



Samdech Akka Moha Sena Padei Techo Hun Sen is welcomed by HE Abhisit Vijajiva, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Thailand at the 14th ASEAN Summit in HUa Hin, Thailand (Reuters)

24 February 2009 (Unofficial Translation)
Graduation Ceremony at Human Resource University

... It is indeed a great pleasure for my wife and I to take part in the graduation of 2,358 students, and this is also our presence here for the seventh time ... It is good time for us to meet when you all finishes another stage in your life ... By saying so I mean that graduation today should not be your last attempt on study ... I am sure you will find way to go on with your study ... If we were to leave study or stay idle, time and new knowledge will go by or we could say that we are running in opposite direction ...

This school has made a great development from a small apartment. With HE Deputy Prime Minister Sar Kheng as honorary President, the HRI has now become HRU and is well known for its rate of finding jobs for students after graduation ... But now everywhere there is this problem of financial crisis which is bringing about economic downturn

... Many companies in the world have practiced this policy of laying off workers or slashed down jobs and some had gone bankrupt for good ... Millions have gone jobless the world over ... I would urge those who have jobs in hands to do their best ... I would also remind you of any strikes or discontent expression should be held according to law as it could cause complete loss of jobs and trade unions could not do anything to change the situation at all ...

Protest for a proper solution must be recognized but those aimed for power building for leaders of trade unions should be carefully and lawfully balanced ... I would therefore appeal to unionists to be considerate in their actions and have more affection on workers as using them as springboard to expanding bargaining power with companies, (Continued on page 2)

16 February 2009 [Unofficial Translation of Selected Comments]
Roundtable Discussion in Siemreap City on Cambodia

Cambodia's Economic Performances

... It is indeed not a political question and I am sure the economists and economic think tank would have the faith to raise this issue up. What I wanted to share though is that aiming for political power one could use all sorts of pretext so that they could gain ground in attacking the Royal Government ... It is not the case in point in Cambodia alone but it is also obvious in other countries as well. Take for example before the elections or to improve rate of popularity, political opponents to the Government always make problems ... the group that is still good in that sense is the economists with whom

a frank discussion could be conducted and their input could be positive for the country's development. Just now the question was about the impact of the financial crisis ... I have mentioned some in relations to its impacts in many of my previous speeches ...

Take for example the country's two digit growth of 10% has gone down to 7% in 2008 – and this is the overall impact for Cambodia. However, Cambodia did not have any impacts in form of stock exchange or it has no concern of being going bad in stock market ... You may take it as a football match in the region or (Continued on page 3)

04 February 2009 [Unofficial Translation of Selected Comments]
Achievements at Sansam Kosal Buddhist Pagoda, Phnom Penh

... I am so glad to return to the pagoda once again after my last trip on December 17, 2007 with my wife during the celebration of anniversary of Samdech Preah Dharma Likhet Luos Lai, the first deputy director of monks in the Kingdom of Cambodia – in his 94 years. The meeting today is possible because of the efforts we made together as collective and public achievements here in the pagoda of Sansam Kosal, Phnom Penh.

toms and Excise together with HE the Government Representative Kep Chuktema were the ones who actually saw through these projects ...

Today my wife and I are so pleased to have noticed orderly manner and I am sure before soon the place will become sacred and venerated our people ... I am so blessed to see that all nine Samdech (patriarchs) of the Buddhist monks are present today ... it is quite a rare coincidence as (Continued on page 5)

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especially when there is no mistake in point, would make the situation for the workers tangibly vulnerable ... Some countries like the United States and European Union before ordered clothing from Cambodia to sell to workers in their countries but because workers no longer have jobs those orders are also slashed ...

But one thing I am sure that no matter how hard the situation is Cambodia will not go back to the time when we had nothing to eat or the situation between 1970 and 1975 where war ravaged the country and between 1975 and 1979 when we all had hard time like in Pol Pot regime at all. Secondly we are sure to take serious precaution on food security as without it the country would go into chaos ... we can go without fuel or luxurious cars but not rice ... Job creations in our country has had impact from this crisis as some countries that planned to throw investment in Cambodia in 2009 has decided to withhold for the sake of redirecting the capital for saving domestic economy from crisis ... There is a need in this case to create jobs locally so as to help assuage poverty among our people ...

I would take this opportunity to express my sincere thanks to every graduates for making their sacrifices and efforts to attain this far reaching achievements in developing themselves ... I also take this achievement to be contributions and favors done by your parents who have sacrificed their times, resources and efforts for your gains today ... I would urge you with what I used to ask from previous graduations here and elsewhere in the country that you have made them happy by

trying to be obedient and keeping yourself away from social ills like drugs and gangsters, etc.

