

Supported by the Canada Fund, the **Women's Media Centre** has distributed at cost 70 videos made of the CDRI's conflict resolution workshop in November 1996, which was held in collaboration with IDR. It is available to all NGOs on request, along with accompanying training material on conflict resolution.

Stephen Owen, Director of IDR, is a member of CDRI's board of directors. He was also a member of the team sent to Cambodia in September 1997 by the Parliamentary Centre to assess the value of continued support to democratic institutions. That report recommended that support to **CDRI** (ie, the CCCR) for conflict resolution be considered. He also paid a follow-up visit to CDRI in December 1997.

Robin Sully of the CBA has suggested that the **Cambodian Bar** be assisted to develop dispute resolution capacity (see Legal System section above).

## **F. National Assembly**

### **1. Issues**

Serious doubts hung over the independence of the 120 seat National Assembly following the July 1997 events. However, despite the reduction of Ranariddh support in the Assembly following the flight of the Prince and many of his supporters, including 19 MPs, the Assembly has managed to function with much of its autonomy intact. Stephen Owen, John Bosley and Greg Armstrong, who conducted a field assessment for the Canadian Parliamentary Centre, wrote in their September 1997 report that:

"There was a general perception that the National Assembly is functioning today, not in a perfectly free atmosphere, but with more effectiveness than it has done in a year [business had come to a standstill prior to the July events]...It was pointed out that the Assembly is not representative of all political opinions and that, most notably, the Ranariddh supporters within FUNCINPEC have only a very small group ... remaining in the Assembly. Nevertheless, the Assembly does include far more politicians from various factions of Cambodian political parties than it excludes...."

Since that report, a number of opposition MPs have returned, without incident; 12 remain outside the country, including Ranariddh.

On the technical side, the Parliamentary Centre's report concluded that the National Assembly's Secretariat is seen as politically neutral and the only source of the Assembly's institutional development. To assist the Secretariat, headed by Than Sina, Secretary-General of the Assembly, donors helped establish the Centre for Legal Drafting and Research at the Assembly and the Office of General Research on International Affairs (OGRIA).

## **2. Support for the National Assembly**

### **a) Cambodian Government**