

Keynote Address

By

Samdech Akka Moha Sena Padei Techo HUN SEN
Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Cambodia

At the

Opening and Dinner Reception of "6th Xiangshan Forum"

Under the theme of

"Security and Cooperation in the Asia-Pacific Region: Reality and Vision"

Beijing, at 19:00, 16th October 2015

******+******

- ***Excellency General Fan Changlong Vice Chairman of Central Military Commission of the People's Republic of China***
- ***Excellency General Chang Wanquan State Councilor, Minister of Defense of the People's Republic of China***
- ***Excellency Admiral SUN Jianguo and Excellency Lieutenant General Gao Jin,***
- ***Excellencies Leaders of the Asia-Pacific Region,***
- ***Distinguished Participants of the 6th Xiangshan Forum!***

Today, it is my great honor and pleasure to attend the opening of the 6th Xiangshan Forum under the theme of "**Security and Cooperation in the Asia-Pacific Region: Reality and Vision**" being held in the beautiful capital of Beijing. On behalf of the Royal Government and People of Cambodia and myself, I would like to profoundly thank the government and people of the People's Republic of China for the warm hospitality extended to me and my delegation.

At the outset, while taking the opportunity of my first participation to address this "**6th Xiangshan Forum**", I would like to express my appreciation and personal conviction that this forum is extremely crucial for expanding and strengthening security cooperation of the Asia-Pacific region.

It is a rare opportunity for us together to prepare longer-term vision and roadmap for in-depth cooperation among regional countries and concerned stakeholders with the aim to ensure security, stability, harmony, prosperity and sustainable development of our region. This forum, indeed, will make valuable contribution to building trust and fostering confidence by improving information exchanges and dialogues on security and development of the Asia-Pacific region. In this regard, I would like to encourage all participants to provide comments and share experiences that will be used to prepare effective and efficient responses to various challenges as well as to create new development opportunities for each of our every nations.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Over the past decades, the Asia-Pacific region has been experiencing a very rapid political, economic and social transformation. Thanks to China's economic growth, our region has become not only the center of global growth but also the leading region for global economic recovery and the catalyst for political stability in the region.

Indeed, regional trade has been growing rapidly in Asia, especially since the inception of ASEAN Free Trade Area in 1992. From 2003 to 2013, bilateral trade between ASEAN and China grew fivefold from US\$78 billion to US\$443 billion. China has become the ASEAN's largest trading partner since 2009. In 2014, ASEAN is China's third-biggest trading partner, with bilateral trade worth US\$480 billion, the increase by 8.23 percent from a year earlier 2013. Although the China-ASEAN ties have been fast developing, I believe that there lies great potential for both sides to further enhance the cooperation. In fact, ASEAN is actively working to expand its connectivity within the East Asia Region through the establishment of Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) that will boost trade and economic activities within the region and will be one of the world's largest Free Trade Agreement. This would allow the East Asia to continue its integration more closely and comprehensively. Thus, the Asia cooperation and integration model could be built on the ASEAN experiences

and gradually include more countries over time, which would eventually result in unhindered flow of trade and investments throughout Asia.

Because of the rapid development and untapped vast potentials, our region has been playing more important roles in development and other global affairs. This indicates the increasing need to maintain stability, peace, security and harmony within the region. Undeniably, prosperity cannot be pursued in the absence of peace and security, the two factors that are essential for global long-term prosperity. As Asia becomes the center of the global economy, it is our self-interest for having the rest of the world doing well economically and politically. Therefore, Asia must manage its rising role as a key player of global governance in a flexible and constructive way. As an emerging global leader, we should show the world that Asia is a responsible region.

