

# US Meddling Continues in Cambodia, but with Setbacks

By [Joseph Thomas](#)

Global Research, August 15, 2019

[New Eastern Outlook](#) 14 August 2019

Region: [Asia](#), [USA](#)

Theme: [Intelligence](#), [Law and Justice](#)

*Two Cambodian employees of US government-funded “Radio Free Asia” (RFA) face espionage charges for continuing to work for the foreign information operation even after the Cambodian government ordered it closed.*

Qatari state media, Al Jazeera, in their article, “[Espionage trial of two former RFA journalists starts in Cambodia](#),” would report:

Former Radio Free Asia (RFA) reporters **Uon Chhin** and **Yeang Sothearin** were arrested in November 2017 after a late-night police raid on an apartment rented by the former. They were accused of supplying a foreign state with information, a charge that carries a prison sentence of between seven and 15 years.

RFA, which is funded by the government of the United States, had closed its operations in Cambodia shortly before the arrests. The outlet was known for its critical coverage of the Cambodian government, including frequent reports on corruption and illegal logging.

Al Jazeera also admitted:

Both Uon Chhin and Yeang Sothearin admitted at Friday’s hearing that they had continued sending videos and information to RFA after it had shut down, but they denied that this constituted espionage.

Human Rights Watch’s (HRW) deputy Asia director **Phil Robertson** would make [a statement published on the organisation’s site](#) claiming:

Chhin and Sothearin should never have had to face these bogus espionage charges, and all judicial restrictions on them should be lifted.

HRW’s Robertson made these comments unironically after celebrating and making excuses for Facebook and Twitter’s [censorship of accounts and individuals critical of Western impropriety](#) (including the dubious, often hypocritical work of HRW itself) worldwide.

Cambodian courts vowed to ignore the demands of foreign organisations like HRW, insisting instead they would use evidence and Cambodian law to reach a verdict, [RFA’s own article](#) on the story reported.

## US Meddling in Cambodia Was Extensive

Amid continued hysteria and accusations of “Russian interference” levelled by the United States and its various functionaries against any and all opponents worldwide, the US itself has been involved in meddling in Cambodia’s internal political affairs extensively.

Far from merely funding information operations like RFA, Voice of America and Cambodia Daily Cambodia has since shut down or co-opted, the US literally ran an entire political party with members operating out of Washington DC itself. It protected these proxies from well-earned accusations and charges of sedition with fronts posing as “human rights” organisations also funded by the US government.

Cambodian National Rescue Party (CNRP) leader **Kem Sokha** openly admitted to Washington’s role in propping up his party and its bid to seize power in Cambodia not through elections, but through the same sort of destructive colour revolutions that have swept through Eastern Europe, North Africa and the Middle East.

The Phnom Penh Post in its article, “[Kem Sokha video producer closes Phnom Penh office in fear](#),” would go over the many admissions made by Kem Sokha:

“...the USA that has assisted me, they asked me to take the model from Yugoslavia, Serbia, where they can changed the dictator Slobodan Milosevic,” he continues, referring to the former Serbian and Yugoslavian leader who resigned amid popular protests following disputed elections, and died while on trial for war crimes.

“You know Milosevic had a huge numbers of tanks. But they changed things by using this strategy, and they take this experience for me to implement in Cambodia. But no one knew about this.”

“However, since we are now reaching at this stage, today I must tell you about this strategy. We will have more to continue and we will succeed.”

Kem Sokha would elaborate further, claiming:

“I do not do anything at my own will. Their experts, professors at universities in Washington, DC, Montreal, Canada, hired by the Americans in order to advise me on the strategy to change the dictator leader in Cambodia.”

Fronts posing as “human rights” organisations operating in Cambodia and running defence for CNRP and its supporters include [Licadho](#) funded by USAID and the [Cambodian Center for Independent Media](#) (CCIM) funded by US National Endowment for Democracy-subsidiary the International Republican Institute, Open Society, the British and Australian embassies as well as Canada Fund.

Were Russia doing any of this in the United States, Washington’s reaction would undoubtedly be swift and severe, and backed with full support from supposed “rights advocates” like Phil Robertson and Human Rights Watch. There would shuttered organisations, arrests, charges, trials and lengthy sentences handed out. Yet the United States openly subjects other nations to abuse it would not tolerate itself.

The US reaction to the trial for former RFA employees and its overall attempts to condemn and reverse Cambodia's widening crackdown on foreign interference in its own internal political affairs is an exercise in both hypocrisy and "might makes right." Unfortunately for Washington, the potency of that reaction is diminishing in direct proportion to its diminishing "might" across Asia-Pacific.

Washington's involvement in Cambodia in the first place is aimed not only at co-opting the Cambodian people, their territory and resources, but also at surrounding China with either US client states or failed states unable to aid Beijing in its continued and steady rise upon the global stage.

Washington's recent setbacks are demonstrative of how this policy of encirclement and containment is failing. While compromised "rights advocates" like Robertson attempt to portray Cambodia's recent trial as a miscarriage of justice, it in truth is indicative of a wider trend reversing injustice imposed upon nation's and their sovereignty by Washington and its proxies who have, until recently, operated largely with impunity.

\*

Note to readers: please click the share buttons above or below. Forward this article to your email lists. Crosspost on your blog site, internet forums. etc.

**Joseph Thomas** is chief editor of Thailand-based geopolitical journal, [The New Atlas](#) and contributor to the online magazine "[New Eastern Outlook](#)".

Featured image is from NEO

The original source of this article is [New Eastern Outlook](#)  
Copyright © [Joseph Thomas](#), [New Eastern Outlook](#), 2019

---

[Comment on Global Research Articles on our Facebook page](#)

[Become a Member of Global Research](#)

Articles by: [Joseph Thomas](#)

**Disclaimer:** The contents of this article are of sole responsibility of the author(s). The Centre for Research on Globalization will not be responsible for any inaccurate or incorrect statement in this article. The Centre of Research on Globalization grants permission to cross-post Global Research articles on community internet sites as long the source and copyright are acknowledged together with a hyperlink to the original Global Research article. For publication of Global Research articles in print or other forms including commercial internet sites, contact: [publications@globalresearch.ca](mailto:publications@globalresearch.ca)  
[www.globalresearch.ca](http://www.globalresearch.ca) contains copyrighted material the use of which has not always been specifically authorized by the copyright owner. We are making such material available to our readers under the provisions of "fair use" in an effort to advance a better understanding of political, economic and social issues. The material on this site is distributed without profit to those who have expressed a prior interest in receiving it for research and educational purposes. If you wish to use copyrighted material for purposes other than "fair use" you must request permission from the copyright owner.

For media inquiries: [publications@globalresearch.ca](mailto:publications@globalresearch.ca)