

Cambodia New Vision

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October 25, 2002 [Unofficial Translation]

Briefing the Press on the New National Election Committee

After the adoption by the National Assembly on the new composition of the National Election Committee, Samdech Hun Sen gave the following briefings to the press.

“... I think it (the approval of the election committee members) is a victory of the whole Cambodian nation and it reflects a positive cooperation between the two main political parties with seats in the National Assembly.

It is indeed a message to the people of Cambodia that the general elections will be held on July 27, 2003 according to schedule with a new National Election Committee. It may be a warning that any boycotting attempts would not gain any interest...

We were seeking for 50% + 1 or 62 votes in favor, but the National Assembly have provided us an overwhelming confidence – more than two thirds of the votes.

... With regard to the financial assistance needed for the 2003 elections, HE Deputy Prime Minister Sar Kheng will proceed after the new National Election Committee's members have been adopted.

... HE Sar Kheng will collaborate with the UNDP Cambodia's field representative to organize meetings



On October 03, 2002, Samdech Hun Sen inaugurated the Sunrise Children Village in Kandal Province.

with donor countries, the European Union inclusive, while we have to draft the election expenses.

... According to our calculation we may spend less than the amount used in the 1998 elections and the commune election in early 2002.

... It is because we may not need to take photos of voters, which could be very costly. Also we may not have to print new voting identity card because we could use identity card or what can be identifying voters as defined by law.

... I think that the present environment is different from what we had in the 20th century. We are now in the 21st century, and our people are optimistic and confident that the collaboration of the two parties in the Royal Government would give them peace

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October 15, 2002 [Unofficial Translation]

On the Civil Code and the Civil Procedure Code

“... We could say with pride that the close cooperation between Cambodia and Japan, and the new topic of the Japanese assistance has been bringing the legal reform in Cambodia to fruition.

Though the two codes have yet to be completed, the civil code and the civil procedure code have in fact taken a real shape.

This latest outcome has firmly changed the political program of the Royal Gov-

ernment on its strategies of legal and court reform and has ushered into a new stage the construction of the Cambodian society with justice, equality and peace.

The Royal Government's commitment to carry out reform on ground of clarity of the constitution and the Cambodian social condition of liberal democratic and pluralistic reality in real action has been a fulfillment of its promise.

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October 24, 2002 (Unofficial Translation)

Addressing the Review of the EYS Sector and Setting the 2002-2003 Objectives

“... I have a great honor and pleasure for being able to join with all of Your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen in the closing of the conference to review the completed tasks of education, youth and sports (EYS), while working out the objectives for the coming 2001-2002 school year.

On behalf of the Royal Government and in my own behalf, I wish to express my appreciation and high evaluation to the conference members in providing analysis and exchange of opinions on education, youth and sports for the last school year and in laying out objectives for the next.

Taking this auspicious occasion allow me to offer my sincere appreciation and regards to officials, and teaching staff of all levels in the whole country for their presence in this conference. Through the delegates from various municipalities and provinces, I wish to convey my appreciation and regards to all the teach-

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and security. Our people are well aware of this...

... The two parties in the Royal Government have been doing a good job in the National Assembly. Today's event has shown that they have taken responsibility before the people. With regard to security, we could say that we have been doing a lot. From 1998 up to the present, we have confiscated and destroyed over 10,000 pieces of rifles. This would hopefully be cutting down violence.

... What is promising is that our people have been accustomed to democracy better than in 1998 and earlier. They are more accustomed in the last five years. We may compare the democratic process in Cambodia to a youngster and this would not reverse.

... I think it is the wish of the international community that Cambodia sustains its democratic process. So what we are waiting for is that the international community continues to provide us with assistance as we are in short of financial resource. I used to mention that the current Government was born with the help of two midwives – Japan and the European Union.

... I think that for the third-term Government, we will have more midwives to help with the third legislative elections. How much one would offer is one thing, but what is clear is that the whole amount needed this time would be less than before. Therefore I am confident that

we will have support.

... Over the past months there have been so many exploitative interpretation on issue of who would be the candidate for the post of Prime Minister. I would like to stress publicly that the Cambodian People's Party has no other candidate than Hun Sen for this position. It may be otherwise only if Hun Sen withdraws or dies. May other parties, especially the opposition party, be clear on this matter and be prepared for any split in one's own party rather than being involved with our affairs. I am quite concerned that they spend most of their time to introduce a split within the Cambodian People's Party and to spend less time to manage their own parties.

