

Launching Election Campaign for the 7th Legislature National Assembly (01 July 2023 — Unofficial Translation)



*Esteemed Buddhist monks;
Dear Compatriots, members of the Cambodian People's Party;
My Dear Beloved Youth*

Today is the auspicious day of the launch of the 7th legislature National Assembly election campaign across the country, an important political event for the Kingdom of Cambodia. This great event also coincided with the enthusiastic celebration of the 72nd founding anniversary of the Cambodian People's Party, which was originally called the Khmer Revolutionary People's Party, originated from the people's resistance movement against the colonialism for national independence and has struggled through many stages of Cambodian history with the greatest heroism. On behalf of the central committee, I would like to express my profound gratitude to our compatriots everywhere, who always confer justice, belief, and support to the Cambodian People's Party, giving the Party ability to fulfil the tasks of serving the nation and people with successes over the past 44 years.

On this magnificent occasion, we would like to express our deepest respect and gratitude to His Majesty King Norodom Sihamoni of the Kingdom of Cambodia, and Queen Norodom Monineath Sihanouk, the highly revered Queen Mother of the Khmer Nation in Freedom, Dignity and Happiness, who are staying in the highest shrine as a symbol of national unity and national sustainability, and a cool shade of peace and tranquility of the entire Khmer nation. May Your Majesty, whose life is placed on the stone, and His Majesty the Queen Mother of the Nation, have abundant health, bright intellect, and a long life to continue to lead the Cambodian ship to progress, prosperity and happiness forever.

On this occasion, we would like to bow in respects to the souls of Cambodian ancestors, heroes, warriors and patriots of all generations, who have fought and sacrificed their might for independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity, peace, freedom, democracy and progress of the Kingdom of Cambodia, and we are committed to continue to preserve, protect and build a loving homeland for longevity, stability and prosperity.

For more than 44 years, after the historic January 7 Victory Day over the genocidal regime, the Cambodian People's Party has stayed at-

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Inaugurating Phnom Penh 52Km Ring Road III (03 August 2023 — Excerpts and Unofficial Translation)

(1) Led by the Cambodian People's Party, Khmers can accomplish the people's need

[...] I commend the authorities of Phnom Penh and Kandal for their efforts to cooperate with the Ministry of Public Works and Transport, as well as with the (Shanghai Construction Group Co., Ltd.) company, to implement this great project, which is considered an ambitious one, but we Khmers can do it. The CPP-led Cambodians can accomplish whatever the people want. I thank the people who helped solve the problem of accepting compensation as well as agreed to sell the land when we had to run the road through and have to buy the land in its entirety [...]

(2) From now on the new Prime Minister to function in future ceremonies

[...] In Siem Reap, through the investment of a Chinese company, in this October month, we have planned for the planes to land at the new airport. Let us leave the event for the new Prime Minister to inaugurate [...] I already visited it [...] let me take a moment to say that today is the last time that Hun Sen speaks as Prime Minister. However, Hun Sen has not gone anywhere yet. Hun Sen still controls the political situation in Cambodia. I will talk about why Hun Sen had to leave the Prime Minister post [...] I

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Transcriptions of Audio Messages

(Excerpts and Unofficial Translation)

Regarding the 23-July-2023 7th Legislative National Assembly Elections (...) 23 July 2023

*Venerable Buddhist Monks,
Dear compatriots,*

Today we have just concluded the (7th Legislature National Assembly) elections across the country (in parallel with the call of) the extremist groups (inspiring) people not to go to the polls or to (go to the polls only) to destroy the ballots. So far, **the temporary result that I have received from the National Election Committee indicates that the number of people who went to the polls is up to 84.21% and may increase further.** Compared to the 2022 commune/sangkat elections, where 80.32% of the population went to the polls at the time and with the participation of the Candlelight (Party), and at this time, the Candlelight Party and its founder called on their supporters not to go to the polls – we have noted the difference in polling rate. Previously, even with the encouragement of the participated Candlelight (Party), the turnout was only 80.32%. This time, **despite leadership from the (creator) of the Candlelight Party from outside calling on the people not to go to the polls, and/or to go to the poll but invalidate their ballots with crossing out sign, on the contrary, more than 84% of the people did go to the polls.**

From these points, **we can conclude that the people have clearly participated in the democratic movement in Cambodia. The people want peaceful life and prosperity under the roof of peace that has been and is happening, and want to get away from the extremists who have**

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tached and shared with the people both good and bad, overcome all obstacles to lead the country out of a state of devastation reaching to the stage of development in all areas with the greatest pride. Cambodia has transformed from a killing field of genocidal regimes, a battlefield of chronic warfare, from national disintegration and from a land where social structures were destroyed to its roots, into a beautiful land where people live in harmony and peace, national unity, freedom, democracy and development, and are united under the roof of the same Constitution, and continue to use all their physical, mental and intellectual strengths to build and defend their homeland. This is the great change of the Kingdom of Cambodia that the CPP has brought to the people and is a historical fact that no one or force can deny.

In the 6th legislature of the National Assembly, the Royal Government led by the Cambodian People's Party, for which I have been the Prime Minister, firmly defended peace, stability, security and social order, ensuring the peaceful life of the people, socio-economic development, and strengthening democracy. The rights and freedoms of the people are respected, protected and promoted, and the economic, social, cultural, educational, health, employment and other fields are more prosperous, and the living standards of the people are constantly improving. Many new achievements include roads, bridges, irrigation systems, water supply networks, water wells, electricity, information systems, factories, farms, small and large buildings, business centers, schools, hospitals, pagodas, etc. have been built and expanded in both urban, rural and border areas. No base is remote, inaccessible and undeveloped.

