

## International Labor Day Celebration at Container Port in Sihanoukville

(01 May 2023 (am) — Excerpts and Unofficial Translation)



### (1) Westerdam to return to Sihanoukville port to mark the history of Cambodia's humanitarian gesture

Today we are celebrating three ceremonies together. The first is the celebration of the 137th anniversary of International Labor Day. The second is the groundbreaking ceremony for the construction of the container

terminal at Sihanoukville Autonomous Port (SAP), and the third is the 70th anniversary of the Cambodian-Japanese diplomatic relations [...] three years ago, everyone here knew that the port of Sihanoukville had done an important job of rescuing (the stranded) Westerdam ship, on which there were thousands of people who finally safely returned to their country. This is a humanitarian gesture of Cambodia. I heard that in December this year, the Westerdam will return to Cambodia with the SAP planned to make a historic mark on Cambodia's concern for the right to life [...]

## Calmette Multi-Specialty Center Building

(23 May 2023 - Excerpts and Unofficial Translation)

### (1) Calmette sole resource would not finish the building in a timely manner

[...] At the time that my mother-in-law was being treated at Calmette Hospital, and that was the reason I missed going to the ASEAN-Korea and Mekong-Korea meetings (which, I was the one who work to promote it from Foreign Ministers forum to one of the Heads of State and/or Heads of Government) [...] I saw the building was under construction. I asked the doctor Chheang Ra of Calmette Hospital, how many years has

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### (2) Respect workers' rights, not just one day, but every day

Every year on May 1st, I come here to talk to SAP workers on behalf of workers throughout the Kingdom of Cambodia. We have thousands of factories. We cannot go talk everywhere. I chose Sihanoukville Port to hold a get-together on behalf of workers across the country. On behalf of the Royal Government and on my own behalf, I would like to express my gratitude and congratulations to the workers all over the country

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## Sending Cambodian Sportsmen to 32nd SEA Games

(01 December 2022 (pm) — Excerpts and Unofficial Translation)

### (1) We thank HM the King for giving the fire for the SEA Games

Before talking about other issues, I would like to thank His Majesty the King for the travel he made to Siem Reap to light the torch for SEA Games. The torch has passed through all 10 ASEAN countries, including us. Due to the busy Ramadan, Brunei Darussalam could not receive it. Now that the torch is back and passing through our country, provinces have been receiving it as if it were a provincial holiday [...] I see people in the streets everywhere, especially in Phnom Penh, there is an arrangement at the Victory

Monument, to welcome the torch as if it were a holiday of the Kingdom of Cambodia. We thank HM the King for taking care of everything related to the conduct of the 32nd SEA Games [...] we have had a good preparation. Just observing the torch relay, I can see a warm welcome from the people  
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## Conferring Agricultural Diplomas

(15 May 2023 - Excerpts and Unofficial Translation)

### (1) Agriculture is the core of economic growth and food security

Today we distribute diplomas to 3,279 students as agricultural technicians [...] we see that the number of female students is not large in the agricultural sector. I think that in the future, there will be a large number of female students to participate in agriculture or the agricultural sector [...] (such as) agro-industry, agribusiness or agrotourism or whatever [...] the scope of it is really huge. Nevertheless, we have a few female graduates today and will become specialists for agriculture in the Kingdom of Cambodia, which remains the core sector supporting economic growth and/or, in other words, supporting Cambodia's food security [...]

### (2) Agriculture evolved from lack of rice to export food abroad

The share of the agricultural sector (in GDP) to date is just  
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## Meeting Workers at Toyal Group PP Special Economic Zone

(15 May 2023 - Excerpts and Unofficial Translation)

### (1) Cambodia provides 1 million doses of Covid-19 vaccine and some medical equipment to Myanmar

[...] It was difficult to forbid us (from meeting each other). It is like we – father and children or grandfather and grandchildren missing each other. Hopefully the Ministry of Health will not sue us for violating safety distance rules [...] I should clarify the purpose of the meeting. In fact, this is my second round in the process of meeting with workers. I have been wanting to meet since 2020, but Covid-19 broke out. We paused. In 2021, Covid-19 continues. We also suspended. In 2022, Covid-19 remained and we still had

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who have worked hard to contribute to the development of the nation. Today, there are probably not less than 90% of factories that hold happy workers' gatherings [...] I would remind you that "effort to respect for workers' rights is not just one day, May 1st. We must respect workers' rights regularly, daily, every time." That is the best point in the relationship between workers and factory owners [...]

### **(3) Do not internationalize demonstrations, hired demonstrations are not respect for rights**

I would ask some foreign friends who have sponsored the internationalization of the (remaining) more than 100 demonstrators for more than two years. It should not be. It was started with more than 300 demonstrators and the number has dwindled to just over 100. (One can) raise the question "how can someone who is a worker can, during the two years of unemployment, feed themselves and are full of energy to protest? It is not that the Royal Government does not know where is the source of their financial support?" Hired demonstration is not a good thing and it is not a respect for rights [...] may our foreign friends who give such money, withdraw themselves, and stop internationalize the demonstrations in Cambodia [...] some unions in Cambodia are given money by foreigners [...]

### **(4) If the port falls under private management, Japan would not lend money and provide assistance**

I should remind a little bit (regarding the port management), and SAP must remember. If I had not been careful, this port would have fallen into private hands. It was in the time of coalition government. I did not agree with giving this port to the private sector. I can say that if this port becomes a private port, we could not expect Japan to lend us money and provide assistance for this port. Definitely, Japan will not in-

volve [...] Hun Sen has been a surgeon who makes this port of Sihanoukville grow [...] Some say how could we develop the port while we have no money. I say that (if we have not got money yet, we may leave) the port (as is) and it is not rotten. Leave it at that and wait until we can afford to build it. This year marks the 70th anniversary of Cambodia-Japan relations [...] I have worked with my Japanese friends for 33 years, from the time of His Excellency Toshiki Kaifu as Prime Minister and Taro Nakayama as Foreign Minister. That was the time when I traveled to Japan to sign the establishment of the Supreme National Council (SNC). Japan has contributed to the search for peace in Cambodia. Next, Japan played an important role in providing grants for the development of Cambodia [...]