Yesterday I received a report that the conflict in the Extraordinary Chamber in the Court of Cambodia has come to an end ... I do not care ... There is a verdict from the court in 1979 but they did not accept it while continuing to recognize the Khmer Rouge at the United Nations and now they wanted to go through the court case again but to have been brawled in millions of financial issue ...

To be correct, I have done my jobs already – *Firstly*, I have led and cooperated in toppling Pol Pot regime, and *Secondly*, I have done the job of preventing the return of Pol Pot regime ... at the time when they protected Pol Pot, and when I was Minister of Foreign Affairs in 1979, 1981 and 1985, my request to meet only a head of department of some countries, they did not respond positively at all ... but they went to meet the Khmer Rouge leaders...

Thirdly, with support of the people and armed forces as well as unity among leaders of the Cambodian People's Party, I have led the implementation of the win-win policy which has unified the country whereas the Khmer Rouge political and military organization have returned to the fold of the nation and they all – Nuon Chea, Khieu Samphan, Ieng Sary and other dignitaries – came to my house. This shows to the whole world that nowhere in this world has the conflict been resolved this way ... Because we are a small country so what we have achieved could not be seen important but in some countries only verbally repeating "change" a

Noble Prize could be in waiting ... Some people who in the past have supported the Khmer Rouge could not by any standard judged to be human right champions ... I think it is their unpaid duty to seek forgiveness from the Cambodian people for their kowtow to the Khmer Rouge ...

Fourthly, I have led the negotiation with the United Nations to coordinate with then General Secretary of the United Nations Kofi Anan on points that were in contradiction ... I suggested to Kofi Anan various possibilities — whether to have the United Nations involved in the Court process with the Cambodian Judges and prosecutors, or the United Nations would provide only expertise and involve only in drafting laws ... While the third option was the United Nations stays away ...

Fifthly, when there is indictment from the court I have ensured that it is fulfilled by getting those culprits before court. When you have a fight in the court it is your problem and we cannot accept to be irresponsible or will lacking ... They never even once beg us for an excuse when they did things wrong on us – both some foreigners and Cambodians alike ... How could some of them compare themselves as God or Buddha ... Having said so it seems that without Hun Sen is kind of hard too ... Take for example it would be uncomfortable if I was absent in the ASEAN summit but I also have planned to meet with Prime Minister Abhisit Vijajiva at Hua Hin on bilateral issues — not only to talk about border as it is not the only issue between Cambodia and Thailand but more like economics, trade, investment, tourism, etc... ■

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to why it has not been adopted yet ... Some people may ask me when the Anti-corruption Law is ready? My answer would be it is ready when the Criminal Code is ready because the two laws need to have mutual compatibility ... Pol Pot destroyed everything in this country and we restarted all laws line after line and Japan has provided us help in putting together the Civil Code for Cambodia whereas France helps us with the Criminal Code and its Procedure ... The Criminal Code has now passed inter-ministerial approval and will soon be sent to the National Assembly ... And thereafter the Anti-Corruption Law ... it is just a question of time ...

However, I would suggest that the Law itself is not a magic pill that will eventually eliminate corruption and itself cannot fight against corruption ... but one thing important in this fight is the effort to shrink down actions that bring about corruption ... Take for instance the establishment of one-window service which has so far scaled down corruption in relation to investment procedure which helps investor to gain more time and save resources ...

The proclamation of moratorium on logging has been placed, perhaps for a long time, aimed at preserving the forest but also to exercise anti-corruption module as in between 1993 and 1998, corruption in this sector had been devastating ... more than that money earned from logging would not be affordable to destruction of newly built roads for their transportation... Land grabbing is another sources of corruption but because of the crisis... We will take serious measure against illegal land confiscation ... To

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in the world. Cambodia did not feel a thing of who wins or loses because we do not have our team in the play. We have planned to set up a stock market of our own though and because of the world crisis we have come to a point of reconsidering if we should go ahead as planned in 2009 or should we delay it ...

The Royal Government and its working groups are conducting serious studies and if we were to give its birth just to see it dies later, I think we should not let it take inception at this time. This is just my preliminary evaluation ... but we have another front that might feel the impact though ... Cambodia depends heavily on exports so some initial impacts have been brought to the exports of garments or other textile products ... A certain number of factories concerned have felt the impact ... That is where our concern lies ... if the United States or the European Union were not slashing down imports Cambodia would be quite fine ... That is why we have reoriented our efforts to markets in Japan and Canada ... and recently the Philippines came telling us Cambodia could export to the Philippines for 0% tax.