In the face of the Covid-19 epidemic, the Royal Government has successfully led the fight against this deadly disease, saved the lives of the people, maintained a stable life and economic balance, and swiftly revived the national economy soon after the Covid-19 crisis, and the country is returning to the path of potential growth. The Royal Government has also introduced and effectively implemented a num-

ber of policy measures to boost production, increase employment and jobs, strengthen and expand public services, strengthen justice, equity and social harmony, as well as promote social protection for all people, especially the poor and vulnerable in the spirit of not abandoning any Cambodian citizen. Along with the strength of national factors, Cambodia's prestige has been enhanced on the international stage, especially through the successful organization and leadership of the 40-41 ASEAN Summit and related summits, the organization of Angkor Sankranta, the organization of the 32nd Southeast Asian Games and the 12th ASEAN Para Games, the implementation of an independent foreign policy based on the rule of law and a great humanitarian spirit, Cambodia's reputation have been made even more prominent.

Through all these noble achievements, it is clear that the Kingdom of Cambodia has been moving forward on the right path with hope and confidence towards a bright future. At the same time, it also clearly reflects the participation of Cambodians of all walks of life, all races and all religions, civil servants, the armed forces, youth, workers, farmers, monks and clergy of various religions, intellectuals, investors and the progressive circles in society for the supreme interests of the nation with a noble patriotic conscience.

The peace and the most precious social achievements that we have realized so far, starting from scratch, have come from trading life as a capital, from the great sacrifices and the relentless physical and spiritual efforts of the Party's leaders, the Party's organizations at every level, the male and female warriors, officials, party members and all our compatriots in the spirit of ownership for the nation, the motherland and their lives, as well as the sincere support of friendly countries and the international community. We always remember this precious support and are determined to preserve all the achievements of the nation forever, without allowing any reactionary power to destroy it. We are determined to continue to build our nation to become a prosperous country in the region, a civilized and loving society, without the recurrence of

war, genocide and internal national divisions as before.

In this sense, the upcoming 7th Legislature National Assembly election on July 23, 2023 is a historical political event that is extremely important to our nation. The political decision of the people in this election to choose which party to continue to lead the country is determined directly for the future destiny of our nation and people. I am confident that my compatriots who have already seen the progress of Cambodia in full peace, independence, unity, sovereignty and territorial integrity will now continue to vote for the Cambodian People's Party and me to continue to lead the country for the seventh legislature.

The Cambodian People's Party (CPP) announces and asks for the support of our compatriots for the "Political Program for Building and Defending the Motherland 2023-2028" to ensure the protection of peace and national sustainability on the path of development and improvement of people's lives towards realizing the vision of Cambodia becoming a high middle-income country by 2030 and reaching a high-income country by 2050. On the basis of this political program, the CPP adheres to the following strategic positions:

Defend the Constitutional monarchy through a multi-party liberal democratic political system in a parliamentary manner to be stable forever, as well as strengthen and expand multi-party liberal democracy to lay a solid foundation in the society, along with strengthening the rule of law together with promoting respect for human rights.

Strengthen national unity and resolve to prevent and eradicate all forms extremist politics and activities caused by individual or group of individuals, or political organization, or any hostile circles that seek to incite national division, create social chaos, destroy peace, and cause political instability in Cambodia in the form of rebellion, which is completely contrary to the principles of democracy and violates the Constitution of the Kingdom of Cambodia.

Continue to raise the great banner of national unity under the roof of the Constitution of the Kingdom

of Cambodia and under the cool shade of the most revered HM the King to unite the forces of the whole Khmer nation irrespective of racism, color, age, gender, language, religious beliefs, political tendencies, past, national origin, social status, resources or other conditions to maintain peace, political stability and every social achievements, and to join hands in continuing to build and defend the motherland towards the glorious future.

Continue to pursue an independent foreign policy based on the law, protection of sovereignty and territorial integrity, against all forms of external interference, build better friendship and cooperation between the Kingdom of Cambodia and all countries in the world and international organizations, while actively contributing to the causes of peace, stability, security, cooperation and prosperity in the region and the world.

The Cambodian People's Party (CPP) has approved its support to me as the candidate for Prime Minister for the seventh legislative term and to His Excellency Hun Manet as the candidate for Prime Minister for the future. Implementing this decision, I solemnly promise that if the Cambodian People's Party wins the 7th Legislature National Assembly election on July 23, I will stand firm on the above strategic position and will lead the successful implementation of the political program of the Cambodian People's Party, which will be the political program of the Royal Government for the 7th legislature of the National Assembly. In this spirit and in order to ensure the protection and promotion of the interests of the people, I will promote the effective implementation of the following priority policies:

Provide public services to the people in a transparent, easy and reliable manner; continue to provide birth registration, marriage registration, death list, provision of residence book, family book and Khmer identity card free of service charge;

Continue to impose no tax on household agricultural land, help farmers to expand production and find markets to sell agricultural produces at reasonable prices, allocate land and provide land ownership to poor landless fami-

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lies who have complied with the social land concession conditions, prevent illegal occupation of all types of state land, and continue to provide land to people living and reaping the benefit on the state land location in accordance with the principles set by the state.

Continue to implement the principle of eliminating taxes and other fees for the people who are vendors in baskets in various markets throughout the country, traders in the state market and state markets where traders have the right to own, use and reap the benefits from stalls, and have the right to transfer these rights to their children or others, continue to reduce the cost of living of the people through mechanisms to stabilize food prices and reduce water and electricity costs for the general population.

Promote the implementation of the policy of safe villages, communes and sangkats, continue to develop all communes/sangkats to have better communication roads by regularly repairing and maintaining new roads, building new roads and improving from dirt roads to paved or concrete roads, ensure adequate electricity and water supply, better irrigation and quality telecommunication services.

Continue to increase the salaries of all types of civil servants and the armed forces, continue to adjust and increase the pensions of former civil servants and veterans, continue to increase the minimum wage of workers and maintain other benefits for workers and employees, continue to implement the principle of non-taxation of the minimum wage of all types of civil servants and the minimum wage of workers/employees, promote the protection of rights and interests of the workers – both formal and informal, continue to implement cash support programs for poor and vulnerable families in times of emergency and crisis, continue to implement programs to support pregnant women and children under 2 years of age of poor families and support programs for female civil servants, interns and contracted officials as well as pregnant workers and children under 2 years old.

Promote the provision of quality, safe, effective and equitable health care services to the people.