### **(5) Japan's way to help Cambodia pay off debt so that it can borrow again**

Japan agreed to give us a loan only in 1999. Why is that? [...] the reason is the previous regimes owed money to Japan, especially the Lon Nol regime. Japan calculated those debts in principles, interests, and the fines. As a rule, if we have not repaid them yet, we cannot borrow more money [...] Japan knows we do not have money to repay the debts. What does Japan do? Japan supplies Cambodia with corrugated zincs, gasoline, and kerosene for sale in Cambodia. We sold them out [...] we got the money to pay Japan [...] Japan got the money and put it in our treasury. They did not take the money out to Japan [...] when we have paid those debts we signed (with the former Japanese ambassador (Satoshi) Saito to start building the port [...]

### **(6) Negotiations with the Prime Ministers of Japan on deepening Cambodian ports**

Before His Excellency Shinzo Abe stepped down as Prime Minister in 2018, in Tokyo, [...] we agreed to focus on what is called maritime logistics. We pinpointed on issues related to

the port of Sihanoukville [...] with His Excellency (Fumio) Kishida, the current Prime Minister [...] in Tokyo and in Phnom Penh, I continue to raise this issue with Japan. Why? [...] before the port was expanded, our water depth was over eight meters. Japan has (helped) to deepen the port up to 9 meters 2 meters deep [...] and the port can receive 18% of the cargo ships [...] investors in Cambodia still have to bear the shipping cost of 200 USD per Container or TEU (twenty-foot equivalent unit) [...] in 2026, (the port will have) water depth up to 14 meters 5 water [...] that can receive up to 93% ships with a profit of USD 200 per container. By 2028, as the second phase, we will have a 400-meter-long container port ready and a water depth of 16 meters 5 meters, at which time, in the Asia-Pacific region, we do not need to transfer goods at any ports any more [...] and finally, by 2029, the new container terminal of 430 meters long will be ready and the water depth of 17 meters 5 meters will ensure (the capacity of the port in) Cambodia the same as anywhere in the world [...]

### **(7) No other port to replace Sihanoukville Port**

[...] I would like to emphasize that there is no other port that can replace the sea port in this place (Preah Sihanouk) [...] along with the expansion of this port, we have to pump and deepen the waterway. If the water is not deep, it means that we build the container port and there are no ships to dock at this site because the big ships can't get in [...] we are now at 9 meters deep. We will make it 17 meters 5 deep [...] the profit is to attract investors to Cambodia, including Japanese investors. I support the Ambassador's initiative to integrate the port with the SEZ right next to it. Japanese investors will see that an attraction for investment [...]

### **(8) Cambodia supports the initiative that 1) serves peace/development 2) does not oppose countries/groups of countries and 3) respects the**

### **ASEAN Centrality**

[...] A number of Japanese initiatives have received support from Cambodia, such as the free and open Indo-Pacific. Cambodia is the first country to support Japan [...] based on three principles, not just for Japan, but for all countries [...] firstly, serve peace and development [...] if it is just coming up with ideas that are not serving peace and development, but fight, I do not support [...] secondly, it must not be against any country or group. It must not be an alliance to oppose each other [...] and thirdly, it must respect the ASEAN centrality and ASEAN Indo-Pacific ideology [...]

### **(9) Trade volume between Cambodia and Japan in 2022 rose to 1,948 million (US dollars)**

[...] Back to the relationship between Cambodia-Japan trade [...] the trade volume between Cambodia-Japan in 2022 last year reached 1,948 million (dollars), of which Cambodia exported to Japan 1,173 million and Japan imported to Cambodia USD 774 million. I sincerely hope that during the Ambassador's tenure, we will increase the volume of Cambodian goods to Japan. Cambodia and Japan are members of the RCEP but with existing bilateral relations we just need to strengthen it to allow more Cambodian goods to enter the Japanese market [...]

### **(10) In November, Japanese fireworks on Independence Day; Water Festival; and 70th Anniversary of Cambodia-Japan relations**

The former Japanese ambassador, who is now the president of the Cambodia-Japan Friendship Association, proposed to fire Japanese fireworks in November 2023 in front of the Royal Palace [...] we can fire fireworks in front of the Royal Palace three times. The first one was to be fired at the celebration of Independence Day, November 9 [...] next, we fired for 3 nights and 3 days on the day of

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the hospital planned for the front building to finish? He said, “it would take perhaps 10 years” [...] I thought that with the resource capacity of Calmette Hospital it would not be impossible to finish it any-time soon. During November 2019, we had about US\$ 3.5 billion in savings after we allocated US\$ 300 million for the 400 MW generator in Phnom Penh and hundreds of millions of dollars to Sihanoukville [...]

## (2) The country is poor, but we have to do what we can

(I then decided to) allocate USD 30 million from the Government saving. With philanthropists’ contribution, US\$ 30 million through the CPP has been

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the water festival – boat racing, eating Ambok (flattened freshly harvested rice), to worship the moon god [...] and on another special occasion to celebrate the 70th anniversary of Cambodia-Japan relations [...]

