not hesitate to contact us."<sup>425</sup>

Global Witness accepted the invitation to take part in an interview with Mong Reththy, and proposed a tape-recorded discussion over the telephone. At the time of the report's publication, Mong Reththy's lawyer had not responded to this proposal.



Illegal clearing and road building in Bokor National Park by Mong Reththy Group, March 2006



Oknha Mong Port

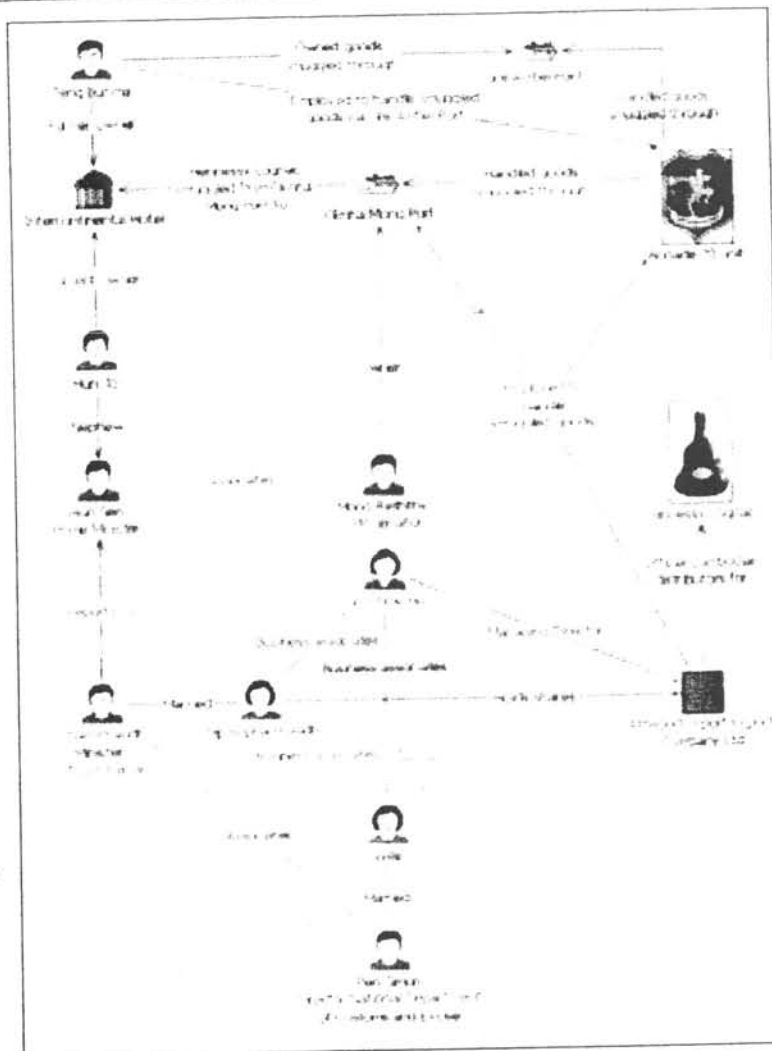
### Box 19: Special Deliveries

According to members of his staff, in March 2005 Hak Mao received US\$100,000 for transporting 60,000 bottles of Hennessy cognac from Oknha Mong Port to the InterContinental Hotel<sup>432</sup> in Phnom Penh.<sup>433</sup> The InterContinental Hotel building previously belonged to Teng Bunma, a tycoon famous for shooting out the tyres of an aeroplane after the airline mislaid his bags.<sup>434</sup> However, hotel staff told Global Witness in 2005 that ownership had passed to Hun To, the nephew of the prime minister.<sup>435</sup>