Expand primary schools to all villages, expand secondary schools to all communes and increase the number of high schools in districts, and provide young people with opportunities for vocational training and employment.

In addition, I will set out the six priority policies in the political program of the Royal Government of the 7th legislature of the National Assembly, including:

Program 1: Provision of health care towards a global health coverage program, starting with – (1) providing health care services to more than 450,000 vulnerable families, equivalent to a total of more than 1.5 million members through the use of health equity funds; and (2) expanding the health care regime for holders of national social security fund (NSSF) cards – both for workers and for public officials, which also covers more than 3 million family members, and their dependents on a voluntary basis. In total, the two projects will provide access to social security services for an estimated 7.4 million people.

Program 2: Provision of vocational and technical training for more than 1.5 million young people from poor and vulnerable families across the country at state vocational training institutions at the technical degree level, and Level 1 Vocation for which they do not pay tuition fees and will receive a monthly stipend.

Program 3: Establishment of a national social assistance program for poor families, vulnerable groups in poor households and vulnerable families in times of economic crisis and emergency to support and provide timely and systematically to the people, especially the poor and vulnerable families, and families vulnerable to risks according to the actual situation of the crisis or disaster in all geographical locations across the country, which will cover a total population of about 4.3 million people.

Program 4: Launching and promoting the implementation of the informal economic development strategy to be able to participate in the formal economy and be able to benefit from the formal social protection system through – (1) providing protection and development of a favorable envi-

ronment for business and trade, as well as providing technical and vocational training to small and medium-sized enterprises, and (2) providing social protection to self-employed individuals in the informal economy with a primary focus on the provision of health care services under the Health Equity Fund.

Program 5: Introduction of coordination mechanisms and financing programs aimed at boosting production, marketing and maintaining balance of key agricultural prices at a reasonable level through the introduction of specific budget packages, starting at US\$ 100 million, with the possibility to allocate more budgets if necessary to intervene in time to buy agricultural produces from farmers with the goal of maintaining price stability in each harvest season, especially on some agricultural produce such as rice, mango, longan, cashew nut, cassava, corn and other produces as needed.

Program 6: Deployment of technical officers to provide agricultural services to all rural communes throughout the country to promote agricultural productivity and assist farmers' families in promoting their agricultural products. The Royal Government of the 7th legislature will also pay attention to the establishment of farmers' associations in rural areas to maintain the farmers' power in production as well as in bargaining with buyers.

The political program of the Cambodian People's Party 2023-2028 is a continuation of the political program 2018-2023 and responds to the evolution of the actual situation both in the country and abroad. This political program is built on the sacred will and aspirations of the people and the realism that the party has the real capacity and ability to implement. As the Prime Minister candidate of the Cambodian People's Party for the upcoming 7th legislature, I have already prepared the Royal Government's Socio-Economic Policy Agenda, which is a continuation of the Rectangular Strategy Phase 4 as a leadership tool to successfully implement the party's "political program".

Before concluding, I would take this opportunity to highlight the

unwavering position of the Cambodian People's Party in participating in the 7th legislature National Assembly election in accordance with the principles of multi-party liberal democracy, strictly adhering to the rules and regulations, procedures and ethics for casting votes. I would like to take this opportunity to call on all working groups to help the capital, provinces, party committees at all levels, candidates, officials and members of the Cambodian People's Party to participate actively in this campaign to show the strength of strong solidarity and unity of our party with adherence to the noble dignity and morality.

At the same time, I hope that the parties contesting in the election, as well as civil society organizations, national and international observers and other media outlets, observing the election process, both during the election campaign, during the vote count and after the election, will strictly abide by the rules, regulations and procedures of the election to ensure the best political environment for a successful, free, fair and just election.

On Sunday, July 23, 2023, is the upcoming election day. I am appealing to all my compatriots as well as all members of the Cambodian People's Party who have the identification documents for the election to go to the polls and vote for the Cambodian People's Party – the flowers scattering angel emblem and number 18 on the ballot paper.

- *Vote for the Cambodian People's Party is voting for peace, democracy and development!*
- *Vote for the Cambodian People's Party is voting for full national independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity!*
- *Vote for the Cambodian People's Party is voting for yourself!*
- *The Cambodian People's Party wins the election, the Cambodian people are the winners!*
- *Long live the Cambodian People's Party!*

In the end, I would like to wish and bless our Buddhist monks, clergy of all religions, compatriots everywhere, members of the Party, the youth, all the best and the five Buddhist blessings. Thank You ■

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will tell you the reasons [...] His Excellency Wang Wentian has contributed a lot over the years to travel with me to launch the groundbreaking and inauguration ceremonies. For the (future ceremonies), (HE Wang Wentian) will have to join with the new Prime Minister. This is It is a normal state process [...]

(3) Voters make up 84.59% of the registered number, valid ballots are 94.64%

[...] I apologize to His Excellency Wang Wentian that I need to send a message and an explanation to the people regarding my departure from the post of Prime Minister by August 22 [...] First of all, I would like to thank the people who, up to 84.59 percent, went to the polls. Compared to the national elections in 2018, when we have only 83.02 percent of the registered voters went to the polls, it is an increase. In the last 2022 commune elections, we had only 80.32 percent turnout [...], in the 2023 national elections, there are more than 7.7 million valid ballots, equivalent to 94.64% of the cast ballots (and the invalid) ballots are 5.36 percent, compared to 2018, there were more than 8 percent of invalid ballots [...]

(4) The 2023 general election is a contest between supporters and destroyers of democracy

[...] on this point, I would like to share with you that the election in Cambodia has two characteristics. The first is the race for seats in parliament (where the competition) takes place in a relatively calm environment. But what is the real competition (secondly) is between the supporters of the election and democracy through elections, and on the other hand, the destroyers of democracy by preventing people from going to the polls, making marks that invalidated the ballot, or in short, destroying the election [...]

(5) There is sufficient evidence that a political party was involved in the invalidation of the ballot

[...] We have found some targets [...] should this party be dissolved or not? If the boss of this party raises his hand to stab us, we will not be afraid to cut off the roots and throw them away.