## (11) Let us celebrate SEA Games as a national holiday for Cambodians

Last night I went up to watch (football match). I could not see any broadcast. I asked to (Fresh News) Vutha, can you help me watch any live broadcast (of football matches)? Then, I called the national television. National TV replied that it only broadcasts the match between Cambodian and foreign pairs [...] SEA Games is just a few days away, and just sending the SEA Games torch to the province, people make it a festival in the provinces. People wanted to watch, and you do not do the broadcast? Please tell the national television this evening that the live broadcast must be up and ready [...] the Prime Minister needs this country to become a national holiday for the Cambodian people. It is the pride of the Cambodian people. Why leave Cambodia quiet during the SEA Games? [...] I am calling on all private TV stations, if the national TV is lazy, to start broadcasting for people to watch [...] the national holiday events [...]

sent here [...] making the contribution from both the Royal Government and the party USD 60 million. We made an appeal on my Facebook to which people got involved [...] we have received an actual budget of US\$ 102.8 million plus 281 million in riel. I instructed the hospital to well equip the new building. We spent more than USD 11.8 million more. The total amount that we spend is USD 82,175,149. The remaining budget is USD 20,630,886 and 207,000,000 Riels. I hope that the hospital will set up additional facilities as they plan to have more new building facilities for patients [...] even though our country is poor, we have to do what we can and do not wait for foreign aid [...]

## (12) SEA Games free (of charge) attracts people to know Cambodia

[...] There are some who criticize the fact that Cambodia does not charge participation fee in the SEA Games. I am not hostile to money, but the fact is that Cambodia does not charge (fees for the SEA Games) aims to get people to know Cambodia. Cambodia is poor, but its heart is generous [...] we are spending 7 million dollars to provide with foreign players/athletes [...] I believe that in the next SEA Games in other countries, they will consider not charging from Cambodia [...] what Cambodia wanted is to show Cambodia’s heart as we did to the Westerdam [...]

## (13) Send players/athletes to compete; not just to win, but to ensure dignity

[...] I have to meet with our players/athletes who are going to the SEA Games. Every time before going to the SEA Games, I always meet with them to send them off officially. Even if they play at home, I have to send them at the Peace Palace to get them to play well as hosts. We do not just want to win, but we must do our best to ensure dignity. I am calling on our citizens to observe dignity, do not jump over the fence where there is no ticket [...]

## (3) Capable hospitals have the ability to provide medical care build trust from diplomats, investors, tourists

I thank the management and medical staff of the Calmette Hospital for its operation and activities for the past 44 years. Three of my children were born in this hospital, and five of my grandchildren were born in this hospital [...] our friends who are working in the country, when there is a clear need, they will definitely come to the Cambodian hospital first [...] building a hospital capable of providing medical care is not just a separate issue for the Cambodian people, but it helps build the trust of the diplomats who come to work in our country, to build trust for investors and to build trust for tourists who come to our country [...] the health sector responds to the needs of the people themselves and for other aspects [...]

## (4) Two codes of professional ethics for medical experts

We have a good hospital, but the most important thing is to have a good doctor to solve the problem. In order for us to have a hospital with good technical equipment, it is already a very difficult thing to achieve [...] however, there are two points as I mentioned at the handout of the degree to doctors a few days ago – *the first is that the doctors must hold on to professional ethics, which requires him/her to think of human life importantly.* Medicine is for saving lives. This is the main ethic of the medical team. I hope that the medical personnel who have been nicknamed in the Covid-19 time – the “white coat army” will not let this honor slip away [...] now that we have larger hospital, it offers more opportunities for interns [...] I have said before that with the advanced technology, should there be no ethical management, it can lead to accidents. Example: terrorists are not ignorant. They are well trained high-tech people [...] technology must be governed by an ethic. Secondly, *I call for our effort to have our medical personnel and/or experts improve the ability to use new*

*technologies.* This is a time of higher modernization. This is a point that requires our team of doctors to research and learn to use those devices. We buy modern equipment, but if you do not know how to use it, it is like we do not have them [...]

## (5) Gradually expand the capacity to cover what we need by own budget

We will continue to work together to help people access a health care that provides survival and good health for the general population. I go on to say that we must make further effort to gradually expand capacity to cover what it requires with own budget. Covid-19 swallows our saving, but it was our responsibility to help people get vaccinated, reduce mortality [...] We have just won the battle, not the Covid-19 war yet. We must continue to work together to fight this deadly disease [...] there is no way of knowing what diseases the current climate change are causing for the world as well as for our country [...]

## (6) More research/diagnostic facilities

Our country now has the ability to research and analyze more diseases. Previously, there was only the Pasteur Institute for diagnostic testing [...] later, we have two more places to get diagnostic tests for Phnom Penh. We deploy test sites to other locations, including oxygen production, which previously we had to ship from Phnom Penh to the provinces. We are now strengthening the capacity of the provinces to produce oxygen for patients in need of oxygen and treatment [...]

## (7) The private sector contributes to the protection, development, job creation and a part of profits to help develop the education and health sectors and other sectors

[...] Do not be poor in heart. Let us not ask from foreign sources for thing that costs us only USD 200,000, USD 300,000, USD 1 million, USD 2 million. If it is thing that we

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in each province, they consider it as their holiday [...]

**(2) Cambodia provides free admission; food/accommodation, and free broadcast rights to make Cambodia known through the SEA Games**

For the first time in the history of the tournament, Cambodia is the first to not sell tickets for its own people and for fans from other countries [...]; secondly, we paid for accommodation and food. We have to pay an additional US\$ 7 million for food and accommodation of

players/athletes from other countries. This is something I think creates unity. Cambodia's goal is not to make money. Cambodia's goal goes even further [...] (in previous events) they bought the rights to broadcast. In Cambodia, the right to broadcast is free to all countries. It is of utmost important that we make Cambodia be known. Many have forgotten Cambodia, while they know about Pol Pot. Now 73 countries in the world know Cambodia through rice. Some countries know Cambodia through other products. With these gestures, some

other countries are getting to know Cambodia through the SEA Games. This is our pride [...]