In this sense, rising influence of Asia will bring new challenges and responsibilities. Asia, led by China, India, Indonesia, Japan and the Republic of Korea, will need to assume greater ownership and responsibilities for the global commons. They need to gradually shift from a passive observant in debate of defining global orders and rules follower to be an active and constructive participant in setting out rules and the enforcement. In this respect, regional integration and cooperation are critical for Asia's march toward prosperity and stronger influence of Asia.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

With prideful successes that we have achieved in further making our cooperation more comprehensive, this forum is being held in the backdrop where some countries in the region are encountering various challenges in socio-economic area and security, including terrorism, food and energy security, transnational crimes, aviation security, human trafficking as well as the evolving geo-political crisis, etc. The option left in our hand in combating these crimes is to strengthen our joint commitment of working together in all forms through bilateral and multilateral mechanisms under both regional and global framework.

In this context, I would like to share some perspectives in relation to the theme of the **6th Xiangshan Forum** as follows:

1- Challenges of ASEAN:

While putting effort to realize ASEAN Economic Community by the end of 2015, we notice that ASEAN is now facing some challenges, including the dependency of ASEAN's economic growth on the consumption of advanced economies specifically the recovery of the US, EU and Japan. In this regard, financial crisis in EU thus far has been a main reason for trade rebalancing between EU and ASEAN member states. Due to low consumption and the decline in purchase order, this crisis has caused the decrease in export from ASEAN to EU and the slowdown of Asia's trade and economic development. On top of this, the dramatic drop of global oil price has also negatively impacted revenue of some oil exporters in ASEAN. However, I think that this impact can be positively addressed, but it requires our joint commitment for innovation and improvement of competitiveness and connectivity among countries and regions. In this connection, I would like to underline the support and highly value the significant role of China in regional development, notably the establishment of Asia Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) and "**21st Century Maritime Silk Road Initiative**". For ASEAN, we have strong commitment to realize ASEAN Economic Community by 2015 as well as develop and implement the ASEAN Post-2015 Vision in a highly effective manner. This would make ASEAN integration deeper and more comprehensive in order to transform ASEAN into a community that pays attention to its people with stability, peace, harmony and prosperity as well as undertaking its indispensable centrality role in regional affairs.

2- Security trend in the Asia-Pacific Region:

For the past years, the leaders of influential countries in the region and the globe have placed more attention to new developments in Asia-Pacific region, specifically concerning security, stability and cooperation. Relation between the US and China is extremely important for Asia-Pacific. Washington and Beijing are conscious of their complex interdependency

and have been building mechanisms across their bilateral relationship to help manage their relations.

After the cold war, the US has become a superpower in the Asia-Pacific region after the collapse of the Soviet Union. At present, new changes in the region, particularly the emerging of China in both economic and military terms, have brought new strategic rebalancing. In economic dimension, China has experienced high growth for the past decades and advanced into the second economic superpower in the world. China has also become one of the largest and major economic partners with almost all countries around the world, including the US. In military dimension, China has been strengthening and modernizing military base, both hard and soft, in order to ensure its sovereignty and integrity.

In addition to the two superpowers China and the US that are influential over Asia-Pacific security, there are some other countries that have been contributing to the architecture of Asia Pacific region. In fact, Japan has been expanding its economic and political influence over the region by focusing on ASEAN members, India and Australia, with its Proactive Contribution to Peace policy. The recent amendment of Japan's constitution has drawn attention of countries in the region and the world to closely monitor. India, under the leadership of Prime Minister Modi, has nudged its vision from Look East Policy to Act East Policy, which is an important efforts to strategically influence the Asia-Pacific region. Russia is a traditional superpower in the region and the world that should not be overlooked, and it has been re-strengthened its strategic role in the region.

Overall, all Asian countries including Cambodia have been contributing to the development of the Asia-Pacific Region; and we wish to see positive relation among all superpowers to have constructive engagement and trusted cooperation so that major regional and global challenges can be addressed particularly to enhance security, stability and cooperation in all sectors.

3- Regional maritime security and terrorism:

As far maritime security is concerned, I think that we have to continue to strictly abide to the approach of dialogue, discussion and trust building.