(There must be a) bargain at that point. You are doing things illegally. Some have confessed and obviously there had been this “Sabai” telegram group. There had been those who photographed and posted them (the crossed-out ballots). We have enough evidence that a political party is involved and that party is placing lawyers (to defend) those who had done that. Is this a proof? [...]

(6) The international community of 65 countries/nationalities declares the legitimacy of the election in Cambodia

[...] It may be wise for certain countries to not force us to go to the level that we have to make decisions. We just urge you to respect Cambodia’s independence and sovereignty, recognize the will of more than 84% of the (registered voters) [...] if you impose the view of the minority on us, we will not reserve understanding for the minority voice here [...] the election results are clear and [...] “in Cambodia, there are no early elections,” I told observers from more than 65 countries or nationalities. What do these 65 nationalities represent when they come to Cambodia? Is this called the international community or not? Or would one or two countries, or 3 is the international community? [...] One country or two countries do not present an international community. That is not right [...]

(7) “Democracy in Cambodia has won”

[...] Dissatisfaction is your thing. Let the people who are satisfied enjoy their rights to be satisfied and do not consider one or two or three countries as the international community. The international community is something like a majority at the UN General Assembly [...] when it comes to the internal affairs of a country, there is no interference. I can finally declare that democracy in Cambodia has won. We hold regular elections, in which the prime minister has no right to dissolve parliament. The constitution clearly states that the parliament has a five-year term [...]

(8) Sacrificing again for the long-term peace of the nation/people ...

Now, let’s ask why I have to

leave the post of Prime Minister when the party has received such high support? I can say that this is a sacrifice for long-term peace, to ensure peace and to ensure development. I have already sacrificed many times. I used to take trade life to liberate the country. I traded my life to unite the country, and end the protracted war, and I used my political life as the capital for political and economic reforms in Cambodia. Now I am sacrificing once again for the long-term peace of the people. There are at least four reasons that I should tell people why I have to leave now. That we are transferring (leadership) to the youth now is (because it is) more stable and safer than (doing it only) when we are older or about to die [...]

(9) How many rulers in Cambodia before have given up power?

[...] How many people in Cambodia in the past have ever relinquished power like what I am doing now, while I am still able to be prime minister for another five or 10 years. It is not good (that we hold office) until we are too old or about to die. “Who is going to take over after Hun Sen?” was a question that arose from 2015/2016, when I went to Tokyo. The late former Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, while sitting at the table with me at the Mekong-Japan summit, posed the question, “Who is going to take over after Hun Sen?” There were jokes that “after Hun Sen is Hun Sen.” Indeed, after Hun Sen was Hun Sen. Hun Sen continued from 2018 through to 2023 [...]

(10) The conditions and qualifications are favorable for the new government to begin

[...] the transfer of leadership to the youth to start now is a good thing (as it is) ensuring that we are all happy (in the state) that the older groups, along with the younger ones, continue to maintain peacefully for peace and development [...] Previously, there were two scenarios. Firstly, the old group would continue to lead the government for a year or two and then leave, and hand it over to the next generation. Secondly, we let them start from the beginning of the term. *Judging by the conditions and qualifications, as well as the favorable situation, the Standing Committee (of the Cambodian People’s*

Party) decided to choose the second scenario that the new government should start from the beginning without the need for a transition by the old one. In this way, we give full power to successors to be able to do their work throughout the term. This is the biggest guarantee that there will be no crisis (of transfer of leadership) [...]

(11) The next generation is well prepared to take over the long journey

[...] *The second point is that (the next generation) has presented themselves to lead (the country) when they have been well prepared.* They come to take from us – the older generation – the burdens for the long run and they are no longer young. Compared to me, when I took over the post of Prime Minister, [...] I was only 32 years old. The new prime minister is now 46 years old, which means he is 14 years older than I was [...] (he) has had enough training and exposure. We have already included some of them in the government for a long time. A group of young people or we called them the younger group (members of the government), has long been included as Deputy Prime Minister and Ministers [...]

(12) President of the Supreme Council of the Throne ... President of the Senate

[...] I am willing to sacrifice this power for the long-term happiness of the Cambodian people, including us. Some of the elected officials, who in the previous government had been Deputy Prime Ministers, senior ministers and ministers, will now be members of the National Assembly, the senators, and some as advisors to the Royal Government. I have confirmed the day before that in the coming days HM the King will appoint me as the President of the Supreme Council of the Throne, which has been left vacant after the death of Samdech Krom Preah. Samdech Sar Kheng, Samdech Tea Banh, Samdech Heng Samrin, Samdech Men Sam An will all be appointed as Supreme Advisers to HM the King [...] there have been demands in the Party that I should not leave too far from the state affairs. On this

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note, I will go to the position of President of the Senate after the Senate election on February 25, 2024 [...] I resign from the National Assembly member of Kandal Constituency but I will stand as a member of the Kandal Constituency senators [...]

(13) The first phase of the five-angles strategy prioritizes people, water, roads, electricity and technology

[...] I can say that the next generation is ready [...] we have started from the triangular strategy to the four-phase rectangular strategy, and now we switch to the pentagon or five angles strategy – adding another angle to the previous motto – job; growth; equity; efficiency; and now one more – sustainability – the fifth angle. In terms of policy, the priority for development is people, water, roads, electricity and technology. The situation has evolved and we cannot stay in the rectangular strategy as before. Capturing technology along with training of human resources is the goal, and it is the main task for the development of the country. Nearly half of the new government members hold Ph D degrees [...]

(14) The former generation has not left politics but does not influence the decisions of the Royal Government

[...] *Thirdly, I want to emphasize that the older generation has not left politics.* I am still (leading) the ruling party, accompanied by four vice presidents, along with several other members of the Politburo, as some will be serving in the National Assembly and some in the Senate. But I would like to emphasize here that we are not trying to influence the decisions of the Prime Minister, the ministers of the institutions. In general, we do not try to influence the decisions of the Royal Government [...]

