



**Contact: David Borgida**  
**Phone: (202) 203-4959**

## **Radio Play Explores Life Under Khmer Rouge**

**Washington, D.C., April 13, 2010** – “Breaking the Silence,” a dramatic play about the impact of the Khmer Rouge regime on the lives of ordinary Cambodians, will make its radio debut April 18-24 on the Voice of America.

The seven scenes of the play will be broadcast by VOA’s Khmer Service on consecutive nights, beginning Sunday April 18 and re-broadcast on weekends in May.

The new theater drama has been stage-produced in several Cambodian provinces for large audiences in recent months.

“The radio broadcasts of the play by VOA Khmer will ensure the drama is heard by a wider, national audience,” said Youk Chhang, director of the Documentation Center of Cambodia, which helped produce the play.

“Breaking the Silence” describes how cruel life was under the Khmer Rouge regime – which held power in Cambodia from April 1975 to January 1979. The play encourages Cambodians affected by the regime to share stories about the past in an effort to heal.

Each of the radio play’s seven scenes – ranging from 15 to 21 minutes each – reflect true stories that Dutch playwright and stage director Annemarie Prins encountered when meeting survivors in recent years.

“The main goal of this production is to find a way out of trauma’s silence; contributing to open dialogue as part of the process of reconciliation,” Annemarie Prins said.

The Documentation Center of Cambodia and Amrita Performing Arts in Phnom Penh collaborated on both the stage production and the radio play production of ‘Breaking the Silence.’

“It is a play which seeks to break Cambodia's silence,” Youk Chhang said. “It is a play about the Cambodian people, their suffering, anger, and courage to move on no matter the circumstances. This play is very important for all Cambodians to see and hear. It will help restore our dignity and humanity and lift up our morality. It will also help our children to better understand their country.”

VOA Khmer’s twice-daily broadcasts in Cambodia are carried on AM 1575, FM 102 and FM 105.

**VOA Press Release**

*The Voice of America, which first went on the air in 1942, is a multimedia international broadcasting service funded by the U.S. Government through the Broadcasting Board of Governors. VOA broadcasts approximately 1,500 hours of news, information, educational, and cultural programming every week to an estimated worldwide audience of more than 125 million people. Programs are produced in 44 languages and are intended exclusively for audiences outside of the United States.*

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