**(3) Wherever Cambodians go, they are still Cambodians; compete and hold the national flag to represent Cambodia**

Our players are also trained both domestically and internationally with thorough management. I would like to take this opportunity to welcome my grandchildren from France, the United States, Australia and other countries in the tournaments. Let me see how many of

you? How many children and grandchildren from abroad stand up for me to see you [...] now there is only one missing because he is going to arrive late. That is the point that I am happy about. Wherever Cambodians go, they are still Cambodians, no matter where they live. Now they volunteer to represent Cambodia and hold the Cambodian flag [...]

**(4) Chinese language press in Malaysia may correct some of its remarks**

I should remind a little bit be-  
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can do ourselves, we do it. I pray for the strength of the Cambodian private sector [...] we must strengthen the Cambodian private sector, which has contributed to the protection of development by creating jobs and, in part, they have contributed profits to the development of education, health and other fields [...] we have a lot of other expenses to cover [...]

**(8) War and excessive sanctions are the reasons for the global economic downturn**

[...] Covid-19 has devastated our economy, but the biggest devastation is the war between Russia and Ukraine, as well as excessive sanctions that have caused the world economy to collapse. Sanction creates problems because dying from it are not only those in the countries that they sanctioned, but countries that sanctioned them. Sanction affects themselves. As for us who do not know anything, also have impacts [...] this punishment affects only the target country, but us all [...]

**(9) Supplementary policies on social protection as an investment in human life and a part of effort to reduce child and infant mortality**

[...] The economy is not yet (in good condition). We need to strengthen the domestic economy by taking the right measures along with stimulating economic growth. There is also a social protection section. I have expanded the scope of support for pregnant women from concep-

tion to when their babies are two-year-old, both factory workers and women of poor households in informal economies [...] we will spend money on that. We are not afraid (to spend). This is an investment in human life to strengthen nutrition for children as well as mothers, and a part of effort to reduce child and infant mortality and make children born healthier [...]

**(10) One hand builds the country and one hand prevents the Khmer Rouge from returning to power**

I thank all the foreign friends, ambassadors, as well as representatives of all foreign friends who are present today. Please look at Cambodia's achievements. We are poor, but we strive to live. We have striven to be alive since when Phnom Penh had nothing. Now we have the ability to do things gradually our own. It is very easy for the president and prime minister of other countries (to lead and manage the countries) because everything is there for them. I started from when Phnom Penh had only 70 people [...] in your countries, prime minister or president [...] just set out a policy and lead the implementation. For us, we started with one hand to stop the Khmer Rouge from coming back, and the other hand to build the country from scratch. The hand we built the country was also wounded because the country was under embargo. However, we hung one to survive. Hope you can see what

character we are? [...]

**(11) How can I trust the one who shake my hand and step on my foot?**

Sometimes you are the creator of obstacles. Let me say again. The prisoners stay longer in the prison because you love them too much. I refuse to forgive because I do not trust you. I may make a statement in front of you. Yesterday, I said in front of the Chinese ambassador, and today I say it to the French, Japanese and other ambassadors clearly. Why do I have to trust you, while working with me, after leaving me, you go to work with the accused. What do you think I am? [...] do you think you can just shake my hand and step on my foot? That is not the case [...] from now on, those who dare to intervene with any person, if convicted, say 5 years, let him/her serve the full term of 5 years. I will not ask for pardon [...]

**(11) Do not associate your country's relation to Cambodia's internal affairs**

Do not interfere in our foreign affairs. This is the work of Cambodia, and please do not link the relationship between Cambodia and your country with some works that is totally Cambodia's internal affairs. We talk frankly with each other because the election is near and some can shout this from the east and that from the west. It bothers us. I must dare to speak face to face or people say that Mr. Hun Sen only spoke behind their backs. I have already con-

firmed that if you do not understand us on land, I also have the right not to understand things in the water. That is equal rights. You have the right not to believe me, and I have the right not to believe you [...] I have been the Minister of Foreign Affairs since I was 27 years old. I have been the Prime Minister since I was 32 years old. So far, I have been the Prime Minister for over 38 years. More than a half-life. I am not that ignorant and unable to respond to the situation. From now until the election, please be silent, let us use the local rules to solve the problem of democracy in Cambodia [...]

**(12) On land you do not understand me, how I can understand you in the water [...]**

Some are not ambassadors here. ASEAN ambassadors remain silent. There is nothing to say. Some diplomats like (to talk) [...] Cambodia has not asked any country to interfere in its affairs and will not accept (any interferences) [...] I am tired of this interference. On land, we have already explained, and you refused to understand. Now you are in the water, I also do not understand. I do not believe you. We have the same rights. I had to use a bargaining formula. Do you believe me? If you do not believe, I do not believe you. That is all. You all have to look at Cambodia beyond Cambodia. Please do not forget that as an ASEAN member, Cambodia has the right to veto [...]

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cause some postings and/or publication may be wrong. We have already determined that our sports village can accommodate 3,500 people. In addition, we provide 4-star and 5-star hotels for the athletes/players to stay [...] from China Press in Malaysia there is a remark about their athletes changing accommodations. The remark was not too bad because it said doing that reduce the impacts on athletes and they participate in the competition without worries.

I suggest the Cambodian organizers pay attention to food. For us Buddhist countries and for Christian countries there may not be a problem, but for those from Muslim they have to have HALAL food. You have to think about this issue carefully [...] we have to prepare to meet the food standards because we are the hosts [...] so that there will not be remarks that they get less medals because they cannot eat this or that, because the food is not halal [...]