... We have observed defecations here and there. So my recommendation is that all parties should reserve more time to manage and to strengthen their own parties rather than to seek to destroy CPP. Let me reaffirm that the CPP's Chairman will always be Samdech Chea Sim, as long as he is alive and Hun Sen will be Deputy Chairman, as long as I am alive.

... The same is true for the position of Prime Minister, as long as Hun Sen is alive. No one would have an ambition to take over this position at all if Hun Sen does not walk out. I am sure that some people in the opposition party wanted to replace me in this post. So please do not put the blame on my CPP...■

03 October 2002 [Unofficial Translation]

Inaugurating the Sunrise Children Village in Kandal

"... I have a great pleasure for being able to participate in the inauguration of the Sunrise Children Village, which shows that though they have no parents, children have not been left unattended. The village management and the villagers nearby have provided them with care. Participation of the Buddhist monks and people from nearby areas proves that they really care for our children.

... Let me recall the historic development of the current Sunrise Children Village. Ms Geraldine Cook has already mentioned a number of points already in her address in Khmer. She first came to Cambodia in 1970 and was very impressed of the country.

... Followed by internal rifts and wars, she had set up a children center in Site B (refugee) camp along the Thai-Cambodian border. From then she had to relocate her center eight times already before she came to this stabilized place. Ms Geraldine Cook has taken the Cambodian nationality on 15 of December 1999.

... It is right for her to have addressed the ceremony in Khmer because one of the criteria to become the Cambodian citizen is to speak Khmer.

... I could recall that Ms Geraldine Cook, as an Australian citizen, had come to meet me in 1998 requesting for an immediate intervention in protection of center management and orphans

after the armed conflict in the area. We took care of her proposal and she came to see me again in 1999.

... At that time she came with the children in her center. I was pleased to have seen that despite enjoying foreign assistance and instruction, the Cambodian children could dance beautiful Khmer traditional dances beyond my expectation.

... I offered my appreciation without any reserve to her for the consideration she placed in this matter. Secondly she impressed me when she said that "you are a strongman and I am a strong lady." Five minutes after our conversation her eyes were full with tear and I could feel that she had been excited and overjoyed.

... In face of her difficulty in finding a site for the center, I had then three options in mind. First I would offer her a piece of land here, second I would find a piece of land some where else and third I would cut a part of about two hectares from the land that belong to my bodyguard unit for her together with a few buildings. But she was very happy and overjoyed with the first option without having to listen to my other two...

... I then instructed my colleagues to take her to see the location. It is a ten-hectare size land. I had confidence in making this decision because if in the

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most difficult situation she could raise fund to help the center, she would be more capable of doing so in a normal situation.

... Ten hectares is quite an appropriate size as in the near future there may be more children to whom her center extends service and more donors may want to offer assistance. If vocational training center of some kind could be set up here, it would be beneficial not only for the children in the center but also those in the villages nearby. As far as land is concerned I wish to give my resolute decision. She has now become a Cambodian national at my initiative and His Majesty the King approved the proposal and based on this development we have leased out the land to her for fifty years for free.

... With regards to our laws, I think that we now should offer a permanent title for the center. This should be helpful when Ms Geraldine has to go to donors and could clear out donors' concerns in terms of land ownership.

... This could be said that the Government provides 10 hectares of land as its counterpart fund to her project. May the Ministry of Land Management, Construction and Urbanization and the local authorities concerned transfer the ownership from the current contract to her. As now the center is in a secure place and has become an appropriate place for our orphans, we would not let

them be desperate anymore. We have done something similar to this center in a number of places in Kandal province like in the districts of Angsnuol and Kandalstoeung...

... The fact that I have recommended this location is because I have a vision that it would become an urban area before long. We may argue about small road passing by here, but with the Asian Development Bank financial loan, the construction of the road is starting while the engineering team and the provincial public service are asphaltting it from the Vietnam-Cambodian border end. Once the road is finished we may fulfil our wish of purchasing electricity from Vietnam. So this area would then become an urban one.