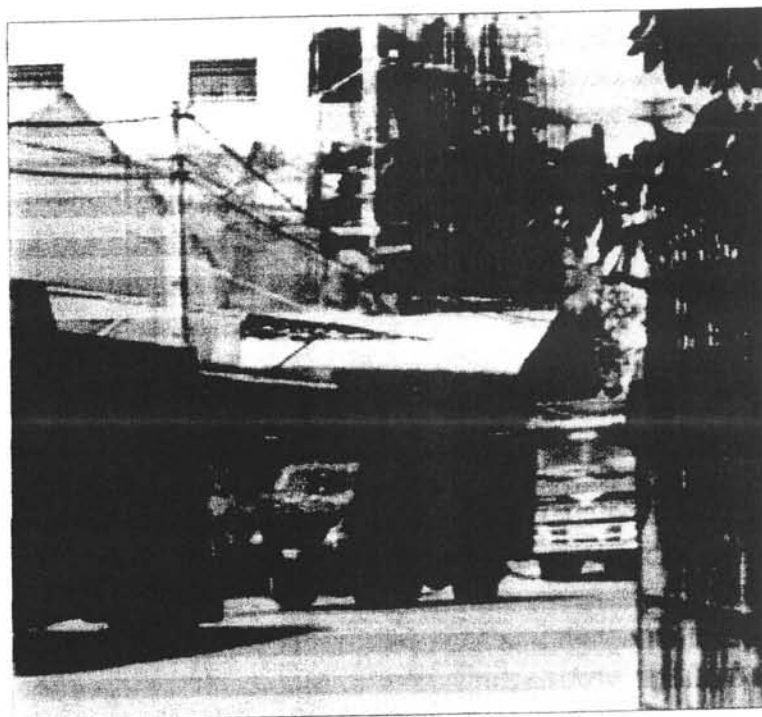
As of September 2006, the bar at the InterContinental Hotel stocked three different Hennessy cognacs. Top of the range was the Hennessy Paradis, weighing in at US\$35 per measure or US\$980 per 70 cl bottle. Global Witness does not know which type of Hennessy cognac Hak Mao was asked to deliver to the hotel. At InterContinental prices, however, the retail value of 60,000 bottles of Hennessy Paradis would be close to US\$5.9 million.

Hennessy's official distributor, Attwood, runs a large shop retailing duty free liquor in a building next to the InterContinental Hotel. In January 2007 Global Witness wrote to both Attwood and Hennessy companies to ask if they were aware of the evidence of cognac smuggling, but has not received a response from either firm. There is no suggestion by Global Witness that Hennessy is involved in the smuggling of its products, or that the InterContinental Hotels Group is implicated in any way.

In December 2006 Global Witness staff observed a truck bearing the Hennessy logo leaving a warehouse on Street 430, one block south of the InterContinental Hotel. Two large green military-style trucks parked outside this depot were both labelled 'LM', indicating that they were part of the Long Meng Group, a smuggling operation run by members of the police which is profiled in Box 20. Global Witness has written to both Attwood and the InterContinental Hotel to ask them if they have any connection with these premises, but has not yet received a reply from either company.



Brigade 70, the InterContinental Hotel and Attwood



Hennessy and Long Meng trucks near the InterContinental Hotel, December 2006



## 5. The Bottom Line – Hak Mao’s Income and Expenditure

Assuming an average return of US\$1,100 per truck for both timber and smuggled goods and ignoring lucrative one-off deals like the Hennessy delivery, Hak Mao’s basic monthly takings could be in the region of US\$171,600-US\$228,800, depending on whether he has just 12 trucks or all 16 in operation. Hak Mao’s staff claim that Brigade 70’s illegal timber and contraband delivery services generate average profits of US\$1,500-US\$5,000 per day.<sup>436</sup>

One Brigade 70 source told Global Witness that Hak Mao pays a cut of his earnings – at least US\$30,000 per month – to the unit itself and that he effectively underwrites its existence. These funds are said to cover soldiers’ food and travel as well as parties for its officer corps.<sup>437</sup> An associate of Hak Mao provides more detailed information that broadly corroborates this account but suggests that the \$30,000 is in fact split between Brigade 70 and the Bodyguard Unit, with the latter receiving the larger share.<sup>438</sup>

According to this source, Hak Mao’s basic monthly contributions to Brigade 70 and the Bodyguard Unit are calculated according to the number of trucks he is using at any one time.<sup>438</sup> At the start of 2006 he was paying US\$1,000 per vehicle per calendar month towards the operations of Brigade 70 and the same amount to the Bodyguard Unit commander Hing Bun Heang – a combined outlay of US\$24,000-US\$32,000.<sup>438</sup> Global Witness believes that the share paid to Hing Bun Heang is intended for Bodyguard Unit operations, although it is possible that some of the money augments the general’s private bank accounts.