As for their concern about staying in the hotel would have the chance of having caught in traffic jams, I would confirm to the Chinese language media in Malaysia that Cambodia is ready for transport, no need to worry about traffic jams. Our country, Cambodia, is very clear on this issue. We would lead the athletes by guiding motorcades, or even by tanks if it has to. People should get to know Cambodia a little better. This is not a problem. The people of Phnom Penh are very dignified [...]

#### **(5) Samdech Pichey Sena, Thong Khon, Hang Chuon Naron in charge of SEA Games**

Hun Sen has his own specialists who are taking responsibility. Samdech Pichey Sena (Tia Banh, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Defense) is already responsible for that issue. Thong Khon, Minister of Tourism, Hang Chuon Naron – who had to go to the ASEAN summits, I allow him to stay too. I have to go to the ASEAN meeting on 09 through

to 11 May. Hang Chuon Naron has to stay at home with Samdech Pichey and Thong Khon to take care of this game because the SEA Games [...]

#### **(6) Representing a nation and as the host country, respect the code of competition, be virtuous and moral**

In this match, our athletes/players are representing our nation, as when they went to compete outside the country. This time, we also compete on behalf of the nation as the host. I am not worried about the technique and strength of the competitors. What you have to pay attention to is the virtues and ethics of the game. Winning or losing is common in sports [...] we must compete according to the rules of the game and prohibit the use of overpowering substances that are not allowed by the rules set by the sports [...]

#### **(7) Sports competitions to make friends**

As host country, we need to give respect. We must give the competition all we have. It does not mean we will just take the fight and do not return the fight. We must return the fight but according to the rules. Even if we win or lose, we consider each other as friends. The next day, our opponents do not become enemies, they become friends. This time, let our athletes build as many friends as possible. Sports is for building friendships [...]

#### **(8) Mocking foreign players is not a virtue of Cambodia, not a virtue of the host**

[...] Whether or not Buakaw came or in whatever way he behaved [...] it is his issue. We give him a warm welcome if he comes [...] it is not a virtue of the athletes, nor a virtue of the Cambodian nation, and it is even more not a virtue of the host to receive guests (if you do it differently). His Excellency Prime Minister Prayuth Chan Ocha sent a message to his players [...] we also sent a message to our players [...] when you compete outside the country, 16 million Cambodians are behind you. If Buakaw came to

Cambodia, he has 60 million Thais behind him [...]

#### **(9) Mai Sokun should apologize to Honda**

[...] Mai Sokun ... my son, if you are a good child of Cambodia, you should apologize to Honda. The words you use are too harsh for the endurance of Honda, who has been the coach of Cambodian footballers for many years [...] I loved Honda's clothes that day. He laughed and smiled [...] the whole country threw supports both to the footballers and the coach [...] having said that to him is like slapping our football players. Slapping the teacher is like slapping the students, [...] if you do not want to be a good child of Cambodia, you will continue to blame Honda, but the Royal Government will not remain silent [...] this is a racial issue for which the government must be responsible [...]

#### **(10) Sea games – historic events after 1966 GANEFO**

[...] This SEA Games is a historic event after 1966 when the late His Majesty the King held GANEFO (Games of the New Emerging Forces) at that time. Now that his son is on the throne, and at the time I am the Prime Minister, the event we have been waiting for 64 years has taken place. The King, the son of the late King Father, even offered to give fire to the Sea Games torch at Angkor Wat [...] let us all try to win some gold medals righteously [...]

#### **(11) Cambodia waits till 2023 to host the SEA Games**

[...] Countries (in ASEAN) have already hosted the SEA Games. Cambodia is the last one (to do so) [...] I need money to build infrastructure, accelerate socio-economic development, reduce poverty [...] now is the time to organize this event. Please take this opportunity to thank His Excellency President Xi Jinping of (People's Republic of China) [...] for helping us build a national stadium [...] the stadium costs about US\$ 150 million.

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## Closing 32nd SEA Games

(17 May 2023 - Excerpts and Unofficial Translation)

[...] Let me thank all the SEA Games athletes competed in the Kingdom of Cambodia, the sports delegates from all countries, the governments of all ASEAN countries for sending athletes to compete when Cambodia hosts the 32nd SEA Games 2023. I consider this to be part of the spirit of solidarity, understanding, friendship and promoting integration within the ASEAN framework. I would like to **dedicate Cambodia's achievements today as part of the success within the framework of our ASEAN solidarity spirit.**

I thank the people all over the country for supporting the SEA Games activities. Let me **dedicate the achievements that we have achieved now to the people across the country, all political tendencies, all races and religions.** Please accept the achievements that we have worked hard to achieve today. Thank you to all the volunteers who helped us on this auspicious occasion.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank and commend Samdech Pichey Sena Tea Banh, His Excellency Thong Khon, as well as other leaders in all fields, all of whom I consider to be the operators of the 32nd SEA Games 2023 from start to finish. We have succeeded. Please congratulate and appreciate Samdech Pichey Sena Tea Banh sincerely.

Let us not forget to (4) **thank HM the King and the Queen Mother of Cambodia for supporting the SEA Games process. We thank the late King Father of Cambodia for leaving us an invaluable legacy for the success of the 2023 SEA Games. I thank the Chinese government and people, especially to President Xi Jinping, for helping Cambodia in building the stadium for the opening and closing ceremonies, and for future generations.**

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measures such as taking pre-test prior to joining events [...]

[...] The World Health Organization has determined that (Covid-19) is a normal disease, not a public health crisis anymore. Today the plane is flying from Cambodia to Myanmar. We provide 1 million doses of vaccine with other vaccination equipment to Myanmar. Lok Chumteav Yok Sambath, Secretary of State of the Ministry of Health, accompanies this vaccine [...] there is a lack of vaccine over there and we have some vaccines in store. we have to share with friends [...]