Another point of concern is relating to the dwindling price of agro-products, which for me I see it as a two edge sword. As the price of fuel has gone sky high, many countries resorted to using crops for producing bio-fuel making the price for food crops going up. I told the people of Cambodia that we have white gold on our land which I mean we has a large land for cultivation (of rice). Why did I say it was a two edge sword? It is because when the price of food crops going high about 80% of the

Cambodian population are happy because they are farmers but another 20% of the population are going crazy because they are consumers ... Impacts on agro-products from the world crisis are felt by producers for market supply scale but not for subsistent farmers ...

The price of rubber which was before close to 3,000 USD per ton has now come down to about 1,000 USD. The cassava, which our farmers have enlarged the cultivation on about 10,000 hectares, has faced a serious price crisis and many farmers decide to leave them in the ground instead of harvesting because of the low price and the high cost of harvesting them.

These are impacts on our farmers and people as a whole and it is the Royal Government's concern. We are in the process of suggesting scenarios and/or policy framework aimed at supporting agriculture. I have just told Mr. Chan Ni of ACLEDA Bank to focus more on promoting agriculture and he said his bank has placed a big amount already ... I also urge him to think more in terms of purchase of products, processing for export as agriculture in Cambodia to be frank has got a large potential. Comparing with Vietnam, it is easily seen that Vietnam has exhausted their soil by producing between two and three times per annum at the yield between four and five tons per hectare. Cambodia produces only once a year at the yield of 2.6 tons per hectare. If Cambodia increases its production frequency to twice a year for only half of the current land of production at the yield of three tons per hectare – we could say that we still have more room for that.

The third impact for Cambo-

dia is indeed the tourist sector. As you may have learned that clothing exported to the United States or in some other countries have gone down because of reduced orders ...

People who used to go for expensive brand cloths are now going for those at lesser prices and the number of cloths to be purchased are also in less number ... In tourism, because of less incomes, people change their plan to tour other countries by countries to their natives and/or local destinations ... That is why the projected growth in tourist sector of 12% has been achieved at 6% only though it is still a positive growth ... We have projected to head for an increase of about half a million tourists but only 300,000 is noted ...

Another impact is in the field of property and construction. We all should note that recent property development has been great and helped the Royal Government's with the problem of housing ... The private investment has played a major role in this sector... In Phnom Penh, as we can see tens of thousands of houses have been built ... In Siemreap, before we have only two old hotels but now we have more than 100 hotels in operation ... a fact of development in the field of construction that no one could deny ... This sector has now come to a standstill and the purchasing power has been stuck ... The purchasing power in Cambodia in the past one year had been tremendous as companies importing motorcycles could not respond in a timely manner to demand ...

However, the purchasing power has gone down and in light of last Chinese New Year, we noted a sharp downturn in term of how much

people spend for their seasonal celebration. It is not an isolated problems to be encountered by Cambodia alone but the world as a whole ... It is still not too severe that we cannot weather it ... It is simple to understand because we are in lower height position so to fall from that height would not break us apart ... What we are cautious of all is food security because according to our experiences food security could be a serious cause as we used to encounter at the time when the country was liberated in 1979 To go without fuel we would not die, to go without cars we would not die but to go without rice, death is certain.

Broad-Based Economy

... In relation to different growth monitoring and evaluation ... Cambodia sets its growth target at 6% whereas economists of the Asian Development Bank, World Bank and institutions concerned predict growth to be lower and some has gone this far with a pessimistic prediction of over 1% ... I could let you understand it in a not-too optimistic way that with the experiences gathered from 2004 at the time when Cambodia ended what was called the quota system with the United States of America, the World Bank and IMF predicted Cambodia's growth at 1.6% and then 2.4% for 2005 because their analysis was based on the fact that with less export to the US and other countries Cambodia's economy would face a free fall situation. In the end, Cambodia achieved the growth of 13.3% ... as the pillars of Cambodian economy are not exports of garments only ...

I have mentioned frequently that Cambodian economy is narrowly based on exports of

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garments and tourists dependence ... I made it clear five years ago and we have then diverted our economy to the direction of expanding growth though investment in agricultural sector as this sector interacts directly to poverty reduction for the people and guarantees food security and economic growth for the country as well...

It is true that impacts from the world financial crisis on the country's economic growth has to be carefully evaluated and more so in reform of public financial management I could say that the Royal Government of Cambodia will be very careful in this sector. In my position as the Prime Minister I have put forward the guideline that everything has to function in accordance with the mechanism of one chief of staff in the field of public financial reform, in which foremost concern is to guarantee macro-economic stability i.e. no spending will allowed to exceed our income ... This is a point of success as in the past years we tried to generate growth until we transformed this country from cash deficit to surplus, a sum of which has been used in infrastructural development like roads and irrigation, etc.