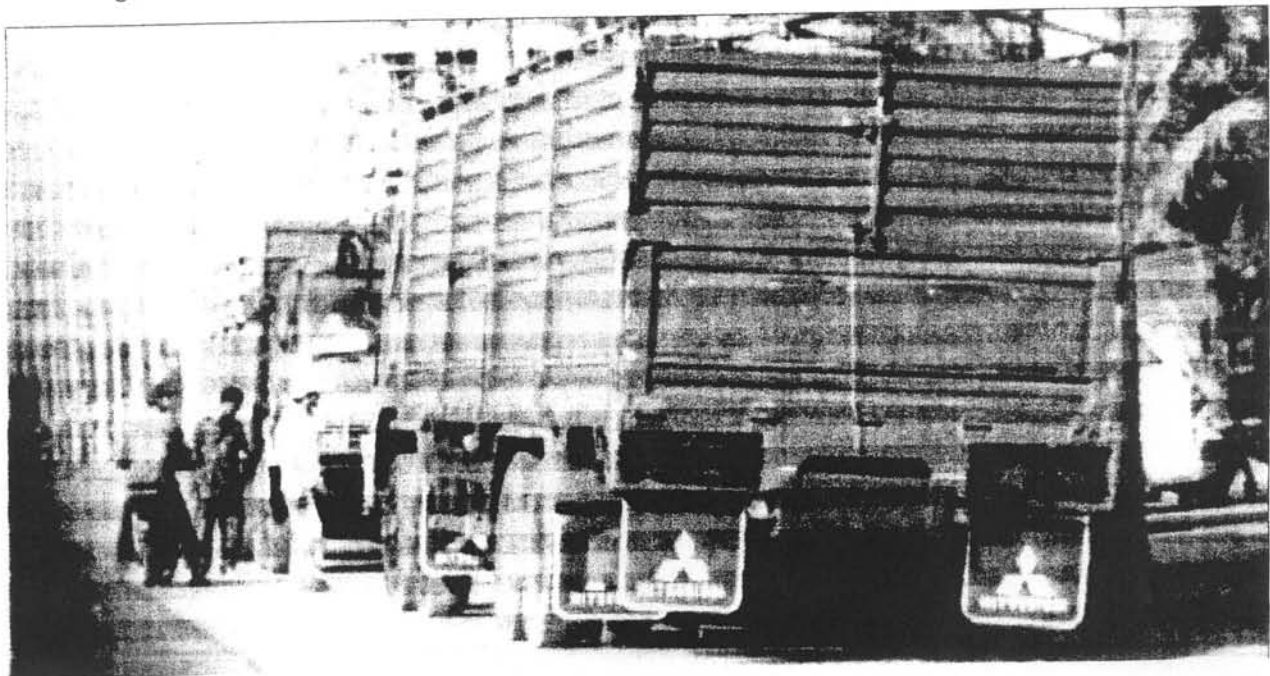
In mid 2006 however, Hak Mao became concerned that he might be in line for promotion to two star



Bodyguard Unit commander Hing Bun Heang is reported to have received monthly contributions from Hak Mao

major general, the same rank as Brigade 70 commander Mao Sophan.<sup>438</sup> One brigade being too small for two major generals, the extra star might necessitate Hak Mao transferring to the army headquarters and thereby losing his capacity to run the unit’s trafficking businesses.<sup>438</sup> Coincidentally or otherwise, it was around this time that Hak Mao upped his monthly payments to Hing Bun Heang to US\$1,700 per truck or US\$20,400-US\$27,200 in total.<sup>438</sup> As this report went to print, it remained unclear whether or not Hak Mao had succeeded in evading promotion.

The figures available suggest that the overall annual turnover of Hak Mao’s operations could be in the region of US\$2 million and US\$2.75 million; with around 60% coming via transportation of illegally-logged timber and the other 40% from delivering contraband. Of this, between US\$388,000 and US\$518,400 is financing Hun Sen’s two most important military units, Brigade 70 and the Bodyguard Unit.