(15) It is time to transfer the position to the next generation ... two layers of belts

[...] Even though I do not have children, I must use this (appropriate) time to transfer power and transfer positions to the next generation, not just for my children. As long as they meet all the conditions and get the support of the party and the sup-

port of the people, that is enough. No matter what you talk about passing on to the succeeding generation, the dynasty, etc. The Constitution does not prohibit my son's right to serve as prime minister, or even if Manet were not my son, it was a stage that commanded transfer (of leadership). We have come to old age. We must leave the jobs to the younger generation with our presence. It would be hard. There would be two layers of belts. We have a backup tire [...]

(16) If the new Prime Minister had life threatening accident, I must return to be the Prime Minister for a while

[...] Let me warn you on one thing. If my son (who is going to become Prime Minister) is having life threatening accident of some kind, the possibility is that I must return to be the PM. Let me be clear. I do not want this country to be in turmoil. If Hun Manet met accident/mishap, I must return to be the Prime Minister for a while. After that, I will choose the one who can be the next prime minister. I have informed the Standing Committee since December 2021 that “if Hun Manet met life threatening accident, I must return to be prime minister.” This is necessary to ensure the well-being of the people [...]

(17) Situation are favorable in all respects ... the ballot confirms a combination of 3 actors

[...] The fourth point is related to the situation. The situation in all areas favors the succeeding team to start their journey. Previously, I still had a backup plan. If the vote (that supported the Cambodian People's Party) was below 74%, I would continue (holding the PM post) because it means that people has not yet supported Manet [...] I would continue to improve the situation first. However, this ballots clearly show the combination of 3 actors – first, the party, second, Hun Sen and third, Hun Manet himself [...]

(18) Will not prevent the progress and independence of successive government

[...] Today is the time for me to speak as Prime Minister. Next time, if I were to make a statement, I would not deliver my speech this way [...] David Huot has written for many newspapers

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always destroyed (the democratic process in Cambodia). Now (comparatively) the number of people who went to the polls is much higher than (from) the elections with the participation of the Candlelight Party even. We are waiting to see how many ballots that are crossed out since the leaders of the extremist group have made it clear that the invalidating ballots with crossing out signs are the ones that support them. We will see how many crossing-out ballots are there? [...]

In their Telegram Chanel, known as the Sabay Telegram, [...] cannot be disguised. Now, (we have already identified) the target members of the said telegram channel, which we already went in to comment, they can check there are four of my commons in there. *You cannot hide your at-*

– Cambodia Daily, Khmer Times, Asia Times [...] in his latest three articles, he had written objectively about the good things that Hun Sen has done [...] it is a good thing that he recognizes the truth. However, David Huot said at one point that “Hun Sen's presence will slow down Manet.” I would like to confirm to David Huot that “you are wrong on what Hun Sen has thought.” Hun Sen does not have the habit of letting children lack independence in decision making and have to ask his father [...]

(19) Saying the wrong thing, evaluating the wrong situation, the profit came to the CPP

[...] I should send a message to the opposition and some analysts. If you continue to make groundless analysis, you cannot win the CPP. As long as you talked things that are not true, the profit will come from the CPP. You are saying all the time that there is tense internal rift in Phnom Penh between Sar Kheng and Hun Sen about the transfer of power/ leadership. Your assessments are too far wrong. It is just that Sar Kheng or Sar Sokha did not respond. The CPP has no habit of arguing [...] those who insulted me or my children and my family have brought CPP more votes. People are not listening to what you tell. Every day, they see the truth – bridges, roads, schools, hospitals, everything [...]■

tempt to destroy (the election process) and all of you who involved (in this movement), please do not flee the country. Please come out and confess your wrongdoing induced by the outlaw rebel leader who declared that those ballots (invalidated with crossing out signs) were his. Let us separate them.

I hope that the NEC will differentiate between invalid ballots, which usually occur every time (there is an election), to the ballots invalidated (by crossing-out signs) since they define the them as the ballots for the extremist leader. *Now more than 84% of the people go to the polls. We are waiting to see how many of the 8,177,053 ballots cast in the elections or 84.21% of the total – were invalidated with the crossing-out sign. These are only temporary figures. This figure is subject to change. We know exactly how many people (who) went to the polls, refusing to listen to the opposition, and supported the people's democratic process, supported HM the King's call, supported the NEC's call, and supported the government's call for the people to go to the polls.*

I am taking this opportunity to express my gratitude and thanks to all *the Buddhist monks and compatriots who have fulfilled duties as the owners of the country, and the practitioners of true democracy through elections. This act has completely pushed the extremists who are trying to destroy democracy in Cambodia to lose their stands.* Let all extremist groups look at and analyze the political maturity of the Cambodian people. The strength of the Cambodian people is (that they) would not let the cheating group destroy their nation.

I am very proud and I will follow this matter up as I am going meet and dine with the Prime Minister of Guinea-Bissau during his visit the Kingdom and to observe the elections. Thank you. ©

Stepping down after giving ups for the survival of the people, ending the war and reforms (...) 26 July 2023

(1) The 2023 election – a record breaker of previous elections

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Earlier, I just visited HM the King to inform HM about the election and the process ahead. As a first step, I would inform our compatriots that our election in 2023 is a record-breaking election (election) to those held in the past, that despite the incitement of unrest to prevent people from going to the polls, the turnout was 84.58 percent, a provisional number, compared to 69.61% for the national election in 2013; 83.02 percent for the 6th Legislative National Assembly in 2018; and 80.32 percent for recent commune election in 2022. Despite there were anti-election movements, people's democracy proceeds as usual and it is considered the people's day to elect their leaders from the political parties that participate in the election.

(2) Over 1 million votes more for CPP compared to the 2022 Commune/Sangkat Council elections

We see that the people have shown political maturity in the democratic process by participating in the largest turnout in the last two decades. At the same time, let me express my gratitude to the people all over the country for their participation. I would like to express my gratitude to our compatriots who – some 82.30 percent – have given their trust in voting the Cambodian People's Party, an increase of more than 1 million votes compared to the 2022 commune elections. Of course, this figure is officially announced by the National Election Commission. The provisional election results have already been announced. I see this as a strong momentum of the democratic process, on the one hand, and on the other, the trust in the CPP to lead the Royal Government.