... I wish to take this opportunity to express my sincere thanks to Ms Geraldine Cook as well as Madame Ambassador of Australia and other generous fellows in making this center shaping up and I hope you all will continue to provide assistance to the center. I also wish to express my thanks to the local authorities at all levels and the people in the center's vicinity for their supports and encouragement in our efforts to provide care to these orphans.

... This is a gesture of respect for dignity of human being and human rights. I also have to thank my bodyguard unit for the efforts they made in providing help in the center's relocation and protection since

the incident in 1997. I tend to agree with HE Ith Sam Heng, Minister of Social Affairs, that getting the center established is indeed difficult but what is more demanding is the sustainable management of the center.

... I hope that those of you representing the donor community here today would not let these kids starving. As HE Ith Sam Heng had mentioned, I also have provided personal assistance on a monthly basis to a number of orphanages in rice as well as in money in addition to the assistance provided by the Government.

... As I addressed to the second national conference on HIV/AIDS, by 2010 we may have to be prepared for the loss of 230,000 persons of labor forces from HIV/AIDS. This figure is frightening because it is equal to the labor forces of four provinces – Ratanakiri, Stoeungtreng, Mondulakiri and Sihanoukville – combined.

... How many orphan children would be left for us to take care of? In addition to this, we also have people died of traffic accidents, diseases and mines. In our country we have problem of orphans to take care of as in other countries they have problem of lonely elders to tackle. The children always take care of their elders as a tradition.

... As we are in the period of Pchum Ben (Donation for the Ancestors) I wish to recall a Buddhist teaching that goes "donation should be first made to the living

Buddhas at home." Who are they? They are our mothers and fathers. Once the good food is prepared, the living Buddhas at home have to be fed first. In addition to that we have to be clear between sin and merit. Some people committed harm outside the Buddhist temple and tried to be blessed by offering the best food and services to the Buddhist monk in the pagoda.

... Committed sin outside pagoda could not be repaid by behaving well in pagoda. As for the offering, the Buddhist monks have to accept offerings by all no matter what quantity or quality they may be...

... Let me express my impression about the live music program. In some of our TV live music programs, it is unbearable to see accompanying dancers jumping up and down in a peculiar way. This is not to mention the way they dressed.

... May all of us make efforts in preserving our culture and tradition... Another concern is the lack of rain. Normally by the 7th day of the Pchum Ben, we have lots of rain and as of today we are still waiting for rain in many places.

... HE Minister of Agriculture Chan Sarun reported that we have cultivated rice in only 1.5 million hectares out of the projected 2 million hectares. It has been three years consecutively, and this year we have drought as well.

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Efforts made to strengthen the state and private institutions through the creation of laws, principles and regulations, and to build Cambodia into rule of law, democracy and respect of human rights have enjoyed new energy while the civil code and the civil procedure code are in place.

It is in this regard that on behalf of the Royal Government of Cambodia and in my own behalf, I would like to offer congratulation to the national seminar today. I have confidence that the whole seminar will be reflecting the true Cambodian society through the civil code.

The civil code is key legal principle. The civil code plays a role in settling relationship on useable property in relation to a physical or legal person, on relationship between citizen and citizen or between physical and legal person, or between legal persons.

This may include relationship in terms of property rights, change of ownership, compensation, and on family affairs and issue of inheritance. Based on the above characteristics, the civil code is a part of the state policy in providing protection of an overall unity in the relationship of rights and interest protection for people and society aimed at making a social progress.

The significant roles of the civil code and civil procedure code set a record in the legal history of Cambodia of the invaluable assis-

tance given by the Government and people of Japan, their Embassy and JICA - Cambodia, together with the Japanese law experts in developing the two codes.

The legal history of Cambodia would also record with great respect the efforts made by the Cambodia's Ministry of Justice as well as various other lawyers, including here the late Excellency Chem Snguon, former Minister of Justice.

Excellency, ladies and gentlemen are all activists in making the reform policy of the Royal Government a reality with responsibility and efficiency.

I believe that the draft of the civil code and the civil procedure code would certainly become laws and take root in the Cambodian society.

Therefore I request that the Ministry of Justice continue to raise high the spirit of cooperation with Japan aimed at speeding up the completion of the two codes that are of great interest to our society.