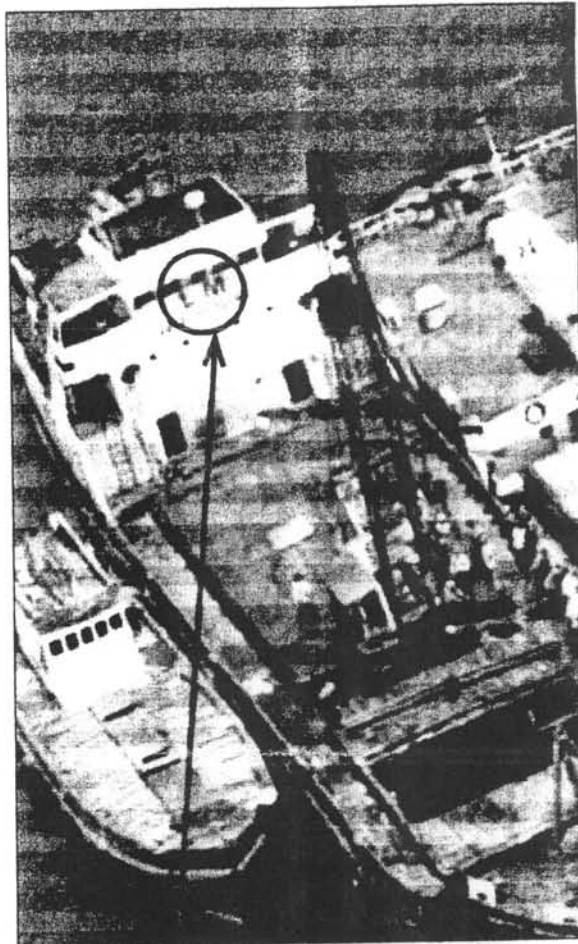


## Box 20: Long Meng Group

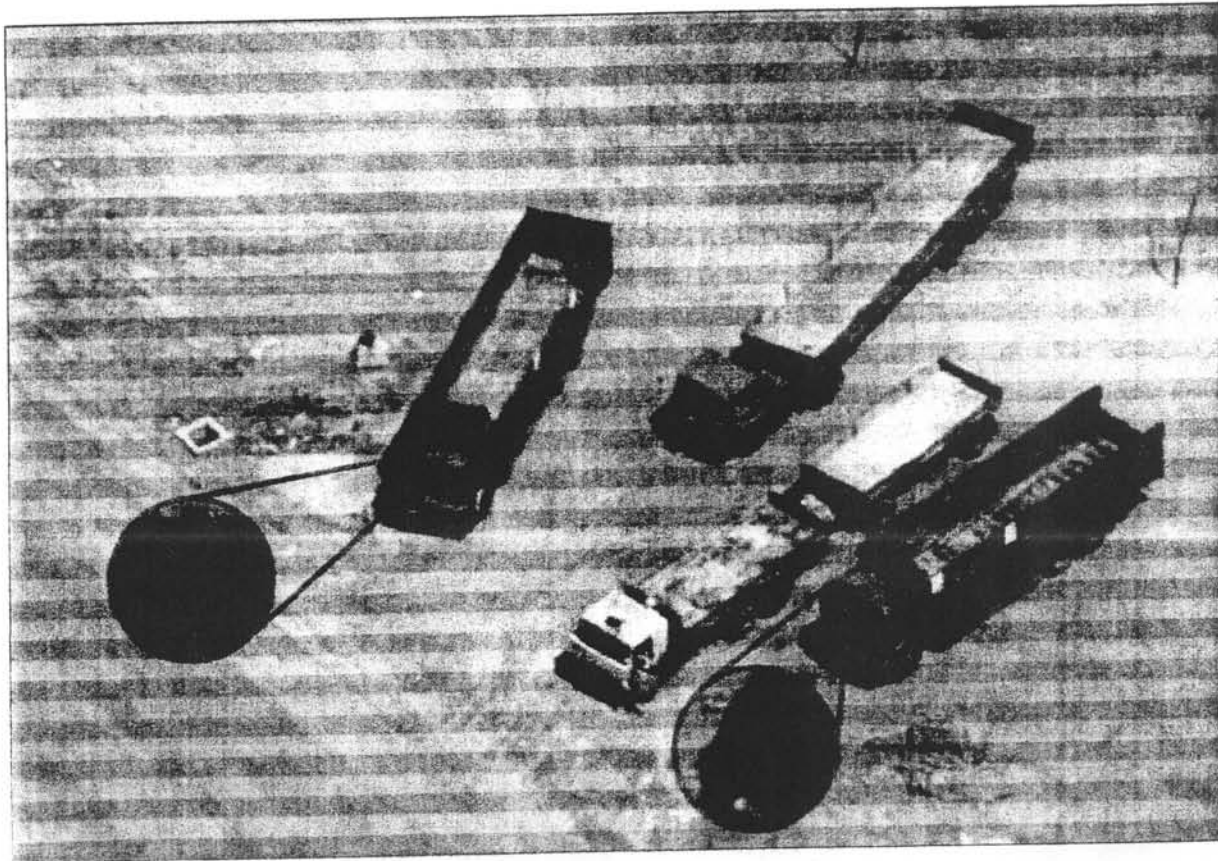
In the course of investigating Hak Mao and Brigade 70, Global Witness also gathered information on a rival syndicate run by a colonel in the economic police named Long Meng. According to officials in Koh Kong Province, Long Meng has been active in the business since around 2000, arranging delivery of smuggled goods in much the same manner as Hak Mao.<sup>439</sup> He manages a fleet of at least 20 large trucks, which are painted military green in the style of the Brigade 70 vehicles. Each truck carries an identification plaque in the front windscreen which begins with the letters 'LM'.<sup>440</sup>

Long Meng's group initially took up the slack left by Hak Mao's switch from Sre Ambel to Mong Reththy's port in 2004.<sup>439</sup> In March 2006 however, Global Witness found 'LM' trucks parked at Oknha Mong Port, suggesting that the Long Meng group may have expanded its zone of operations. During the same aerial survey, Global Witness found a cargo vessel labelled with the Long Meng 'LM' logo docking alongside a loaded barge sailing under a Thai flag just off the coast from Keo Phos.