Every country in the world is making effort to bail out and stimulate economy. This means Cambodia is not alone and I am sure because we are making efforts altogether we will be complementing each other ... The US is true to be the locomotive of economic growth and if the US economy is not doing fine, bad impact is also brought to other economies as well ... I just hope that the US, the EU, India, China, Japan, South Korea are doing better so that Cambodia and other countries

could adapt to their betterment ...

Management and Use of Other Resources

... First of all I would stress that Cambodia has got many potentials that are available and they are our hope in the long-term future of Cambodia. Aside from natural resources and land which we are good for agriculture, we still have more valuable resources that are not being tapped yet. Generations of Cambodians will benefit from them and if we could speed up the exploitation deal in the near future, we in this generation could also benefit and contribute in our country investment for development too ... Mineral resources in Cambodia is limited to just oil and gas. I could mention more to you like bauxite area of nearly one million hectares in Ratanakiri province which is under exploration by a company from Australia, ores of iron, gold, precious stones, etc. that are yet being tapped ...

Talking about management, some fools have even predicted about corruption from oil while all the money is still under the sea bed. Could anyone believe that corruption could happen when the money is nowhere to be seen? Is it a destructive political maneuver or a constructive suggestion? That is why I say only the economists could say something of serious concern while those ill-intent people are hard to believe...

Cambodia wishes to be open for NGOs, and the press not only those inside but also from outside of Cambodia. We would be glad for them to contribute to the betterment of good governance ... But they made statements here and there which downgraded the sense of their contributions

... What corruption could it be while oil and gas are still under the sea bed? Bauxite and iron ores are still underground. I have responded to some partners who seemed to have expressed concerns in similar trend that at this point on time it is not appropriate to talk about that but to talk about trying to make money and not to just keep concerning on how to spend it ...

It would be great, I told delegates from the World Bank, the ADB and IMF, if they could help us get the most profitable contracts with foreign oil companies ... They can, for example Chevron and the US Embassy are here too, help by paying a big royalty ... but according to the report from HE Sok An that does not seem to be the matter of interest ... I do not specifically mention about Chevron ...

Aside from experts, I am waiting to hear from diplomats who would convey their advice as to how to make more money and I would ask them to reduce tax for companies from their countries ... I have been working in this country for over 30 years now and there has not been a country or company that approaches me and suggests to raise the platform above what had been agreed upon, only to ask for lowering it ... I would be thankful if they approach me and suggest more money for Cambodia and not for less ...

Global Witness the other day criticized us of being corruption on oil, which is still under the sea bed ... I actually brought a can of crude oil from Kuwait and displayed it at home ...

Having said so does not mean we do not have management

measures but on the contrary we have placed serious thought on that ... and an important political decision has been made to include in fiscal policy taxes on oil and gas exploitations other than keeping them as a separate bill ... it is because of good intention that taxes on oil and gas as well as on other mineral exploitations have been bound as one fiscal policy ...

It is indeed our effort to exercise financial management for Cambodia ... If we were not to mention of the millennium development goals, we also have the national development plans of ten, five and rolling three years and budget has been divided in percentage to different ones ...

I would urge those people with ill intent to review and assess their comments while refrain from using world financial crisis for own votes and political gains at all as doing so would indeed devalue oneself. I would affirm to you that in Cambodia NGOs and civil society groups have attained major rights because they have been requested to join in debate and discuss some bills – and in some cases our partners also have enjoyed this as well. The private sector involves also in drafting national policy whereas the press takes it to another level showing setbacks in our implementation ... Some civil society and press groups though have used harsh means in doing their duties, but they were normally invited inattention from us.

Cambodia is indeed the heaven of civil society, because here with only five people a civil society could be established and registered its license at the Ministry of Inte-

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normally we could have only five or less of them present together at one ceremony ... As tomorrow is going to be the Buddhist celebration of Meakboja I would seek your consent with me that all merits gathered from this auspicious religious occasion should be a blessing for the place ...

Achievements we have realized in the pagoda of Sansam Kosal are remarkably noble one among many others in 45 years of its existence ... The place has evolved from a merit making building to a Buddhist pagoda in itself as is reported by HE the Governor Kep Chuktema. Let's imagine, in between 1964 and 1975 this place was comprised of a wooden temple and a Buddhist monk residence. In between 1970 and 1975 the pagoda was then theoretically transformed into settlement for war displaced people and in between 1975 and 1979 it was left unoccupied like other pagodas throughout the country. Buddhism and other religions had come to a complete stop in this country.