## **(2) Meeting in the second round to review the progress, recommendations and regulations instructed in the first round and what to respond**

[...] We now have Covid-19 under control. The fact that I started the second round (of this meeting is) to meet with workers to review the progress of the recommendations and regulations laid down in the past and what else to do to meet the wishes of workers [...] in his report in the future, the Minister of Labor and Vocational Training should make a report clarifying the difference between the status of our workers before the first meeting and what did the workers receive after the meeting? [...] for example, the problem of pregnant women giving birth. Previously, any female workers giving birth would entitle to three months leave with only 50% of her salary. After the first-round meeting, the pregnant woman benefits the 90 days leave with 120% of her salary [...]

## **(3) Peace and political stability attract more domestic and foreign investments**

Thanks to the peace and political stability that we have, we have the opportunity to attract both domestic and foreign investments to produce in our country for export. Our exports in the past were very small. Now the volume of exports is getting bigger and bigger and from year to year our exports are increasing. We do not de-

pend on one or two markets. We depend on many markets. Although some places are at risk of economic downturn, while our exports to that country are declining, we can still increase exports elsewhere [...] *while some countries reduced orders from Cambodia, there are still countries whose economies are in good shape increasingly buy from Cambodia, creating a diversified situation as we pursue an outward-looking foreign policy.* More external relations, more external markets, more exports. At the same time, we do not depend on any particular country. They cannot kill us because of their economy or their politics [...]

## **(4) Provide infrastructure to attract investment to the provinces**

The size of our exports is still large. We strive to attract local investors for the whole country, not just in Phnom Penh. In Phnom Penh, there are more factories in the economic zone than anywhere else. I remember that in one of the government and the private sector forums in 1999, I pointed out that the necessary infrastructure should be built to attract investment to the provinces. Otherwise, people from the provinces rush into Phnom Penh to find works. Now there are factories in the provinces, not only in Phnom Penh and Kandal, but also in Kampong Cham, Takeo, Kampong Speu, Pursat, Sihanoukville, Koh Kong, and Svay Rieng [...]

## **(5) The minimum wage in Cambodia shall not be less than \$ 200 / month**

[...] Comparing salaries in Cambodia with some countries in the region, the current minimum wage of Cambodian workers is US\$ 200 (per month). I heard that this factory has a higher (salary level), including other benefits. Nationwide, salaries should not be less than US\$ 200 [...] Cambodia allows factory owners (to pay in dollars) to secure their benefits. We think about the sovereignty related to the Riel, but if we require them to put it in the bank, and release the Riel cash

back, sometimes it may incur losses. That is why in some places we offer the opportunity for workers to receive payment in Riel, and in some places, the majority I would say, to receive in dollars [...]

## **(6) Doubling social benefits for women with pregnancy**

reminiscing the past is useful as we can compare it with the present and to prepare for the future. By 1997, Cambodia had only 64 factories. There were only 80,000 workers. The export volume at that time was only 270 million US dollars. These 80,000 of our workers were paid only US\$ 40 [...] in 2023, the total number of factories is recorded at 17,000 and the total workforce of 1.5 million [...] I thought we had our policies covered everyone [...] but when I asked in Sihanoukville, it has not been implementing there [...] *the past practice had been covering only the (women with pregnancy in) informal economy and the poor. From now on, it will be applied to workers in factories/enterprises as well [...] we have now doubled this benefit or increased 100% [...]*

## **(7) Childbearing till the child is of two years will receive a sum of 1.52 million Riel**

Previously, workers take benefits from social equity card (SEC) and money provided for childbirth [...] we decided to increase the child bearing and birth 100% of the amount we applied. Previously, you received only 40,000 Riels every time she goes for prenatal care checkup. *With the new policy, every prenatal care checkup, the mother will receive 80,000 Riel at a time. Before giving birth, there will be four prenatal care check-ups [...] probably not many countries have done that [...] according to this policy, a woman from bearing to birth until her child is 2-year-old, she will receive a total of 1.52 million Riel [...]*

## **(8) Starting from August, it requires a sum of nearly 13 million US dollars more than the amount spent in the past**

The Royal Government must

take the burden of paying them. Women with pregnancy in poor households, farmers and informal workers, must know about the amount they are entitled to [...] *starting from August, we will implement the new policy that doubles the amount, which is a 100% increase in child-bearing for women [...] implementing the second round of social protection for female workers and poor headed households, we need to increase each year a sum of nearly 13 million US dollars, more than the amount spent in the past.* Spending this US\$ 13 million will not lead to the collapse of the Royal Government. We are investing in people. Our policy is to solve problems for people [...]

## **(9) The Meeting solve problems for families depending on workers' incomes**

There should be a comparison of what people have benefitted after I have laid out the principles for the first time? What happened after the visit? It is to confirm the progress that we have achieved in the first phase. Hun Sen is not a horse rider looking at flowers. I wanted to know about the well-being of workers and how to solve problems for workers? This is the national economic problem, the employment problem of the people, the income of the people that we must find a way to solve. *Some say that Mr. Hun Sen is definitely visiting the worker for political gain. Let me tell you, if all we did is for the lost course, one would not do it [...] you who say it are also doing it for the gain. What I am doing now is for these children and their family members who are dependent on the incomes of these children and grandchildren [...]*

## **(10) Prevent inflation, maintain purchasing power and exchange rates, landlords keep rents reasonable**

*The Royal Government pays attention to curbing inflation, maintaining the purchasing power of what our children and grandchildren receive. If inflation happened, and if the work-*

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banks [...] (we must figure out) how to make our production cheap to profit from [...] we are in competition with imported goods. Nowadays, there are some imported goods that we cannot prevent. We are within the framework of AFTA, the World Trade Organization and, further, RCEP [...] as long as our production has good quality and of low price, we can reduce imports and use what we have locally [...]