During investigations in December 2006 and January 2007, Global Witness found Long Meng trucks in convoys of up to 25 vehicles transporting goods along National Road 4, which connects Phnom Penh to ports on the coast.



Boat bearing the Long Meng group 'LM' logo, March 2006



## CONCLUSION

Eight years after Prime Minister Hun Sen pledged to stamp out forest crime, illegal logging continues to erode Cambodia's most valuable forests. Areas such as Prey Long remain seriously at risk.

More than ever, large-scale illegal logging operations, such as the ones described in this report, are the preserve of a relatively small number of people who are relatives or friends of the prime minister or other senior officials. Dy Chouch, Seng Keang and Khun Thong have been a fixture in Cambodia's illegal logging sector for the past decade. Their careers show how, despite a forestry reform process launched by the prime minister himself, elite families have maintained, and even strengthened, their grip on the illegal logging industry.

The responsibility of Hun Sen and his ministers goes beyond allowing their families to log illegally, however. The job auction at the Forest Administration demonstrates that institutionalised corruption is driven from the highest levels of the government. By allowing and in some cases encouraging state institutions to generate money through extortion and other types of crime, senior officials are exacerbating the damage to Cambodia's forests and the country's overall development prospects.

The example of Brigade 70, meanwhile, shows how intimately Hun Sen's personal powerbase is connected to organised crime. Brigade 70's prominent role in timber trafficking and smuggling, as with elite families' dominance of illegal logging, reflects a wider consolidation of power in Cambodia by Hun Sen and his allies.

Addressing these problems requires holding the most powerful criminals accountable to the law. There can be little doubt that a handful of competently investigated and prosecuted cases against senior officials, their relatives and associates would have a far greater impact on abuse of power and corruption than new legislation, important though this is.

The stakes in the fight against corruption have been raised recently by the discovery of oil and gas reserves off the coast of Cambodia. The country will soon be earning hundreds of millions of dollars from offshore oil and gas extraction, something that should be a cause for celebration in a country that remains heavily dependent on overseas aid. However, the precedent offered by Cambodia's forest sector is hardly encouraging. Given the entrenched corruption in government, the oil discovery poses as much a threat as an opportunity. Under current conditions, Cambodia has the potential to follow the example of countries such as Angola, where a super-rich elite, bloated by oil revenues, rules with little regard for the interests of an impoverished population.<sup>41</sup>

Senior officials' vested interests in the status quo mean that change can only be driven by strong pressure

led by ordinary Cambodians citizens and civil society organisations. However, in the current political climate, in which those who speak out against abuses are threatened or attacked, civil society in Cambodia is not robust enough to play this role on its own. Those with the greatest leverage over the government remain the international donor community.

In the past decade and a half, international donors have been reluctant to use this leverage and have helped legitimise the entrenchment of a kleptocracy. It is not too late for donors to start playing a more constructive role, however. At the forthcoming 2007 Consultative Group meeting donors need to redefine the terms of their engagement with their Cambodian counterparts. As a first step, they must directly link future disbursements of non-humanitarian aid to reforms that make the Cambodian government more accountable to its own citizens.