(3) Prepare the Royal Government from the beginning of the mandate to ensure the smooth running of the Royal Government process

[...] I would like to inform the Buddhist monks and compatriots that, based on the decision of the Permanent Committee of the Cambodian People's Party and the audience granted by HM the King, I am asking people for the understanding that I am declaring that I will not continue in the position of the Prime Minister. I

have declared candidacy for the Prime Minister for the seventh term, and His Excellency Hun Manet is the candidate for the future Prime Minister position. The situation, however, requires the preparation of the Royal Government from the beginning of this term to ensure the smooth running of the Royal Government without interruption [...]

(4) Stepping down after giving ups for the survival of the people, ending the war and reforms

As other dignitaries, we have turned into our 70s or even the 80s. We should now be staying behind. I would like to clarify a little bit about how I will deal with it. We must dare to sacrifice. Once again, I relinquish power. Before that, I traded my life for the survival of the people, the liberation of the people from the genocidal regime of Pol Pot. I then traded my life for peace, trying to end the war, bringing about national unity and territorial unity for the first time in the long history of Cambodia. I have also traded my political life for the (positive) reforms results in the Kingdom of Cambodia so far.

(5) Pre-planning stepping down to maintain long-term stability

With these sacrifices, why am I in such a hurry to leave? This is a prelude to the long-term stability of the country, and that peace and stability in the long run is the foundation of peace and development (which the country) will continue to be inherited through my children ('s leadership). He is not taking the position from me without going through the procedure, especially the people's vote to become a member of the National Assembly. It's indeed a guarantee that when the new generation takes office, the old generation will stand by them.

(6) Continuing to serve the people and assist the RGC ...

I myself, Samdech Krala Hom Sar Kheng, Samdech Pichey Sena Tea Banh, Samdech Men Sam An and some other Deputy Prime Ministers will also resign. I would like to inform our compatriots about my political future [...] that I will continue to be the President of the ruling party and a member of the National Assembly. In addition, His Majesty the King will nominate me as the

President of the Royal Council of the Throne after I permanently leave the Council of Ministers. Next [...] on February 25, 2024, there will be a Senate election. I am going to run for the Senate. According to the plan of my party, *I will become the President of the Senate in place of Samdech Say Chhum, who wished to take leave for his old age. I am still able to continue to serve the people and assist the Royal Government in managing security, order, as well as contributing to the further development of the nation.*

(7) Will not interfere in the affairs of the Prime Minister or the new Royal Government

I would like to make it clear that I will not interfere in the affairs of the Prime Minister or the new Royal Government in accordance with the division of power between the legislature and the executive. Based on my experience as the Prime Minister for more than 38 years, I am well aware of the independence of the Prime Minister in decision-making. This is an effort to prevent (unnecessary happening because) a long night would have too many dreams – where rumors are spreading, as analysts, or extremist groups, I may say, who like to attack us to have their eyes opened (to the fact that) Manet will be Prime Minister in just over three weeks from today.

(8) HM the King to appoint the Prime Minister, who shall organize the Cabinet for the approval of the National Assembly

Hun Manet (the Prime Minister, who) has the ability. Manet has already completed two tasks. First, the party unanimously nominated Hun Manet as the prime ministerial candidate. He will now become prime minister in the coming weeks. Second, Hun Manet has already been elected to the National Assembly. It is true that he is not yet a valid member of the National Assembly because all the elected people have not yet (received) the call by HM the King for their swearing in. This morning, I met with HM the King, who also accepted the request of the President of the Party with the most seats in the National Assembly to issue a Royal Decree appointing the Prime Minister, Dr. Hun Manet. Next, the Prime Minister must

arrange for the Royal Government – to match the composition of the Cabinet – so that the National Assembly can give confidence to.

(9) A great sacrifice to ensure the peaceful life of the people

I reiterate that this is a great sacrifice. My sacrifice is worth to ensure the peaceful life of the people. In the same way, our former King, the King Father of our nation, Prince Norodom Sihanouk, Preah Borom Ratanak Kaod, had modelled a great preparation. He abdicated and appointed a new king – the current HM the King Norodom Sihamoni. In the meantime, if there had not been prior planning for eight years, when the King Father passed away in 2012, we would have been in a state of turmoil. One side we had to take care of the royal funeral and the other side the Royal Council of the Throne had to elect a new king [...] to be President of the Senate, I will assist the Royal Government and HM the King, while in his absence, as the Acting Head of State. This is the ultimate guarantee of peace for the country and, in particular, the stability of the functioning of state power without hindrance.

(10) To appoint new Prime Minister either on August 10 or August 7

I would address all the monks as well as our compatriots, according to the work calendar, after the National Election Commission announces the official results, HM the King will appoint the Prime Minister so that he can prepare the Royal Government and bring the Cabinet to seek approval of the National Assembly. According to the calendar, there are two possibilities. The first possibility is that the National Election Commission will announce the (official electoral and elected deputies) results on August 9 [...], in which case, on August 10, HM the King will appoint a new Prime Minister [...] however, the National Election Commission (NEC), as far as I heard, could be announcing the (official) results on August 5 [...] in which case, I have had the attention of HM the King that we should not appoint the Prime Minister on Sunday, August 6.

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Please appoint the Prime Minister on Monday, August 7, instead.

(11) The National Assembly convenes on August 21 and the new Prime Minister is sworn in on the evening of August 22

HM the King will convene the first session of the National Assembly on August 21, 2023, which is a good departure for the National Assembly as well as for the new government [...] on August 21. In the morning HM the King will convene the session of the National Assembly, and in the afternoon of the same day, the members of the National Assembly will be swearing in. On August 22nd, the National Assembly will be in session chaired by the most senior member. At that time, the leadership of the National Assembly and the Royal Government will be formed. On the evening of Tuesday, August 22nd, the Council of Ministers will be sworn in. It is a good time for us to celebrate official departure time of the National Assembly and the Royal Government.