Along with this, the Ministry of Justice should organize a working group by disciplines of each code so that they become appropriate advisors, who would then be helpful in facilitating the discussion to pass the codes at the Council of Ministers and the National Assembly.

While making the two codes firmly taking root in our society, the Ministry of Justice should continue to cooperate with the Japa-

nese side in drafting additional and necessary laws on notary, bailiff, storing and registration systems, etc. The Ministry of Justice has to take this opportunity to seek cooperation with Japan to train Cambodian human resources in the field of laws as well as in our reform efforts.

I am confident that Japan would not hesitate to further assist Cambodia especially in this new topic and I believe that this new trial in the history of assistance for development of the Government of Japan would yield a great success on the marvelous land of Angkor.

The preparation of the codes is not only the principle for further strengthening the rule of law but is a foundation of social and national development in the future.

From the start to the present, it has taken us three-and-a-half years to get the work done but the position and principle of the Japanese professors in offering direct assistance to the drafting of the two codes remains firm.

The Cambodia's Ministry of Justice and its experts as well as other Cambodian lawyers who have taken part in the work process has also shown their persistent efforts in putting important legal principles together.

I have strong belief that the draft of the two codes will attract plenty of constructive ideas. It has proven that the Cambodian society is in cooperation for the

improvement of its justice.

Justice is an important part that helps strengthen peace that we have gained completely at the end of 1998.

For peace that needs a share of justice, please allow me to wish first of all the Japanese lawyers good health, wisdom and successes in the international mission of Japan in providing a new type of development assistance.

I wish the seminar energy and wisdom and hope that it will collaborate further with the Royal Government for the sake of peace, democracy and respect of human rights.

We could not get things done out of the blue. So we have to build Cambodian society through this process with faith, patriotism, love for people, patience by our own hands and those of our beloved friends... ■

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43 communes have yet to have rain so our cultivation is slow and the yield would also be less. The Royal Government, NGOs and the local authorities of all levels have to combine efforts to help our people in drought affected areas... ■

02 October 2002 [Unofficial Translation]

Ad-lib Comments at the Closing of the Second National Conference on HIV/AIDS

In addition to the prepared text, while closing the Second National Conference on HIV/AIDS, Samdech Hun Sen made the following comments.

... According to the report, if we have no medicine to prolong the lives, by 2010 we would have 230,000 people more died of AIDS. This figure is equal to the numbers of people in Mundulkiri, Ratanakiri, Stoeungtreng and Sihanoukville together.

... If we were to compare this figure to those caused by war, we could say that death caused by AIDS is more than death caused by war. Before we were worried of death caused by mines. But putting the figures in order we now find that death caused by AIDS is the highest.

... First, in the statistics, the 230,000 people could not be cured completely but only prolong their lives for a while. The second in rank is the number of death caused by traffic accidents.

... Thanks to the efforts made by the Cambodian Government and people and the supports by the donor community, death from mines is approaching 0% rate. But as death and casualties caused by mines decreases, we are being disturbed by the two other incidents – AIDS and traffic accidents.

... I could recall what Doctor Tia Phalla had said in 1998. He said AIDS is the

most dangerous disease. If one were to step on mine, one would die or be crippled alone. As far as AIDS is concerned, if one is HIV/AIDS positive, his wife and children would also be infected.

... Despite the fact that the rate of contagion has decreased, we have to work harder to bring this incidence down further. I wish to seek an understanding that this disease is man-made and not a natural one.

... Sometimes women are not the one who cause the incident, but their husbands who have been infected from different contacts. So we have to increase more education and awareness services about the spread of HIV/AIDS.

... I would like to take this opportunity to express my appreciation and thanks to the National Authority against AIDS as well as the Ministry of Health for their efforts and consideration paid to achieve a wonderful work result. Because efforts made in raising the awareness on HIV/AIDS we could put a halt to the its spread.

... What I wish to say here today is that we should not think only of education services through the media like TV and Radio but many other means. We have to have a proper thought on what an advertised picture means to the people.

... Like before there was a poster with a man thinking

of a beautiful lady and it was posted on the corner to the brothel... It is like telling bystanders going to that place. We have to make efforts to improve this situation.

