

36th Session of the Human Rights Council (27 September 2017)

**ITEM 10 Interactive Dialogue with
the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Cambodia**

Statement by Ambassador Mitsuko SHINO

The Permanent Mission of Japan in Geneva

Thank you, Mr. President,

Madam Special Rapporteur, Japan highly appreciates the active approach you have taken to your work since assuming your mandate in May 2015. For example, with the inclusion of your visit this August, you have visited Cambodia four times, and have not only met with representatives of the Cambodian government, but have also travelled to the provinces to meet with people from various backgrounds.

After experiencing a tragic civil war, Cambodia went on to achieve remarkable economic development to the benefit of many. And while improvements have been seen as a result of the Cambodian Government's efforts, outstanding issues have yet to be addressed. Japan welcomes reports that June's communal elections appear to have been carried out in a relatively peaceful and orderly manner. We are, however, paying close attention to the recent situation in Cambodia ahead of next year's general election.

Japan appreciates Cambodia's acceptance of international observers to promote increased transparency in its elections to date. We expect Cambodia to avail of international technical cooperation, including the UN mechanism, to ensure that next year's important election will also be open to international observers. In this aspect, we welcome positive engagement of Special Rapporteur.

As penholder, Japan has submitted a draft resolution on the human rights situation in Cambodia, which includes a two-year extension of the mandate of the Special Rapporteur. As with previous resolutions on this issue, we expect this draft resolution to be adopted by consensus

Madam Special Rapporteur,

Concerns have been raised regarding heightening tensions in Cambodia, including with regard to restrictions on the activities of civil society and the media. Can you please share your impressions of the effects of this situation on the general public and their reaction to it, including in the provinces, as well as your thoughts on the background to this heightening of tensions. Also, in your understanding, what kind of technical cooperation does Cambodia need in order to improve the situation?

I thank you Mr. President