(12) Still a political figure leading the country ...

I am still a politician who continues to lead the country in the capacity of the president of the ruling party, and in the interim period – a member of the National Assembly, along with my future role as Chairman of the Supreme Council of the Throne [...] I will assist HM the King, as well as mediate between the Royal Palace and the Royal Government, especially to help the palace with the supply of logistics or security, especially the protection of the throne. In either February or March (2024), I will become the President of the Senate of the Kingdom of Cambodia, replacing Samdech Say Chhum, who will resign. This is a compromise and I have already told HM the King, Samdech Heng Samrin, Samdech Sar Kheng, Samdech Tea Banh, Samdech Men Sam An will be appointed as the King's personal advisers. This is the process that I would like to inform you all.

(13) New generation leaders to implement the five-angle strategy

I would like to emphasize that although I still have political power, I will not interfere in the

affairs of the Royal Government or the new Prime Minister, because as the Cambodian People's Party already laid out its political platform, the Royal Government will have to figure out implementing it according to reality. With related dignitaries, we have been proactive to organize the succeeding generation to take over, and they will move towards leading with the Pentagon strategy in replacement of the rectangular strategy, with its processes added to new aspects in line with the needs of the country's development. Therefore, my compatriots, please do not worry about my departure. Lok Chumteav Pheung Sakona, (Minister of Culture), upon learning of my purpose (to step down) said – and it really touched me – “meeting the brother is fun, but being separated from the father is really difficult.” I am aware of this, but I must step down as Prime Minister, the position I have served for more than 38 years, the longest-serving Prime Minister in the world, to pave the way for the long haul [...]

(14) Prime Minister from January 14, 1985 until August 22, 2023

I have been the Prime Minister for how long? I will be the Prime Minister from January 14, 1985 until August 22, 2023. I have been in this tenure 2,014 weeks. In terms of months, it is 463 months. In terms of years, it is 38 years, 7 months and 8 days. In terms of days, it is 14,099 days. I am the longest-serving Prime Minister in the world. Considering the time when I began my tenure as Minister of Foreign Affairs in the Government from January 08, 1979 to August 22, 2023, I served in the Government and the Royal Government for 2,328 weeks, 16,297 days, 535 months, or 44 years, 7 months, and 14 days – nearly half a century.

Considering the beginning of trading life to (liberate and) lead the country and becoming the leader of the movement from June 20, 1977 to August 22, 2023, I fulfilled my duties for 46 years, 2 months, and 2 days or 554 months, 2,409 weeks and 16,864 days [...] I am not yet done. This is just to emphasize two important tasks – one is how long I have been the Prime Minister and the other is how long I

have been in the Royal Government. I still remain a member of the National Assembly and will continue to be President of the Senate next year. It is not over yet.

(15) Even if Hun Manet were not my child, I would still support him as Prime Minister

I will be 72 years old in the next few days. I am announcing it early to avoid comments from foreign newspapers or from the opposition on whether Manet could become the Prime Minister? I would like to make it clear to you that Hun Manet will start being the Prime Minister on the evening of August 22, 2023. At that time, whether you call Hun Manet as the Prime Minister or not will be up to you, but you are the outlaw. Some 84% of the people voted with more than 82% of the support (for the CPP and he is the PM candidate). It is enough. There is no need for you to give your support [...] my trust is that people will continue to support Hun Manet.

Even if Hun Manet were not my son, I would still support Hun Manet as Prime Minister. I always affirm that position. Hun Manet has gone through 4 important stages – 1. the party must have an internal agreement to become the successor. 2. He must be a member of the National Assembly through the general election. 3. He must be appointed by the King to organize the Royal Government and 4. He must win approval by the National Assembly.

(16) Some old-aged Ministers to sit in the NA, the Senate, and to serve as advisors

I would ask all ministers who do not hold the positions anymore to please understand. We must have a sacrifice. The one who gave the greatest sacrifice was myself. Even though my son takes over, the one who once was in command is no longer so. That is sacrifice.

Let those former ministers sit in the National Assembly. we are old now. Some can be appointed as advisors to the Royal Government and some can become senators in the future. We will check later [...] some of our senators are also 80 or older, or close to 80, old enough to leave. It is true that the Senators are (for people

with) old (age), but (when they are) too old, (they are) not able to work. We need to think about health and think about the succession of the next generation [...]

(17) The opposition's insults gave sympathy to Hun Sen and Hun Manet

Once again, I would like to thank my compatriots, both inside and outside the country, for their supports of myself in the past, and most recently for the democratic process through elections. I would also like to thank all the opposition groups for insulting/scorning Hun Sen, for insulting Hun Manet as much that the CPP received more than 82% of the votes [...] it is because of your radio, your insults on Hun Sen and Hun Manet, people have given sympathy to Hun Sen and Hun Manet [...] it is high time for you in the opposition to learn from these experiences to guarantee that you can participate in the process of democracy in Cambodia.

(18) They humiliated us, but they had to work with us

The national and international observers (here present for the elections) are living witnesses to the democratic process in Cambodia. It is not up to one or two countries to undervalue Cambodia's elections. What is determined and necessary is that the people did vote for the National Assembly to form the Royal Government,

HM the King appoints the (PM to organize the) Royal Government, and not a recognition by one or two countries. I do not make inference to any country, but as we all can see, since 2018, though they have always humiliated us, but they still had to work with me, they could not avoid me – and that would include the ASEAN Summit in Phnom Penh – the relationship between state and state is like this.

(19) Ballots show trust in CPP, in Hun Sen and in Hun Manet, the successor

I should emphasize that extremist politics should be eliminated from Cambodia. Any group that intends to associate with extremist leaders should not be forgiven. We will implement the law to get rid of this extremist group. It is

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not a warning, but my advice that it is better for them to be cooperative, constructive, rather than violent. You have used too much verbal violence. It is enough. The ballots that the people gave to the CPP this time confirmed – firstly, trust in the CPP, second, trust in Hun Sen, and third, trust in the successor – Hun Manet. That is a clear message from the people, you need to understand this. You cannot go wrong again and again. Please do not do politics from the outside to imprison the insiders, and the insider should understand what it is to you to follow the outsiders [...]