After the liberation of January 7, 1979, together with people's rebirth the pagodas and religions – Buddhism and others – have all come back to lives and made constant progresses at own paces ... The pagoda of Sansam Kosal has in this last time been led by three head monks already and Samdech Preah Dharma Likhet Luos Lai is the incumbent Head of the Samsan Kosal pagoda ...

I would take this opportune moment to call on the souls of the former Head Monks Pok Sam An and Um Doeun to witness the achievements today, which we all devote for the benefit of their memories and Buddhist development ...

I also would like to take this chance to express my sincere thanks to HE Pen Siman and HE Kep Chuktema as well as other generous fellows in making these achievements possible as I learned also that a part of the resources used in reconstruction the pagoda has been noted as contribution from the Municipal of Phnom Penh as well ... The space of the pagoda has been remarkably small as it has been divided into three major parts, one of them for the development of the Primary School of Sansam Kosal, which we all note with satisfaction that it is a strong bond of development between the Buddhist and the secular worlds ... The Buddhist monks have shown through this gesture the concept of caring for the survival of the whole nation by taking responsibility in sharing resources for the sake of human resource development. This is a remarkable sign of effort and farsighted Buddhist concept for the country's development as a whole.

I am profoundly grateful and excitedly moved for the contribution that is great and vehement ... Its impact has been farsighted as well as promoting vision which is my initiative for the development of the pagoda has been implemented in full.

I have fully responded to the wish of Samdech Preah Dharma Likhet Luos Lai's wish, *firstly*, to have the Buddhist temple built, and *secondly*, to get the Buddhist temple in Kompong Speu to be inaugurated in March after my return from the ASEAN Summit in Thailand ... I would see that the two wishes have now been fulfilled for the sake of devotion for Buddhism and for the people as well.

We are overseeing the Buddhist achievements in the pagoda and it should indeed be a tool for measuring interdependence between Buddhism or other religions and the country's peace and political stability as well ... The question is whether Buddhism and other religions in this world could be strictly abided by at the time of war or turmoil. As we can see in between 1970 and 1975, the people here could not exercise their religious duties and more than that it was nothing but a settlement for the war displaced persons from all parts of the country.

The war between 1970 and 1975 could be clearly seen, evaluated and studied to be a lively lesson that as long as peace and political stability are not available people first of all could not defend their lives not to mention practicing religious duties ... The wrong political concept of the Pol Pot genocide had brought about forbidding beliefs and religions, and Buddhism was indeed banned whereas monks were either killed or disrobed, while pagodas were turned into torture camps or places for other purposes...

In between 1979 and 98, we have tried step after step, in a period that Cambodia was caught in a situation of parts of the country were in peace and others were in war, and to be frank the part under peace was larger and more frequent than the one at war. Still the war situation in those parts and times had disturbed our ways of life – some of our people who traveled from one place to another for the purpose of Buddhist rites were frequently ambushed by guerrillas or other illegal armed clans ...

As of now the people of Cam-

bodia in the whole Kingdom could exercise their religious rights anywhere they wish – in pagodas that is far deeper in forests or in places where there never has been a pagoda before – take for example the pagoda of Keo Sekha Kiri Svarak close to the Preah Vihear temple – the world heritage of Cambodia. We have up to 4,000 Wats (Buddhist pagodas) and there are in all 50,000 Buddhist monks.

One may ponder and ask a question, what would happen if the country were to get back to war? Would our people have chances and retain their rights to exercise religious beliefs? Some parts of the country may but there are parts that may not. I could remember in 1973, when the US had yet to sign the Paris Agreement to withdraw its troops from Indochina, the US and the South Vietnamese troops and the Lon Nol troops themselves bombarded Cambodia and at one time I was at Ji Lang of Kompong Cham province ... People called out to the monks for help and the monks responded that they could not help it themselves ...

That is why I always prognosticate that at whatever cost we have to keep peace and political stability that are sought out and achieved in heaps of hardships ... The win-win policy that I have applied has brought an end to the war and division ... Cambodia which before this policy was divided into many parts at one time – for example Cambodia between one part with Lon Nol, South Vietnamese and the US forces and another with the National United Front of Kampuchea led by Samdech Preah Norodom Sihanouk, which later was usurped by Pol Pot and destruction of

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rior. Over two thousand non-governmental organizations have been registered in a country of over ten million people ... And when we declare preparing organic law on that matter they have overreacted to our position ... Does this mean that they do not want to be placed under law? What do they want to do with this status? How do we go about holding NGOs accountable for their actions if such a law does not exist? Despite the fact that they do not want such a law to be enforced, this time around we will get the law going ... I may ask another question, how could they talk about transparency when they are afraid of it?

