



Samdech Akka Moha Sena Padei Techo Hun Sen with elderly people at Wat Angkor Knong, Kompong Cham's Punnhea Krek District (Photo: Kampuchea Thmei)

30 November 2009 (Unofficial Translation of Selected Comments)
New Achievements — Hluong Preah Sdej Kan City

My wife and I are so happy to be able to come see you all in the Buddhist pagoda of Angkor Knong, Dauntei commune, Punnhea Krek district after my presence on February 26, 2006, when I initiated some reconstruction projects. Our meeting today shows a strong solidarity between our Government and provincial officials, the armed forces, politicians and our people from all walks of life in rehabilitating an historic site which is 499 years of age now, as it was built under the reign of Hluong Preah Sdej Kan in 1514 – 1516 and was abandoned later in 1525. The place was also neglected there later by various regimes, especially destruction caused by the Pol Pot's regime. Today we celebrate the inauguration of the Wat Angkor Knong temple, which was before known as Wat Prasat or Wat Preah Ang Khmao.

In 1976, my wife and I stayed in one of the monk's residences. My wife was sent here on her education (hard labor) mission. She had her morning sickness of our first child here. She worked in the field to help to improve levees, as a

cook and a medical practitioner. I joined her here to help her with in that very difficult time. Maybe it is not too exaggerating to say that the sole of Preah Sdej Kan was there to help me out in those days though I have no idea then that it was the former city of Hluong Preah Sdej Kan.

In showing my interest on national heritages, and freedom from judgment on who is who in the past of Cambodian royal reigns, I have initiated reconstruction of two former cities – Veang Jas and Sralob Dautei Pijei Prey Nokor. The Veang Jas (old royal palace) under the reign of Preah Baat Ang Duong, in 1840, has been restored. The area for public hearing hall (Deva Vinichai) has been preserved and I am of the thought to invite HM the King to inaugurate the scene that was left by HM who was his great-grandparents, as his grandsons had been Preah Baat Norodom and Preah Sisowath.

As for this part of the country, we have come to discovering a for
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24 November 2009 (Unofficial Translation of Selected Comments)
30th Years of "Government-NGO Growing Partnership"

It is a great pleasure indeed that I have the chance to participate in this very meaningful and joyful celebration of the 30th Anniversary of "growing partnership between the Royal Government of Cambodia and Non-Governmental Organizations." It has taken us a long and bumpy road before we have come this far. Ms Eva Mysliwiec has just mentioned in her speech starting from when she met me for the first time in 1980. I became Foreign Minister when I was 27 years old in fact, in 1979. I was the youngest Minister indeed in the world. In just two months from now I will be the one who

has been the longest person serving in the Government within 31 years.

As is mentioned by Ms Eva Mysliwiec, we first started in 1980 with only 5 NGOs – Oxfam, CIDSE, Church World Service, World Vision and AFSC (American Friend Service Committee). Cambodia had then suffered unjust embargo after it survived the genocide of Pol Pot. It is like we survived from the Pol Pot's genocide, and they pushed us to another death. Pol Pot's crimes has been witnessing today
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08 November 2009 (Unofficial Translation of Selected Comments)
Briefing Press Upon Japan-Mekong Countries Summit

Usually, after such a mission to foreign country, it is the foreign minister who will have to brief all of you of what have been achieved. This time we have two major parts. The part I am giving you is in relation to the Cambodian-Thai relations, whereas HE Deputy Prime Minister Hor Namhong will brief you on the first summit between Japan and countries that are members of the Mekong River.

between the people of Cambodia and the people of Thailand as a whole. It also is not a tension that is caused by armies from both sides. In the past five months, after the visit of Abhisit Vijajiva to the area, tension seems to have risen only between Bangkok and Phnom Penh, and caused by Bangkok alone.

I would start with the border situation between Cambodia and Thailand which is relatively calm. This allows us to withdraw, within a week, our brigade 911 of paratroopers from the Preah Vihear area and place them back in their barrack. You may have asked me a question as to why the Prime Minister is commanding a withdrawal of the Cambodian troop from the area at a time when there is tension along the Cambodian-Thai border. I wish to stress here today that it is not indeed an issue

As far as the two armies at the border are concerned they have developed a better understanding and also in cases, have made good cooperation as well. They have conducted joint border patrols and also practicing sports altogether too. The situation has indeed allowed us to reduce number of troops in the Preah Vihear area. In the first phase, we have brought
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mer capital of Hluong Preah Sdej Kan where there left a monastery under the French, under the Sangkum Reastr Niyum, and the Republic Khmer periods, only by then it was liberated by the liberation forces already. In 1990, HE Lan Chhan, who formerly was Governor of the district of Punnhea Krek and currently Chairman of the Governing Council of Kompong Cham province already rebuilt the Buddhist temple here.

On February 26, 2006, I came here and our people proposed so many projects. There had been a proposal to build a bigger temple. But because I wanted to preserve former form and style, we then decided to build it on former foundation.

Aside from contributions made in rebuilding monastery and other achievements here, the Royal Government invested a sum of 11.638 billion Riels etc. We have incorporated in the 2010 budget draft for building an asphalt road of 11.685 kilometers from national road 7 through to the western entrance of the city barrack.