I would like to thank HM the King for his continued encouragement, especially this morning's audience regarding proposals for the appointments, compositions, convening National Assembly session and formation of the Royal Government, all of which he provided support. Finally, I wish all the Buddhist monks, compatriots, both inside and outside the country, good health, happiness, prosperity with the five blessings of the Buddha. Thank you.

On Political Functionaries Re-appointments (...) 29 July 2023

Dear compatriots,

First of all, I apologize for my voice as I seem to be a little hoarse. This morning I had a golf session. After losing some calories, it is normal that it makes a hoarse sound. However, I have to convey this message especially to Excellencies, Lok Chumteavs, Ladies and Gentlemen who work within the framework of political affairs. **There has been a great deal of congratulations from the people and all walks of life regarding my dedication from not holding the position of Prime Minister and giving the jobs to the younger generation led by Dr. Hun. Manet to ensure the sustainability of peace and development.**

The congratulations of the compatriots show the need to ensure long-term peace and development. I understand that **my great sacrifice is a sacrifice for the happiness and prosperity of the whole nation to ensure that this nation does not fall into chaos, instability, or power grabbing**

at gun points as it happened in the past. I am leaving in a situation where the CPP is leading/ ruling with more than 82% of the votes, the highest ever in the history of the CPP, with only 75% and 74% at the commune election in 2022.

I would like to thank you for your support of my decision and consider that this is a national process that we needed to handed over to the next generation so that they can do a better job. However, I also grasp the concerns of the Excellencies, Lok Chumteavs, Ladies and Gentlemen in various institutions related to their future duties.

Samdech Say Chhum, Samdech Sar Kheng, Samdech Tea Banh, Samdech Men Sam An, Dr. Hun Manet, Dr. Aun Porn Moniroth, His Excellency Keut Rith, and I have had discussion at my house, and we have decided to keep all officials who have already been appointed as Secretaries of State, Undersecretaries of State or advisors to the Royal Government, so that they will continue to do the jobs.

The ranks appointed by the Royal Decree are re-appointed by the Royal Decree, the ranks appointed by the sub-decree are going to be re-appointed by the sub-decree, and the ranks appointed by the decision of the Minister are also going to be re-appointed. I would like to emphasize that for those who hold public office, there is no problem, except for those who have reached retirement age. Public functions, such as the General Department, Deputy Director General, Head of Department, Deputy Director of the Department, Head of Office, Provincial Governor, Deputy Governor, District Governor, Deputy District/Khan Governor are not affected. Military officers of all ranks, military police officers of all ranks are not affected unless they are of retirement age and are required to retire by law.

For those who hold political positions that are appointed as Secretaries of State, Undersecretaries of State in the Ministry, they will continue, except for those who resign due to age or illness. The already appointed advisors to the Royal Government shall be re-appointed. For this appoint-

ment, the political office is divided into three levels, appointed by Royal Decree, from the level of Director General up to the level of political function. In terms of ministries, from the Under-Secretary of State and the Secretary of State are appointed by Royal Decree. The advisors are also appointed by Royal Decree, ranging from the Director General, the Under-Secretary of State, the Secretary of State, the Minister, the Senior Minister to the advisor who is the Deputy Prime Minister.

There are still advisors appointed by the sub-decree such as the Deputy Director General and the Head of the Department must also be re-appointed. In some ministries, some retirees are appointed to continue working, and there is a need for some officials to be appointed by the ministerial proclamation as deputy heads of departments and heads of offices. I have discussed these functions thoroughly, especially with Dr. Hun Manet, with His Excellency Aun Porn Moniroth, His Excellency Keut Rith, who are keeping the discussion going with me about the future process. In this regard, you may not worry about what is going to happen to you.

The only thing that needs to be reformed is the function of minister attached to the prime minister. In the past, a number of ministers attached to the prime minister – who have been working directly with the prime minister, (were appointed among those holding the position) as secretary of state. We leave it up to each of them to choose whether to remain Secretary of State or to be the Minister attached to the Prime Minister.

S/he may choose only one. I would like to emphasize that the reform here does not affect many people. Some are secretaries of state in ministries, but there are also additional (positions as) ministers attached to the prime minister.

The Minister attached to the Prime Minister portfolio will be kept for two major entities, which I have told the future leader. It will be reserved for the Director General of Taxation and the Director General of Customs, both of whom will

work on the one side with the minister, and on the other with the prime minister, who has to have direct control of the daily budget. This case is a must. For others, it is necessary to choose whether to remain the Secretary of State in the Ministry or to be the Minister attached to the Prime Minister. The is the only reform that has an impact.

I would like to reaffirm that all of you who have been appointed before will continue to (be re-appointed). Please be informed that **these Secretaries of State, Undersecretaries of State and advisors will end (their positions) on 22 August (2023) along with the end of the term of office of the Royal Government, and will also be re-appointed. In particular, the ministers who are no longer in office, including some deputy prime ministers, some senior ministers, and some ministers, including myself, before I am going to be the President of the Senate next year, have to sit as members of the National Assembly. Former ministers who are not members of the National Assembly may be appointed to serve as advisors to the Royal Government or to be nominated as senators in the future where possible.** Others who are unpaid advisors, re-appointment is not difficult. It does not weigh (on) the budget (for) the position of those advisors with honorary nature for them to have easy communication with related authorities to help build the local development.

On this note, **I hope that the future Prime Minister, the future ministers in every institution will continue to pay attention to the work to be done with the incumbent officials, the officials in the current position – so that they can continue to work without changes, unless the said persons asked to stop.** This is a confirmation to address the concerns that has come to my attention so far. Blessings to all the Venerable Monks, Excellencies, Lok Chumteavs, Compatriots. Please be blessed with the five blessings of the Buddha. Thank you. ☺

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