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- 285 Global Witness wrote a letter to Men Pha in February 2007 to ask for his comments on the main issues raised in this report as involve or relate to him. At the time of the report's publication, Global Witness had not received a response. For information on the content of this letter to Men Pha please contact Global Witness via mail@globalwitness.org.
- 286 Global Witness wrote a letter to Chet Ra in February 2007 to ask for his comments on the main issues raised in this report as involve or relate to him. At the time of the report's publication, Global Witness had not received a response. For information on the content of this letter to Chet Ra please contact Global Witness via mail@globalwitness.org.
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- 292 Global Witness wrote a letter to Mao Sophan in February 2007 to ask for his comments on the main issues raised in this report as involve or relate to him. At the time of the report's publication, Global Witness had not received a response. For information on the content of this letter to Mao Sophan please contact Global Witness via mail@globalwitness.org.
- 293 Interview with an RCAF officer, 2006.
- 294 Global Witness wrote a letter to Kun Kim in February 2007 to ask for his comments on the main issues raised in this report as involve or relate to him. At the time of the report's publication, Global Witness had not received a response. For information on the content of this letter to Kun Kim please contact Global Witness via mail@globalwitness.org.
- 295 Interviews with police and FA staff, 2001; interview with a confidential source, 2002.
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- 299 Personal communication from a former member of staff at UNOHCHR, 2006; Human Rights Watch, Cambodia – Aftermath of the Coup, 1997, <http://www.hrw.org/reports/1997/cambodia> (last downloaded 28 March 2007).
- 300 Interview with a logging subcontractor, 2000; investigations 2001, 2002 and 2003.
- 301 Interviews with Brigade 70 officers, 2004, 2005 and 2006; field observations 2004 and 2005.
- 302 Interviews with military police officers, 2004 and 2005; field observations 2004 and 2005.
- 303 Global Witness wrote a letter to Cheoun Sovantha in February 2007 to ask for his comments on the main issues raised in this report as involve or relate to him. At the time of the report's publication, Global Witness had not received a response. For information on the content of this letter to Cheoun Sovantha please contact Global Witness via mail@globalwitness.org.
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- 306 Interviews with RCAF officers, timber traders, local residents and officials, 2004; field observations 2004.
- 307 Interviews with RCAF officers, 2004.
- 308 Interviews with Brigade 70 officers 2004, 2005 and 2006; interviews with police officers, businessmen and local residents, 2005.
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- 311 Interviews with Brigade 70 officers, 2005.
- 312 Interviews with Brigade 70 officers, 2004, 2005 and 2006; field observations, 2005.
- 313 Interview with a Brigade 70 officer, 2006.
- 314 Field observations, 2005 and 2006.
- 315 Field observations, 2004, 2005, 2006.
- 316 Interviews with a Brigade 70 officer, 2004 and 2005.
- 317 Global Witness wrote a letter to Meas Sophea in April 2007 to ask for his comments on the main issues raised in this report as involve or relate to him. At the time of the report's publication, Global Witness had not received a response. For information on the content of this letter to Meas Sophea please contact Global Witness via mail@globalwitness.org.
- 318 Global Witness wrote a letter to Mrs Meas Sophea in February 2007 to ask for her comments on the main issues raised in this report as involve or relate to her. At the time of the report's publication, Global Witness had not received a response. For information on the content of this letter to Mrs. Meas Sophea please contact Global Witness via mail@globalwitness.org.
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- 322 Interview with a Brigade 70 officer, 2005; Global Witness wrote a letter to Kong Horm in February 2007 to ask for his comments on the main issues raised in this report as involve or relate to him. At the time of the report's publication, Global Witness had not received a response. For information on the content of this letter to Kong Horm please contact Global Witness via mail@globalwitness.org.
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- 324 Field observations, 2005 and 2006.
- 325 E-mail from a spokesman for the US Embassy in Phnom Penh, 2007.
- 326 Field observations, interviews with Brigade 70 officers, 2005 and 2006.
- 327 Interviews with a Brigade 70 officer, 2005 and 2006.
- 328 Interviews with Brigade 70 officers and police officers, 2005.
- 329 Global Witness wrote a letter to Pol Saroeun in February 2007 to ask for his comments on the main issues raised in this report as involve or relate to him. At the time of the report's publication, Global Witness had not received a response. For information on the content of this letter to Pol Saroeun please contact Global Witness via mail@globalwitness.org.
- 330 Global Witness wrote a letter to Moeung Samphan in February 2007 to ask for his comments on the main issues raised in this report as involve or relate to him. At the time of the report's publication, Global Witness had not received a response. For information on the content of this letter to Moeung Samphan please