Another factor is the education service needed to help prevent discrimination against HIV/AIDS carriers... It is a human right issue and it should be open to participation by all. Despite the fact they are AIDS carriers, still they are human beings. Our nation has to refrain from being split by those with HIV/AIDS and those without.

... In a recent UN Conference, Cambodia has been allocated with more than 16 million dollars for combating with AIDS and the Royal Government will add further to this amount of money aimed at offering these AIDS positive people access to the medicine.

... We have to take into consideration issue of distribution of medicine without disparity. We have adopted a plan that is no different to the one for tuberculosis. Take for instance, if we have 230,000 people died of AIDS, how many orphans would we have to take care of.

... We have now approached the Boat Racing festival. Those coming from the rural areas will flood in the city. The Ministry of Health has to take care of this matter as coming from the countryside they may lack experience in

face of issue of brothels, etc. We have to increase our efforts in raising their awareness of HIV/AIDS so that they know how to protect themselves.

... Mines could be more obvious as there are signs telling about them but this kind of disease is quite spreading once it is infected. We have to look into the problem because our boat racers are no old but adult people. I am glad to see monks in the religious institution also participated in raising awareness on the disease...■

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vent the future perpetration of serious crimes. The world for our children, grandchildren and great grandchildren must enjoy real peace, security and well-being.

The world to be inherited by the next generation must be in our thoughts as we work hard during the two days of this conference. I wish all the presenters and participants at this conference good health, sharp minds and strong commitment in putting the world under the protection of the law, and in ensuring that laws govern everything in the world...”■

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ing staff of all levels for the efforts they made in fulfilling the task of providing our children and youth with training.

This is an active contributing factor in the restoration and development of the education sector, which is the most important policy in the development strategy, aimed at generating economic growth and poverty reduction.

As HE Im Setthi, Secretary of State for Education, Youth and Sports has mentioned, all topics included for discussion in the conference and the results achieved in this moment are clear response to the Royal Government policy and strategies, which are demanded for further implementation. I remember that recently we have organized an education forum and various round table discussions, like the one held on September 13, 2002 with international organizations and donor countries, aimed at determining education actions in the future. I understand that the education conference could be considered as the education forum mentioned above, and it was in fact further broadening the discussion in a larger scale.

We have delegates coming from all provinces and municipalities to participate and give out their opinions to reflect strong and weak points from the past year, and to further improve the coming school year. Every round table discussions on education -- the

first discussion was in 1994, the second discussion was in 2001, and the third discussion that was held recently -- has defined its five-year strategic planning and prioritized actions base on a yearly advance in order to respond to new need of national development.

In closing the third national education forum to review the 2002-2006 Education Sector Support Program (ESSP) on September 13, 2002, I proposed ideas in connection with the topic "Education for All" and the strategy for poverty reduction.

They are similar to the commitments made by the Royal Government in the Conference on "Education for All" in Dhaka in 2000 that Cambodia will try to achieve the "Education for All" target by year 2015.

I have offered my support to the priority ESP and ESSP. The two plans strategically focus on 9 year basic education by promoting the enrolment up to 2.4 million in primary schools (from grade 1 to 6) and up to 0.8 million in the secondary schools (from grade 7 to 9) by the year 2005. Actually, the overall enrolment in primary schools has risen from 1.9 million in 1996 to over 2.7 million in 2001, representing an increase of 42% in the last five years.

At the same time, we have to continue to implement the Priority Action Plan (PAP) for basic education, which is a strategy to increase enrolment to the maximum of students in

primary education in all 24 municipalities-provinces throughout the country.

This is implemented with a focus being placed on the students from poor families, female gender, and ethnic minority. Overall, the PAP performance has been highly appreciated and gained gratification from teachers and their parents as an effective and transparent program.

Furthermore, the formal education cannot absorb all the children and cannot guarantee all of them the 9-year basic education. Thus, we have turn to the non-formal schooling by making this system more effective and better in quality.

This is to ensure that all children and adults are entitled to basic education equitably without discrimination on sex, races or their social status, while focusing on the improvement of the latter's education program to that of the formal one. This will also enable them to be well prepared for future careers, which is the main purpose of the Royal Government's education policy for a "universal 9-year basic education linked to literacy and vocational training".