### **(10) The Hun family protects the king, the throne, and the monarchy**

Some (in the opposition) like to talk about family. I am talking

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*ers are paid in Riel, when the riel loses its value, the purchasing power will be weakened.* Even though we have dollars, should the price of goods be so high, you have a problem still. (Therefore) I beg the landlords to do their best to keep the rent price reasonable so that our workers can stay [...]

Along with addressing and reviewing progress and implementation, *I still call on all to maintain peace, political stability as the key to development in all areas. All factories must become a safe community* where employers and workers are united, understanding and tolerating each other, and taking all laws and standards as a basis (in resolving their conflicts) [...] *factory owners understand and care about workers' well-being. When workers are healthy, workers are more productive. Every factory pays attention to additional training for our workers. In the past, our factories were small and foreigners came to work in many professions. Now, in many factories, chiefs, division chiefs, team leaders, division commanders are Cambodians [...]*

### **(11) To strengthen the implementation of the set-out recommendations**

*Recommendations should be strengthened and implemented, including measures to be taken*

about the family now, too. The Hun family is not just Hun Sen. There are a lot of people throughout the Kingdom [...] who support the Hun family for the continuation of the post of Prime Minister or the future Prime Minister in Cambodia, [...] this family is not the one that betrays the king. This family is the one that protects the king, protects the throne, protects the monarchy. I contributed to the restoration of the monarchy and we are now the single largest force in defending the monarchy, defending the throne, defending the king. You need to understand [...]

### **(11) Tickets-free, advertising**

*in co-operation between the Ministry of Social Affairs, Veterans and Youth Rehabilitation and the Ministry of Labor and Vocational Training. When you start the process of child-bearing or to get pregnant, you must go for a prenatal care check-up [...]* by the way, is the bus service back on now? ok, it is. In the process, workers are taking the bus for free, one of the ways to help the workers, help the poor people, and our workers are getting free bus rides [...]

### **(12) "This party does not want to participate in the election knowing that it will lose" and wished the foreigners to criticize the Cambodian Government [...]**

One birth certificate, I do not believe they have lost it. It could be left with someone who is a leader. *Their goal, which I analyze here, is not to get this party to contest, knowing that it will lose. What they want is for foreigners to oppress Cambodia [...]* I am neither the National Election Committee nor a member of the Constitutional Council, but I think it is a ploy by someone to make the certificate disappear [...] *the goal of these important leaders is to get some foreigners who love them to criticize the Cambodian government [...]* I do not think it has vanished to anywhere, but they hide it. That is cheap political goals [...]

### **rights free, no obligation fees – right decisions**

In just two days, the 32<sup>nd</sup> SEA Games will be over. It is the time for the whole Khmer nation to celebrate. Cambodia is hosting a successful SEA Games. We do not think too much of winning or losing. What we think about the most is the hosting that gives our guests the happiness and warm welcome of the Cambodian people. I made the right decision [...] not to sell tickets for the (Cambodian) people or for the fans, not to sell the rights to advertise abroad, and not to charge obligation fees under the SEA Games statutes.

We spend about USD 7 million more on the accommodation of athletes from other countries and their diet. I have has thanks from the Heads of State and Government of the ASEAN countries, who just concluded the meeting a few days ago [...]

### **(12) 80% of Cambodians moved with tears of pride hosting SEA Games**

About 80% of (the Cambodian) people are moved when they see a great event at the opening of the SEA Games. Some shed tears, not tears of torturing, but tears of national pride. This pride does not belong to Hun Sen or to the Royal Government or the CPP, but to everyone [...] we used to be ranking at eighth, sometimes the ninth – only above Brunei [...] Now we come fourth [...] winning or losing a few medals is considered a pride in the process of advancing the sport of Cambodia, [...] however, when friends leave Cambodia with no incidents, that is 100% success [...] it is the goal that Cambodia wants, not money. We wanted friends – not only within ASEAN itself, but other countries in the world – to know Cambodia [...] if athletes, after the tournaments wanted to visit Angkor Wat, please let them see for free [...]

### **(13) Cambodians excited and proud of the opening ceremony of the SEA Games**

Do not look at the SEA Games only on winning medals. Need

to look at managing a game that provides friendship to the people of ASEAN, or we called ASEAN as a single community. The fact that I do not charge money has many goals.

One of them – ASEAN is a single community. How other countries organize it is up to them. Cambodia has done this work from the perspective of its own thinking as a contribution to the integration of the people of ASEAN.

I thank all the countries that sent athletes and provided support to Cambodia as hosts. I would like to send a message of gratitude to the Chinese people, especially to His Excellency President Xi Jinping, for donating a strong and beautiful stadium for Cambodia to have a good reputation at the opening of the 2023 SEA Games [...]

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We went out on our own to make more than USD 30 million for the places. The infrastructure costs in all USD 180 million [...]

**(12) A richer Cambodia will provide more aid abroad [...]** Among ASEAN countries, some may respond in kind to Cambodia's (gesture of providing free SEA Games) [...] but I do not set that a condition [...] I tell you that if I had, I would give a lot of help abroad. Even under Covid-19, I brought aid to Nepal, Timor-Leste, Vietnam, Laos, Myanmar and donated rice to Cuba [...] this is an international obligation for humanity [...]

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*I thank all the foreign friends who have helped Cambodia in the past as well as during the SEA Games preparation. I apologize to the Cambodian people as well as to our friends among ASEAN if any mistakes are made unintentionally. We look forward to receiving constructive feedback for future improvements. In a moment to come, we will be handing over to the Kingdom of Thailand its hosting turn of the 33rd SEA Games 2025 [...]*

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under 30%. In addition, the service and industrial sectors contributed to higher GDP. In this world, the richer the country is, the smaller share of the agricultural sector would be [...] previously, our agricultural sector covered more than 80% (of GDP) [...] but our people were still short of food [...] (we have changed) agriculture from before when we lacked rice (for consumption) that we had to import or ask (from well off countries/organizations) to be able to export food abroad. At this point, do not think that agriculture is shrinking and lacking. It is not so [...] what is extensive development in comparison with intensive development? [...]