Facing a situation that terrorism is growing everywhere, local and foreign-based NGOs - some registered at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, some at the Ministry of Interior and some at the Council of Ministers - have created a state of reference difficulties as if an incident happens like - the possibility of attacking the US and UK Embassies in 2002-2003 in Phnom Penh, what sort of situation we could find ourselves in? Who will take the responsibility? That is why I am talking about there is a need to get the organic law going ...

Cambodian-Thai Investment & Trade Relations

Tension rose from the Thai-Cambodian border conflict to armed clash on October 15 but I do not foresee major war between Cambodia and Thailand at all. The incident of October 15 should be seen to repeat no more. The previous Governments of Thailand - counting from Samak's to Samchai's - and now the current Government of HE

Abhisit Vijajiva always assure of their determinations to resolve the matter bilaterally with Cambodia ... I would say that we should not let conflict in a tiny part of our country to infect the whole border of Cambodia and Thailand ... or to expand the conflict at this level and in this area to another level or other areas like culture, trade or investment at all ...

As of the moment of speaking border situation between the two countries - at the point of Preah Vihear or along the whole Cambodian-Thailand border - has been noted with good relations ... What remains now is to demarcate the border ... The history of 100 years - since the convention of 1907 has left the two countries a situation that neither side could actually conduct border demarcation ... This requires the two sides to exercise patience and seek for coordination in accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding in the year 2000 ...

We had the visits of the Foreign Minister, the Minister of National Defense and commanders of all forces - navy, air and infantry - to Cambodia and I had the chance to see them myself as they are in the process of fulfilling the tasks entrusted by both Governments ... I have stated straight to the Minister of National Defense and all commanders that they should not refrain from fighting but forging their roles as diplomats along the border ... I even suggest they play chess with each other as Cambodia and Thailand have similar rule on chess board ...

In 2008, the year that Cambodia and Thailand had problematic relations, trade between the two countries reached 1,8 billion US dollars

whereas tourism had been affected to a certain extent ...

I would also share with you all a piece of news that during the visit of the Foreign Minister of Thailand, there was a suggestion for renegotiation of joint exploitation in the overlapping area between Thai-Cambodia in the gulf of Thailand. Discussion has been delayed because of the political development in Thailand which frequented changes of Government ... On the part of Cambodia HE Deputy Prime Minister Sok An is ready for resumption of negotiation with Thailand as what remains to discuss is the share for each holder or the block to be divided among us for exploitation ...

This has clearly shown that our policy toward neighboring countries would not allow an expansion of small border conflict to other areas or higher level ... We also do not incorporate this into conflicts of trade, tourism, investment, culture, etc. You may take the lighter side of this relation that when we had tension at the border, we also had a Thai golfer to compete in Siemreap ... and he won the first prize ... So I assure all of you that the conflict would not be escalated to hinder investment and I am sure this is what the two countries, armies and Governments believe in ...

Cambodia never has intention to wage a big war with any country but instead what we want is investment and especially infrastructural development in roads, water canals and border area development. As I said before I wish to change fighting zones along the border into development zones and not to develop modern army and arm them for border fight with Thailand

at all ... As you see I have increased investment in those areas since there needs better infrastructure which could in the end be for border people's benefit ... they may take it as their share of economic wealth distribution ...

Combating Corruption & Speeding Anti-Corruption Law

... It is indeed a good question as it concerns good governance which is the core of rectangular strategy ... In the square of good governance of the Rectangular Strategy - Phase II, the first angle is referring to combating corruption, the second angle is to exercise legal and judiciary reforms, the third angle is to bring about public administration reform and the fourth angle is the reform of the armed forces ... As you can see the four areas of reform, not only in the first angle, all other angles of legal and judicial, public administration and armed forces reforms - all contain element of fighting corruption in there ...

Fighting corruption exists not only during election campaign but it stays with us up to now ... There has been questions relating to law on corruption and some "Prime Ministers in example" or the candidate for the post of Prime Minister in the electoral campaign promised that between one and three months after getting elected they will get rid of corruption ... The Constitution of Cambodia defined that the first session of the elected national assembly will meet 60 days at the latest after the elections ... How could they make such a promise? ...

Anti-Corruption Law has indeed been lying on the table and I would clarify to you as

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the need to organize training courses and hands-on training from which some have become capable asset while others could not make it ... That is the reason why we had “too many but too little.”

