



Animal Welfare
Worldwide.

**His Excellency Samdech Techo Hun Sen
Prime Minister of Cambodia
Office of the Prime Minister
Royal Government of Cambodia
Government Peace Building
No. 38, Confederation Russia Blvd (110)
Phnom Penh, Cambodia.**

07 December, 2020

Re: Submission of 1,000,000 signatures to end the dog meat trade in Southeast Asia

Your Excellency,

We are writing on behalf of FOUR PAWS International and more than 1,000,000 people from around the world, including more than 200,000 from Southeast Asia, to kindly request a ban on the dog meat trade as a matter of safeguarding animal welfare, and protecting the health and safety of Cambodian people. The petition can be viewed [here: បញ្ចប់ជំនួញសាច់ឆ្កែ និងឆ្កានៅអាស៊ីអាគ្នេយ៍ | Four Paws \(four-paws.org\)](#)

This matter is perhaps made even more timely than ever given the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, and the role animal trade play in emerging diseases.

Since 2018, FOUR PAWS and Cambodian NGO, Animal Rescue Cambodia have been conducting nationwide investigations into the dog meat trade. The evidence we gathered documented the immense animal cruelty inherent in the trade, unsanitary slaughter methods, and the serious risk the trade poses to public health, largely due to rabies. The publication of our findings has resulted in national and international calls for action to be taken to protect dogs as faithful companions and defenders of public health and national security, not food.

The dog meat trade in Cambodia involves the slaughter and consumption of up to 3 million dogs each year, many of them stolen pets. Research suggests that less than 12% of Cambodians regularly consume dog meat, and consumption is historically not Khmer culture¹. Despite this, the trade continues to involve the mass sourcing of animals of unknown health status, cross-country transport, and import of potentially rabies-infected dogs into cities such as Kampong Cham and Phnom Penh. At the final destination, dogs are killed in unhygienic slaughterhouses by means of drowning, bludgeoning, or hanging. Not only do these practices cause immense animal suffering, but there is also no way to ensure

¹ FOUR PAWS, 2020, A summary report on dog meat consumption in Cambodia

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that meat sold from animals sourced, kept, and slaughtered under such conditions is safe for human consumption. The World Health Organization (WHO) has already explicitly highlighted the trade in dogs for human consumption as a contributing factor to the spread of rabies and The Pasteur Institute recognizes the need for a comprehensive rabies plan that involves large-scale dog vaccination².

Furthermore, the dog meat trade in Cambodia is in clear violation of Cambodia's Law on Animal Health and Production (No. NS/RKM/0166/003), specifically Chapter 8 (Slaughterhouse and Sanitation), Chapter 9 (Movement of Animals and Animal Products), Chapter 11 (Animal Welfare) and Chapter 19 (Inspection)³. The slaughter of dogs specifically is also in violation of Sub-decree 108 on Control of Slaughterhouse and Slaughtering Business and Primary Animal Product Processing Premises.

In July 2020, the Siem Reap Provincial Department of Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries issued a letter outlawing the dog meat trade, reflective of current widespread opinion that dogs are companions, not food⁴. We congratulate this important first step in creating the first dog meat-free province in the Kingdom, and a national ban is the next logical step to ensure other provinces follow suit. Since early 2019, FOUR PAWS and Animal Rescue Cambodia have been collaborating with the General Directorate of Animal Health and Production (GDAHP) to lend support for such a ban.

Since the COVID-19 pandemic emerged from Wuhan, China in late November 2019⁵, other governments in the region have acted to ban the dog meat trade, recognising that it is not something compatible with modern practices and safeguarding human health from future pandemics. For instance, the Chinese cities of Shenzhen and Zhuhai introduced city-wide bans on dog and cat meat consumption, and the **Chinese Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs excluded dogs from the livestock list stating dogs are "companion animals", not "food"**^{6,7}.

On behalf of the undersigned organizations around the globe and the 1,000,000 people who have made their voice heard, we respectfully ask that the Cambodian government take **urgent** preventative measures by:

1. Immediately and permanently banning the trade, slaughter, and consumption of dogs in Cambodia.

² Institute Pasteur, 2017, Rabies in Cambodia

³ Law on Animal Health and Production (No. NS/RKM/0116/003), 2016.

⁴ BBC News, 2020, Dog meat: First Cambodian province bans sale and consumption

⁵ Business Insider, 2020, China just banned the trade and consumption of wild animals. Experts think the coronavirus jumped from live animals to people at a market.

⁶ BBC News, 2020, Shenzhen becomes first Chinese city to ban eating cats and dogs

⁷ International Business Times, 2020, China's Zhuhai Permanently Bans Consumption Of Cat And Dog Meat, Second City To Do So



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2. Enforcing existing legislation to close down illegal dog slaughtering establishments according to the law, specifically sub-decree 108 on Control of Slaughterhouse and Slaughtering Business and Primary Animal Product Processing Premises, under the authority of General Directorate of Animal Health and Production.
3. Issuing a public statement regarding the public health dangers of the slaughter and consumption of dogs.

We look forward to hearing your response regarding this urgent matter and would like to meet with you to discuss how we can support you on the way forward.

Sincerely,

Josef Pfabigan

CEO and Chair of the Board of FOUR PAWS

Sent also on behalf of the following:

1. Animal Rescue Cambodia
2. Phnom Penh Animal Welfare Society
3. Cambodian Animals Protection Association

Copied to:

H.E Veng Sakhon

Minister of Agriculture Forestry and Fisheries
No. 200, Preah Norodom Blvd (41),
Sangkat Tonle Basak, Khan Chamkar Morn,
Phnom Penh, Cambodia.

H.E Mam Bunheng

Minister of Health
No. 80, Samdach Penn Nouth Blvd (289)
Sangkat Beoungkak 2, Khan Tuol Kork,
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1. FOUR PAWS, 2020, A summary report on dog meat consumption in Cambodia, <https://dogcatmeat.four-paws.org/the-truth/a-summary-report-on-dog-meat-consumption-in-cambodia>
2. Institute Pasteur, 2017, Rabies in Cambodia, <https://bit.ly/368lQuY>
3. Law on Animal Health and Production (No. NS/RKM/0116/003), 2016.
4. BBC News, 2020, Dog meat: First Cambodian province bans sale and consumption, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-53334854>
5. Business Insider, 2020, China just banned the trade and consumption of wild animals. Experts think the coronavirus jumped from live animals to people at a market, <https://www.businessinsider.com/china-bans-wildlife-trade-consumption-coronavirus-2020-2>
6. BBC News, 2020, Shenzhen becomes first Chinese city to ban eating cats and dogs, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-china-52131940>
7. International Business Times, 2020, China's Zhuhai Permanently Bans Consumption Of Cat And Dog Meat, Second City To Do So, <https://www.ibtimes.com/chinas-zhuhai-permanently-bans-consumption-cat-dog-meat-second-city-do-so-2960225>

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