- contact Global Witness via mail@globalwitness.org.
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- 334** Interview with an RCAF officer, 2005.
- 335** Interview with an official, 2005.
- 336** Interview with a Brigade 70 officer, 2004.
- 337** Interviews with two businessmen, 2004.
- 338** Interviews with port officials, 2005.
- 339** Written complaint lodged by residents of Trapeang Svay Village, 2006.
- 340** Global Witness wrote a letter to Khai Narin in February 2007 to ask for her comments on the main issues raised in this report as involve or relate to her. At the time of the report's publication, Global Witness had not received a response. For information on the content of this letter to Khai Narin please contact Global Witness via mail@globalwitness.org.
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- 342** Interview with SGS representative, 2004.
- 343** Interview with local residents, 2005.
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- 359** Five letters signed by Preap Tan, Hing Bun Heang, Ty Sokhun and others, January and February 2004.
- 360** Field observations; interviews with monks, 2003 and 2004.
- 361** Field observations; interviews with officials and local residents, 2003 and 2004.
- 362** Interviews with timber traders, 2004.
- 363** Interview with an RCAF officer, 2005.
- 364** Global Witness wrote a letter to Hak Leng in February 2007 to ask for his comments on the main issues raised in this report as involve or relate to him. At the time of the report's publication, Global Witness had not received a response. For information on the content of this letter to Hak Leng please contact Global Witness via mail@globalwitness.org.
- 365** Global Witness wrote a letter to Siem Touch in February 2007 to ask for her comments on the main issues raised in this report as involve or relate to her. At the time of the report's publication, Global Witness had not received a response. For information on the content of this letter to Siem Touch please contact Global Witness via mail@globalwitness.org.
- 366** Field observations, 2003, 2004 and 2006; interviews with local residents, 2003, 2004 and 2006; interview with sawmill workers, 2006.
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- 368** Global Witness wrote a letter to Koeung Vannak in February 2007 to ask for his comments on the main issues raised in this report as involve or relate to him. At the time of the report's publication, Global Witness had not received a response. For information on the content of this letter to Koeung Vannak please contact Global Witness via mail@globalwitness.org.
- 369** Personal communication from a researcher, 2004.
- 370** Interview with local residents, 2006.
- 371** Global Witness wrote a letter to Sean Leang Chhun in February 2007 to ask for her comments on the main issues raised in this report as involve or relate to her. At the time of the report's publication, Global Witness had not received a response. For information on the content of this letter to Sean Leang Chhun please contact Global Witness via mail@globalwitness.org.
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- 373** Interviews with officials and local residents, 2002; Letter from MAFF Under-secretary of State Chan Tong Yves to Ty Sokhun regarding the sale of 593 m<sup>3</sup> of confiscated timber to Sean Leang Chhun, 8 June 2001; Department of Forestry and Wildlife internal memo regarding US\$30,150 owed by Sean Leang Chhun for the rights to 593 m<sup>3</sup> of confiscated timber, 6 June 2002; invoice sent by DFW to Sean Leang Chhun regarding payment of the US\$30,150, 19 June 2002.
- 374** Letter from Chan Sarun to Ty Sokhun approving Sean Leang Chhun's request to establish a new sawmill for six months in O'Reang District, Mondulkiri, 21 April 2003; Letter from Mondulkiri Deputy Governor Kuy Kun Huor to local officials regarding an extension of Sean Leang Chhun's sawmill permit, 10 February 2004.
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- 379** Global Witness wrote a letter to Chea Sam Ang in March 2007 to ask for his comments on the main issues raised in this report as involve or relate to him. At the time of the report's publication, Global Witness had not received a response. For information on the content of this letter to Chea Sam Ang please contact Global Witness via mail@globalwitness.org.
- 380** Interview with a confidential source, 2004; Solana Pyme, 'Permits Still Going to Woman Linked to Logging', Cambodia Daily, 15 July 2004.
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- 382** Interviews with local residents, 2006.
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- 384** Global Witness wrote a letter to Preap Tan in February 2007 to ask for his comments on the main issues raised in this report as involve or relate to him. At the time of the report's publication, Global Witness had not received a response. For information on the content of this letter to Preap Tan please contact Global Witness via mail@globalwitness.org.
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- 387** IMF, Article IV Consultation - Staff Report; Public Information Notice on the Executive Board Discussion; and Statement by the Executive Director for Cambodia, July 2006.
- 388** Interviews with Brigade 70 officers and businessmen, 2004 and 2005.
- 389** Field observations 2004 and 2005; interviews with Brigade 70 officers 2004, 2005 and 2006.
- 390** Interviews with Brigade 70 officers and local residents, 2004 and 2005.
- 391** Global Witness wrote a letter to Tea Banh in February 2007 to ask for his comments on the main issues raised in this report as involve or relate to him. At the time of the report's publication, Global Witness had not received a response. For information on the content of this letter to Tea Banh please contact Global Witness via mail@globalwitness.org.