HE Meh Rotra, when he was Special representative of the United Nations to Cambodia, recommended us to get rid of some government employees or civil servants ... I did not agree with his method and I was strongly opposed reducing number of teachers and medical staff ... For sector that is trivial I accepted to let some senior people go into retirements while no new staff is being recruited ... What remains to be done here is to urge for capacity building and no slashing of jobs as such to be taken into effect ... It was because of this need that we have organized this Royal School of Administration which at the time aimed at training and re-training government officials ...

In order to have a comprehensive public administration we can no longer recruit staff because of kinship but to organize competition exam in a transparent way ... Or we would not get strong personality and hard-working people at all ... The selection of staff should be strictly and transparently conducted irrespective of political party's affiliation at all as the aim of this is not for a party but for the whole country ... By saying this I mean to recruit staff for public function but this cannot be applied for the Government or political function ... because they have to be filled by appointments from political parties in the coalition government – in this case the Cambodian People's Party and Funcinpec ...

I think that from now to next elections no one will take up this issue of salary as their campaign topic anymore as we have gradually increased salary ... every January of every new year in this term we will keep adding 20% increment of salary so by 2013 no one could preach against this anymore ... Our aim has been to use up to 4% of GDP or 40% of the current expenses for this purpose but now we have used only 3.57% of the GDP ... I called HE Keat Chhon to see the Government payroll because I need to increase the number of soldiers in one battalion and he told me that we have used only 3.57% of the GDP ... I told the Ministry of National Defense to prepare the sub-decree so that I can order for the soldier number ... It is not for fighting but for defending the country ...

There is this Point 3 which stated about changes of attitude of Head of Institution so that staff under his supervision could build up their capacities ... I would remind you all that some senior staff have made themselves a huge rock on new buds obstructing his/her staff from getting capacity development ... This is indeed a bad habit from long ago but I suggest that it has to be changed at all levels ... I am so proud that some of my previous colleagues from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs have become Deputy Prime Minister, Senior Minister and Ministers ...

I have a pride because I took the bold decision to share them as human resources with various ministries in need of human resources ... some economists like HE Kang Keng and Sin Serei were all former staff of Foreign Affairs ... who had been transferred to the Ministry of Plan-

ning, the Council of Ministers, etc.

I have started from being a messenger to this position so I have done countless things and I would urge our senior staff to allow for training among junior staff. It would be a silly thing to hold on to all the work and complain of being overworked ...

I have the experience that one qualified and able person could do a job that ten people would do it ... This is so because his work ability and productivity is high and this is what I would suggest attention be paid when we have to seek people suitable for what we call “priority package” – which looks into benefit for those able staff ...

We have achieved so much indeed but we should not be over-satisfied ... the International Republican Institute (IRI) has brought out its release of new polls about the leadership of Cambodia and by November 2008, 82% respondents had approved leadership on right direction ... This has indeed positively changed as in 2006 only 60% approved the same question, January 2007, the rate of respondent had gone up to 71%, in August 2007, 75% and last February 2008, 78% ... This is a clear indication that we have achieved this not because we have cheated or made our people unhappy but because we have been working hard ...

As I said we should not be complacent because of this but instead we have to make more effort to improve further public service and if we were to have no good roads, bridges ... people would not give their consent ... In order to guarantee this rate of approval I would urge our senior

officials/staff and leaders to hold on to this concept of serving the people and not masters over people ... You should not see this as a discrediting manner but it is a pride in life ... sharing our people's culture is by no means cheap ...

I reiterate here that I am expecting to see efficiency from now to 2013 and if you all help make this possible it will be a magnificent and fortunate thing for our people ... We have done some of them already like digging for them water canals, giving water pumps, seeds, fuels, and roads and bridges ... I contrast it with the time when my family had a hard time with crops being destroyed for lack of water or for too much flood ... I could still see my father crying for that ... but it is now a different thing which I would credit it in part to our reasonably good public and effective public service ... I may remind you that our love for people is limited by no boundary and I beg you to provide better public service for our people and continue to make better what has not been good yet ...

I have information about acts of disturbing our people in Snuol district where people trade with Vietnam ... We have grown cassava and we do not have processing plant yet so our people had to trade their cassava to Vietnam but they were severely taxed on count of trucks ... and this should not be assessed as a separate case for Snuol alone but for the whole country ... I do not have many advisors only more with additional role as advisors to their incumbent positions like governor or/and deputy governors of provinces, commanders or/and deputy commanders of the
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18 February 2009 [Unofficial Translation of Selected Comments]
Action Plan 2009-2013: Administration Reform Directions

In addition to prepared text, Samdech Akka Moha Sena Padei Techo Hun Sen, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Cambodia gave comments on some debating issues relating to national program for administration reform and preparation of Action Plan 2009-2013 ...