In this regard, I understand that for the new school year and the 2002-2006 five-year plan, we have to drive further the Priority Action Plan (PAP), the Education Strategic Plan (ESP), and the Education Sector Support Plan (ESSP), for qualification and efficiency taking the following prioritized activities into consid-

eration:

- *Strengthen the quality of basic education to ensure equitable and increased rate of enrolment, reduced retention and drop out rate providing facilitation and greater opportunity for poor and girl children ;*
- *Improve the quality of secondary education, by linking the education to technical and vocational training to enable the students to quickly acquaint jobs and continue to higher education;*
- *Strengthen the quality of higher education, by improving academic curricula and standards to the levels of neighboring countries in the region and to the levels that meet the market requirements;*
- *Continuous teacher development at all levels through improvements in both new and continued teacher training programs linked to the improvement in the teachers' living standard, with attention given to women according to gender principle in education;*
- *Develop sustainable provision of core instructional material in term of equipment and facilities in schools and educational institutions, which are the prerequisite for quality and effective teaching services;*
- *Expand the non-formal education system, im-*

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proving training programs for literacy and complementary education, and re-entry programs, providing the opportunities for disadvantaged people, adults and children, to get the basic education toward the objective of "education for all".

- *Develop activities of youth and sports by mobilizing children and youth to become new forces to take over the national development.*

We all know very well that we could not fulfil this task alone. We have to gather assistance from international community and international development organizations.

In order to implement these prioritized actions, I think that we have to consolidate further partnership in the development of education sector because if we were to have no further assistance from our partners, we would not be able to realize such an achievement in just a short time.

It is true that many countries are more advanced than Cambodia, especially our neighbors have spent decades to build their countries, to organize their authorities, to educate their people, to develop their economy and to integrate themselves into the international economy. But Cambodia has had to jump over these phases within a short time. We have to fulfil these tasks in just a few years. The reality has re-

quired us to do so. It is in this regard that we have to commit for the fulfillment of these tasks by using to the most the resources that we could gather and collect.

While strengthening partnership with international organizations and donor countries, the Royal Government of Cambodia has made all-out efforts aimed at increasing investment in area of education through the provision of an appropriate budget from the national budget and through the contributions that are encouraged from both private and civil society.

In the Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) for the next 3 years, the Royal Government is committed to double the allocations for education sector, including annual recruitment of 5,000 new teachers and increased budget for PAP programs. These are what I wish to share with you all and to recommend to the conference for consideration while fulfilling the tasks in the new school year and for years to come.

In its efforts to develop the education sector, the Royal Government has been promoting the implementation of initiatives within the framework of regional and international cooperation, especially within the frameworks of ASEAN, the GMS (the Greater Mekong Sub-region) and other cooperation mechanism such as the ASEAN + 3 and ASEAN + 1. In less than two weeks, the First Summit of the Greater Mekong

Sub-region and the 8th ASEAN Summit will be held for the first time in Phnom Penh.

The most important objective of the meetings was to seek cooperation in human resource development aimed at promoting competition with partner countries as well as in Asia as a whole.

This is in fact the best opportunity for Cambodia to learn from experiences and to seek supports from partner countries in the above mechanisms for the sake of realizing the objectives of our education sector. We have foreseen potentials for cooperation with partner countries, because:

- *Their successes in area of human resource development, and*
- *Their strong points in the development of human resource.*

Within the framework of ASEAN, we have launched the ASEAN Integration Initiatives and to seek supports from the +3 countries – China, Japan and South Korea, as well as India, (which is being included this year) for the process. Particularly, in the framework of the GMS, we will urge for the Phnom Penh Plan for Development Management.

I have confidence that the building of mastery and partnership in developing the Cambodian education infrastructure is complementary to one another and would give us a multiple result rather than simple addition.

Our strategy is to master the development project and program that is responding to the reality of Cambodia by learning from positive experiences of countries and development partners while expanding the circle and extension of cooperation aimed at seeking support for its strategy and efforts in human resource development.

Having realized the above objectives, we will have a strong human resource, which will become active and leading partner in the regional as well as international cooperation according to one's own field of superiority.

Our wish is to build a prosperous Cambodia, well-educated and cultured people, free-from illiteracy, hungers and all kinds of diseases, and peacefully coexisting with its neighbors.