- 392** Global Witness wrote a letter to Tea Vinh in February 2007 to ask for his comments on the main issues raised in this report as involve or relate to him. At the time of the report's publication, Global Witness had not received a response. For information on the content of this letter to Tea Vinh please contact Global Witness via mail@globalwitness.org.
- 393** Interviews with customs officials, 2004 and 2005.
- 394** Global Witness investigations, 1997 and 1998.
- 395** Global Witness wrote a letter to Attwood's Managing Director, Lim Chhiv Ho, in February 2007 to ask for her comments on the main issues raised in this report as involve or relate to her or the company. At the time of the report's publication, Global Witness had not received a response. For information on the content of this letter to Lim Chhiv Ho, please contact Global Witness via mail@globalwitness.org.
- 396** Interview with a source in Cambodia's business community, 2005.
- 397** Global Witness wrote a letter to Pen Simon in April 2007 to ask for his comments on the main issues raised in this report as involve or relate to him. At the time of the report's publication, Global Witness had not received a response. For information on the content of this letter to Pen Simon please contact Global Witness via mail@globalwitness.org.
- 398** Global Witness wrote a letter to Tep Bopha Prasdih in February 2007 to ask for her comments on the main issues raised in this report as involve or relate to her. At the time of the report's publication, Global Witness had not received a response. For information on the content of this letter to Tep Bopha Prasdih please contact Global Witness via mail@globalwitness.org.
- 399** Global Witness wrote a letter to Cham Prasdih, in February 2007 to ask for his comments on the main issues raised in this report as involve or relate to him. At the time of the report's publication, Global Witness had not received a response. For information on the content of this letter to Cham Prasdih, please contact Global Witness via mail@globalwitness.org.
- 400** Erik Wasson and Kay Kimsong, 'Sihanouville Tax-Free Zone Awarded to Private Firm', Cambodia Daily, 28 April 2005; Kay Kimsong, 'Minister of Commerce Accused of Nepotism', Cambodia Daily 13 May 2004; Interview with a source in Cambodia's business community, 2005.
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- 403** Interviews with a Brigade 70 officer, 2004.
- 404** Interviews with Brigade 70 officers, officials and businessmen 2004, 2005 and 2006; field observations 2004, 2005 and 2006.
- 405** Interviews with Brigade 70 officers, officials and businessmen, 2004, 2005 and 2006.
- 406** Interviews with officials 2004 and 2005.
- 407** Interviews with officials, 2004 and 2005.
- 408** Interviews with customs officials and port workers, 2005.
- 409** Interviews with officials, 2005.
- 410** Global Witness wrote a letter to Hennessy in February 2007 to ask for its comments on the main issues raised in this report as involve or relate to the company. At the time of the report's publication, Global Witness had not received a response. For information on the content of this letter to Hennessy please contact Global Witness via mail@globalwitness.org.
- 411** Global Witness wrote a letter to Teng Bunma in February 2007 to ask for his comments on the main issues raised in this report as involve or relate to him. At the time of the report's publication, Global Witness had not received a response. For information on the content of this letter to Teng Bunma please contact Global Witness via mail@globalwitness.org.
- 412** Interview with a local resident, 2004.
- 413** Hun Sen speech at the opening of Okhna Mong Port, 2 December 2004, <http://www.cmv.org.kh> (last downloaded 24 March 2007).
- 414** Prak Chan Thul and Lee Berthiaume, 'Some Standing Firm at RUIFA as Deadline Ends', Cambodia Daily, 30 June 2005.
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- 416** Letter from MAFF Minister Chan Sarun to Global Witness, 12 June 2002.
- 417** Interview with a human rights worker, 2006.
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- 419** Interview with a confidential source, 2006; Som Sattana, 'Arrest made in marijuana case after general backs down', Associated Press Worldstream, 22 April 1997.
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- 428** Interviews with port workers and local residents, 2005.
- 429** Interviews with port workers, 2004 and 2005.
- 430** Interviews with diplomats, 2005.
- 431** Interview with a local resident, 2005.
- 432** Global Witness wrote a letter to the InterContinental Hotel in February 2007 to ask for its comments on the main issues raised in this report as involve or relate to the company. At the time of the report's publication, Global Witness had not received a response. For information on the content of this letter to the InterContinental Hotel please contact Global Witness via mail@globalwitness.org.
- 433** Interviews with a Brigade 70 officer, 2005.
- 434** Personal communication from a journalist, 1998.
- 435** Interview with member of staff at the InterContinental Hotel, 2005.
- 436** Interview with Brigade 70 officers, 2005.
- 437** Interviews with a Brigade 70 officer, 2004 and 2005.
- 438** Interviews with an associate of Hak Mao, 2005 and 2006.
- 439** Interviews with officials and businessmen, 2004 and 2005.
- 440** Field observations, 2006.
- For further information on Angola, see for example Global Witness, A Crude Awakening, 1999; All the President's Men, 2002; Time for Transparency, 2004, [www.globalwitness.org](http://www.globalwitness.org).



## global witness

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