... Usually I always have my comments in addition to the prepared speech ... Before setting my journey here I have received information that there had been a lively discussion from participants in this seminar ... HE Sok An reported to me the twelve points that were raised in discussion ... and point 11 was about the fact that some ministries or state institutions have got many unqualified staffs and I am sure this is the whole issue we need to look at in relation to continuing our reform priority ...

It reminds me of the situation in 1988 when I wrote a book entitled “Ten Years of Cambodia’s Journey” ... in which I covered issues relating to structural and human resources and I mentioned of “being too many, but too little.” When I said “too many” I meant too many staff and by “too little” I meant despite too many staff, there is a need for more capable ones. That is why I stressed on the fact Cambodia possessed a unique character of its own as we have started from lack of human resources take for instance the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was started with three persons ...

All institutions in Phnom Penh were first started after the liberation on January 7 with two to three peoples ... My first secretary at that time was Mr. Di Lam Thol and

when I sent Mr. Di Lam Thol to continue his study in medicine, HE Long Visalo, currently Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, became my secretary and then HE Sok An and when I sent HE Sok An as an Ambassador to India HE Cham Prasith became my secretary and the HE Ho Sithi, currently my Cabinet Director, who has been in this position ever since ...

At the time when the Paris Peace Agreement came in it was required that we integrate armed forces and civil servants into one ... The plate of food for ten persons had then, with the same amount of food, to be shared by 15 as we have integrated civil servants from other factions ... And some who had failed their exams in Phnom Penh went to the border and became a teacher and when he returned, the country at that time became a market of position sale ... There were no proper university at the border but all reported themselves to be doctors, professors, etc. The result is we had an inflation of positions and staffs ...

Take for instance the Ministry of Trade which was first started by HE Taing Sarim and then HE Ho Naun and then HE Nhem Vanda ... had gathered so many staff – because at that time people do not have work and little food to eat – but later had to discharge some of them. As integration started, we went back to staff inflation again ... So not only salary cannot be propped up, proper offices also could not be provided too ... The point is that if they come to work with capability to do the job it would be great but some came with nothing to help ... Therefore we had

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lives came about ... while the forces to struggle to thwart them off came to be reckoning with ...

Cambodia in between 1979 and 1993 was divided into four parts – the Government of Phnom Penh and the tripartite coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea ... In between 1993 and 1998 Cambodia was under two different controls – the Royal Government of Cambodia and the Government of Anlong Veng – I said so because there had been local currencies at that time. By and large it was a steadfast attempt to get the win-win policy implemented the result of which is no secession, and cohesion is observed also in the relations between Buddhist and secular worlds...

It is in this reality that I urge Buddhist monks, Buddhist followers and those in the secular world to observe together an obligation in maintaining peace and political stability. I may remind all of you that UNTAC spent over two billion US dollars in keeping peace in Cambodia but the Head and Commander of UNTAC could not enter the Khmer Rouge’s headquarters for one-piece bamboo barricade by two Khmer Rouge soldiers ... But we have finally made them united with the nation fold ...

Some people have been quite courageous but I noted that in meetings everywhere like Paris, Bangkok, Jakarta, Beijing, Pyongyang or in the Khemarin hall in the Royal Palace, those who said themselves to be strong in fact stared the floor every time Khieu Samphan read his interventions ...

To recap what I have said

earlier this has in fact been the path that Cambodia has taken to get here – to get to Buddhist development and it is undeniable that no progress could have achieved if the secular world did not make any development. Vice versa, Buddhist development contributes to a great extent to peace and political stability of the country. As far as I know many pagodas have offered residences and food to students coming from provinces in pursuance of their studies and recently the Buddhist monks have gone all the ways to give help to soldiers at the forefront ...

I wish to make a remark about one thing that has disturbed and caused reaction from the Buddhist monks – that is the opera of Where Elephant Weeps – I agree with what has been proposed by Samdech Buddhist Patriarchs and I have written my instruction on this matter already... I would like to take this chance to place my appeal that all sorts of plays in form of drama or opera or movie must first have permission from the Supreme Buddhist monks and the Ministry of Cults and Religious Affairs ...■

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armed forces – army, military police and police, etc. I urge you to act in your authorized capacity and in your advisory role in seeing this matter through ... If you are not able to help the people you should not make them more problems ... I warn you of monthly income from off the record taxes or checkpoints as I would not hesitate to remove anyone found colluding in this ... I would not let one bad element causing a spoil the whole ... When I mean efficiency I would deem to see good and effective service provided for the people ...■