In the past, a family of five people would need one hectare of land (to grow rice for consumption) [...] if we continue like this, our forests will be cut down to serve the agricultural demand [...] *seeing the rate of agriculture (share in GDP) shrinking some people like to (defame the Royal Government to make a political profit) [...] that their leaders are unclever, their followers who are intelligent detached themselves and joined the CPP [...] I continue to welcome them.* There is only one person I will not accept. Other than that one, I take them all as soon as they declare secession from extremist [...]

### **(3) Mobilize agricultural technicians as sub-national administrative staff**

I have announced that we must provide each commune an agricultural extension worker/technician to help farmers solve agricultural technical problems [...] if we delegate only one agricultural extension worker/technician per commune and work separately, there is a lack of cooperation [...] (we needed to address this issue so that), the sub-national administration will have technicians on hand. We are not afraid of the cost for the technical staff to be sent. We need to select the ones with appropriate skills [...] avoiding sending the sugarcane agronomist to work in the rice field. It

seems not right. Agriculture is not just about growing sugarcane. They know more than that. This is where we accelerate the development of agriculture, and the development of this sector is an overall aspect of rural development [...]

### **(4) Land reform or economic reform is not a small issue**

When we started giving land ownership, or so-called land reform, after the Pol Pot regime, [...] I used to say that land reform was not a trivial thing. There are three pressures on me as I lead political and economic reforms. *The first pressure force was within internal realm that does not understand about negotiation or what is the so-called political solution for peace, national unity, and ending the war [...] meanwhile, the Vietnamese troops who came to help Cambodia, accompanied by Vietnamese experts, while Vietnam had not yet reformed [...] at the time when Cambodia needs to turn its economy into a private economy, Vietnam respected Cambodia's action. Another pressing force at that time was while still receiving help from the Soviets and Eastern Europe, CMEA, that was not yet undergoing reforms.* The former Soviet Union (also not yet) reformed by Gorbachev's Perestroika or Glasnost. If the Moscow side says, "If Hun Sen is left to go on with what he is doing, they will stop providing aid," I will suffer the same ill fate [...]

### **(5) Intensive farming development to prevent deforestation for agriculture**

(About) Land reform. The 1981 Constitution stated that there were only state and collective economy entities. There is no private economy entity. What were we going to do? Fortunately, at that time, Chea Sim was the President of the National Assembly, Heng Samrin was the President, we immediately gave the opportunity to form a working group to amend the Constitution. Through the amendment of the constitution, we distributed the land to the people [...]. In 1989, we amended the Constitution to allow

private ownership. At that time, we had a population of about 7 million [...] to this day, although not yet re-surveyed, the population has increased (to approximately) 17 million people. It is this increase in population that requires us to address their land requirement issues so that they have the opportunity to grow crops. No development that does not degrade the environment. However, we have measures to prevent deforestation for agriculture by shifting from development through extensive to intensive farming development [...]

### **(6) Terms-end thesis should study land to determine appropriate crop cultivation**

Along with water management, we must work on (research and experiment to achieve new) rice seed varieties that provide high yield, in addition to our intensive agricultural practice efforts to get more yields, the introduction of technology into agriculture is essential to advancement of the agricultural sector [...] when handing out diplomas more than 10 years ago at Chamkar Dong (Agricultural) School ... I suggested that graduate students should learn more about land so that we would be able to identify suitable planting areas. Some places have no water, but our farmers still grow rice depending on the sky. We can transfer the cultivated area with insufficient water for other crops such as sugarcane, which has a sugar factory here or something that provides high economic benefits, and do not worry about water shortage [...]

### **(7) Market and capital – driving force for raw material production and processing**

The role of the farming community is very important in bargaining with traders on the market. This market factor plays a very big role in boosting production [...] the market is a factor that stimulates the agricultural sector [...] without a market, farmers do not produce. It also deals with capital [...] (we must prepare) what kind of intervention for farmers so that farmers can have productive force. Not only produce as raw

material, but encourage them to learn how to process [...] encourage farmers in their cultivation and breeding with competing principal costs [...] in the market framework with other countries [...] how to make production cheap that they can profit from the production in addition to competing with imported goods [...]

### **(8) May send experts to study the feasibility of agricultural crops in Timor-Leste**

I promised the former President and former Prime Minister of Timor-Leste (Xanana Gusmão) who came to the SEA Games, and I met the current Prime Minister in Indonesia. I told them "Cambodia wants to send a team of experts to help study (about agricultural feasibility) in Timor-Leste, where about 27 percent of the land can be agricultural [...] (Cambodia) can help Timor-Leste in two ways. The first is to give the country the opportunity to invest in Cambodia in rice miller, warehouse and set up a collection network and supply rice to Timor-Leste stably. I told them no country offers such an opportunity for a 100 per cent investment [...] in addition, we can help Timor-Leste with techniques related to food and/or agriculture [...] I said to them, "No one knows the poor better than the poor." Cambodia has the ability, so Cambodia helps. To Cuba, we can also export the 78-days rice seeds [...]

### **(9) Lowering production costs to compete with imported goods**

I remind you this point to encourage cultivation, animal husbandry and aquacultural practices to cost cheaper to compete. This is a key point to address. If our farmers still produce at a high price, competition in the market framework with other countries (will still be difficult) [...] imported goods will still be cheaper than domestic production. It is still a problem [...] not only the Ministry of Agriculture that has to do this job, there are other relevant ministries include the Ministry of Economy and Finance,  
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