The South China Sea issue should be further addressed using the existing mechanism under ASEAN – China framework, including Declaration on the Conduct of Parties, Six-Point Principles on the South China Sea and putting more efforts to the conclusion of Code of Conduct, especially the direct discussion among parties having territorial disputes. Continued joint activities among all concerned parties is necessary to build mutual trust. Overall, the adherence to peaceful approach in line with principles of international laws is the solution that could ease tension and last to ensure peace, security and good cooperation. In this respect, I think all relevant parties should continue doing whatever can be done first, following the Early Harvest Approach, to build trust and confidence.

For the situation in East China Sea and Ukraine, we observe its historical complication. Generally, the Royal Government of Cambodia encourages all relevant parties to be patient and make further efforts to resolve problem peacefully, following principles of international laws, while refraining from using military muscle to solve the problem. Our common interest are maintaining stability, peace and security in the region and the world for the happiness of our people.

In terrorism, we recently observe that ISIS has been expanding and is seriously threatening the stability and security of some regions and the world. The rapid development of ICT has become an effective tool for the spreading information, communicate extremism ideology and building of network of terrorists. Although the ISIS is situated afar from Southeast Asia, it remains a concern for the region. Recently, the ISIS has lured young adults in Southeast Asia to become its members. The Royal Government of Cambodia has closely watched this development. Taking this opportunity, Cambodia, joining with other countries, would like to express its full support to the international campaign against ISIS, especially through proactive cooperation, information sharing and capacity building.

4- Effective rescue and disaster management

As we all know, disaster risks management and mitigation is a long-term undertaking and complicated issue that requires us to jointly resolve it

through strengthening institution, formulating regulatory framework, developing disaster management mechanism based on the actual situation of each country in the region, and further expanding and fostering cooperation for disaster management, especially information exchange and knowledge sharing program focusing on prevention and mitigation of disaster risks at both national and international levels.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen!

In the medium term, it might be unavoidable to constitute a new architecture for Asia. Asia will need to develop its own unique model of regional cooperation and integration that builds upon the positive experiences from the past in order to enhance resiliency, competitiveness and regional development. In this light, ASEAN, presently a leading architecture of regional cooperation, have to strengthen itself to maintain its centrality role in regional cooperation and as a main facilitator in Asia.

The creation of ASEAN+1 and the ASEAN+3, ASEAN Regional Forum and East Asia Summit (EAS) have helped promote peace and stability in the region. These fora and meetings offer mechanism for strategic discussions and productively exchanging views on many issues affecting the region. For instance, ASEAN Regional Forum and East Asia Summit have been playing an important role in trust building as well as the strengthening of political and security cooperation in the Asia-Pacific region. I believe these fora and summits have potential roles in building trust and confidence, as well as to seek diplomatic measures in preventing and addressing conflicts.

Overall, there are reasons for optimism in peace, stability and cooperation in the region. The long-term growth of Asia that has expanded the economy on the unprecedented scale is our most important strength. Certainly, risks of miscalculation and policy error may not be eliminated in some circumstances. However, the growing strength and size of economy as well as better connectivity and closer integration of regional relation are the basis for us to believe that the shifting polarity of regional and global power can be constructively managed for the sake of stability, peace, security and development. The positive and stable solution among all countries, specifically larger nations including China, Russia, India, Japan

and the United States will be essential for long lasting peace, security and prosperity in the region. I strongly believe that China, ASEAN and other relevant countries would work together to deal with risks and challenges for collective benefits and create win-win situation for all concerned parties.

Taking this opportunity, I would like to urge all relevant stakeholders to focus attention on good cooperation in all sectors—through deeper and more comprehensive economic integration, trade facilitation and constantly improvement of investment climate—to assure favorable environment for narrowing development gap as well as for sustainable and inclusive development in the Asia-Pacific region.

Finally, I would like to reiterate that the **6th Xiangshan Forum** being held now will make valuable contribution to realizing the shared aspiration of our nations which is to achieve peace, security, stability and sustainable development and to build a region that all countries and nationalities can live together with harmony, progress and prosperity.

Thank You for Your Attention!