Taking this opportunity, on behalf of the Royal Government and my own behalf, I wish to offer my sincere appreciation to officials and staff of the MoEYS, professors and teachers, for the efforts they made in fulfilling this task with high professional moral standard despite having to overcome many hardships...■

09 October 2002 [Extensive Excerpts]

Opening Remarks to the Conference on the International Criminal Court

“... The Capital of Phnom Penh of the Kingdom of Cambodia, has the great honor of hosting the conference of observing experts of the International Criminal Court (ICC). This signifies the sympathy and support for Cambodia expressed by the believers in justice and all other supporters who established the International Criminal Court for the benefit of all citizens of the world. I extend my warmest welcome to all the presenters and participants. I wish you all success in keeping the world safe from criminal acts, including any future crimes of aggression...

I am pleased to join everyone's appreciation for those who devoted their efforts to enable the creation of the International Criminal Court as a full-fledged international effective 1 July 2002. Our hopes and dreams of a better world have become closer to reality through the establishment of the International Criminal Court. Half a century ago, this dream was forced into being, in the face of powers that caused genocide, crimes against humanity, criminal wars and aggression.

On 17 July 1998, in fulfillment of the dream and willingness, the Rome Statutes on International Criminal Court was set up. Four years later, on 1 July 2002, the International Criminal Court came into existence according to the provisions of the Rome Statutes. This was an unprecedented

achievement in international jurisprudence, one that will actively contribute to ensuring world peace. The shocks that have been endured by humanity over the last century, where millions, including children, suffered from unexpected atrocities have made all of us recognize that serious criminal acts have considerably threatened the peace, security and the well-being of the international community.

Peace, security and well-being cannot be sustained and stabilized without justice. Therefore, I am convinced that the countries in the region and others will ratify the Rome Statutes of the new International Criminal Court soon. Currently there are 81 countries which have ratified the Rome Statutes, of which there are only a few Asian countries. Cambodia is a founding-member of the International Criminal Court. Moreover, Cambodia is ready to send its judges as candidates of the International Criminal Court and expects the support from all the member states for this initiative.

Cambodia sincerely urges all friends in the Asia Region to enter into membership on the International Criminal Court. Through this mechanism, all nations can contribute more meaningfully to maintaining peace, security and the well-being of our region as well as to the world.

So far, I have addressed to our regional and interna-

tional friends. Now, allow me from this forum to speak to our beloved fellow citizens and government officials! As I stated earlier, Cambodia is a member-state and a founding member of the International Criminal Court. First, I think it is important to raise awareness of the International Criminal Court among the public and people of all walks of life. The Cambodia Human Rights Commission, which is the government body, must actively and comprehensively fulfill the task of educating the people about the International Criminal Court.

We all know that only those crimes that have taken place after 1 July 2002 may be brought before the International Criminal Court for judgment. This means the International Criminal Court does not have mandate to address crimes which occurred before its establishment. Moreover, the nature of the International Criminal Court is not to replace or fulfill the functions of national courts. The International Criminal Court will enter into cases only when the national courts are unable or unwilling to act. Thus it is clear that the relationship between the International Criminal Court and the national courts is complementary. Such complementarity requires us to exert our best efforts to enfold criminal procedures of the International Criminal Court into the procedures of our na-

tional criminal law.

This will bring our national court proceedings closer to the international-level standards of the International Criminal Court. This requires the strengthening of our legal and judicial system, involving the improved quality of national courts and improvements in the protection and respect for human rights in Cambodia. These days represent an opportune time for such reforms since are in the process of formulating a new criminal code and procedures. Thus I urge the authorities responsible to consider, and urgently so, what needed for our national criminal laws to be consistent with the Statutes of the International Criminal Court.

I reaffirm that education and awareness-raising on the International Criminal Court, and the inclusion of the provisions of the Statutes of the International Criminal Court into our national criminal laws are the two most important things that we need to attend to. Over the past 50 years, the world has gone through more than 250 wars and armed conflicts. These conflicts have caused the suffering and death among about 150 million people.

The emergence of the International Criminal Court as a new feature of world justice, will equip the world with a new protection and weapon that will help pre-

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