



MEDIA RELEASE



May 1st INTERNATIONAL LABOUR DAY

On May 1, a group of young Cambodian women will present a fashion parade that will put the Paris catwalk to shame. Under the banner *Logos of Exploitation*, some of the country's garment workers will take to the stage, showcasing the high profile brands that profit from their labour.

The workers will show the other side of the labels, with messages advocating worker solidarity, labour rights, fair pay, transparent unions and an end to discrimination, exploitation and violence against women.

This is particularly relevant given the current situation where factory workers are fighting to protect their incomes. Factories are increasingly moving away from salary payments towards piece payments. Moreover, some factories are attempting to cut piece payment rates by up to 50%.

Together, the workers will perform original songs and poems; moving accounts of the difficulties faced in their migration from rural villages to urban centres in search of work to support their often impoverished families.

The lives of garment workers are characterised by poor and insecure living conditions, loneliness, low pay and high expenses, forced overtime, long hours, threats and intimidation. Gender, social and economic discrimination perpetuates a disturbing incidence of sexual violence.

Cambodia's move towards WTO accession and the end of the international quota system in 2005, threatens to worsen their situation. Workers will no doubt bear the brunt of greater global competition. Least Developed Countries (LDCs) like Cambodia are unable to compete with states whose governments provide subsidies.

In a show of solidarity, garment workers will be joined by sex workers from Women Network for Unity, a collective of sex workers dedicated to HIV prevention through empowerment. The women will perform songs, role plays and traditional dance.

When: 9am – 12pm
(Garment Worker Fashion Parade and Songs 11am – 11.30am)
Where: Womyns Agenda for Change (Oxfam Hong Kong) office
(Former Kong Kea Restaurant)
No. 1 Sisowath Quay Sras Chork Daun Penh
(North of Wat Phnom, opposite Camintel on the river)

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