As far as the Ministry of Water Resource and Meteorology is concerned, HE Lim Kien Hor invested a sum of 710 million Riels in two different steps to restore canals around the barrack and to build some water control systems. The project would be able to irrigate some 2,932 hectares of land. I am sure this has enabled the area to become an ago-tourism. So this is what is termed the state investments in road and water system and I would suggest that we register in our festivity calendar that on November 30 annually we celebrate boat race at Wat Prei Nokor or Angkor Knong.

Maybe I should mention a bit, but not to make judgment, on what happened here in the history of Cambodia. We had come through so many major internal conflicts and therefore I wish that you all keep in mind to be cautious. Our

neighboring countries have scolded and cursed their natives of bad manners to get born as a Khmer. Now it seems the spell has taken a reversal effect to them.

I would not need to bring into light today all seven major conflicts but one that was concerning the division of Cambodian territory into three areas of control and again two areas of control with two Kings that in those days were called – HM the King in the east, who had been living here, and HM the King in the west. The conflict was between 1475 and 1486, or about twenty years between a son of HM the King Punnhea Yat, Prince Soriyotei and Preah Srey Raja and Dharma Raja, which in the end Dharma Raja had won with intervention from Siam. Srei Raja and Soriyotei were arrested and taken to Siam. According to “Éksa Moha Boras” (Documents of Great Men), David Chandler and Adhemar Leclere, a conclusion has been drawn Preah Srei Raja died in Battambang, whereas Soriyotei died in Ayudhaya.

The second conflict arose in between 1504 though to 1525, another twenty years. It could be said to have started from when Dharma Raja came to the throne and later had a son named Srei Sokunbot. After his father’s death, the half-Siamese Srei Sokunbot took over the throne and moved the city to Khsaj Kandal where he met and married Srei Sar Chhor, who had a brother whose name was Kan.

The conflict arose in 1508 and started with a dream, which caused turmoil in the whole country and lasted for four years. Sdej (King) Srei Sokunbot dreamed of being threatened by a dragon. Fortunetellers and bad royal officials came to a conclusion that there was a man who had been born in the year of dragon planning a throne coup. This had brought King Srei Sokunbot to a decision that his brother-in-law, Sdej Kan, who was born in the year of dragon, be killed. A plot

was prepared secretly but Srei Sar Chhor happened to have heard it and let it be known to Kan to get himself prepared for the danger.

As was planned, Kan was asked to accompany HM the King to fish, and net was tricked to be caught down in the water. Kan was asked to go down and remove the net from there. Once Kan submerged, more nets were thrown to his direction aimed at causing him accidental death. Thanks to information leaked to him by his sister, Kan did not stay under water to be caught by nets but swam away. In revenge, Kan conducted a people’s uprising against the King which could be compared to a people’s democratic revolution.

In those days Cambodia had what it called “God Sevants” or “Pul Preah” and they have their generations to serve God for 5000 years. Because he had a beautiful sister who became HM the King’s wife, Kan was lucky to become HM brother-in-law. In his revolution, Sdej Kan said “if you people supported me, I would give you all equal rights.” So here theory on class struggle came to being since 1508 once Kan started his struggle. Maybe class struggle could not be said exceptionally to have happened first in France, but in Srei Santhor and Khsaj Kandal of Cambodia.

It was because of this that Sdej Kan could mobilize a lot of people and overthrew Srei Sokunbot and killed him in 1512 at Stoeung Sen in Kompong Thom province. After the victory, Sdej Kan took the throne in 1512 at his age 29 years old. So he started his struggle when he was 24 and the two indicators have been identical to my life. I started my struggle against Pol Pot also when I was 25 years old. Sdej Kan became the 39th King after killing Sdej Srei Sokunbot. He was called “Preah Srei Jeddha Dhiraj Rama Thibdei” or in short Preah Srei Jeddha.

Historic records and composition seem to have mixed a bit because

according to Leclere, the French Governor General identified the place as only Kan’s barrack. But according to various other studies, that of Ros Chantrabot, Ph. D, a conclusion could be made that Prey Nokor Knong was indeed a city because at the time we had no Jadomuk or Tuol Basan at all. He first came to the throne in Tuol Basan but in 1514, Sdej Kan moved the city to Sralob Dautei Prey Nokor. There have been three versions of how the place or city is called.

The city is between the province of Ba Phnom (a district of Prey Veng province now) and Tbong Khmorn (a district of Kompong Cham province now). At the time of construction, Hluong Preah Sdej Kan also built a black Bud-dha statue here, which because of that the pagoda was once named after the statue. The fact that Hluong Preah Sdej Kan chose to build the city here has proven to be a strategic location too. It is 60 kilometers from the Mekong River and there are roads that are easy land access for transportation but water has been a major scarcity here. That was why Hluong Preah Sdej Kan ordered that water reservoir be built with road accesses from here to waterways at Tonle Bet via Pam Jang, Thmor Pij and Moat Khmong of Kompong Siem (at Mekong River).

Having done so, Hluong Preah Sdej Kan appointed four senior officials – Vieng, Viang, Lumpang and Sral to take care and manage the four main directions, whereas Oknha Vieng took care of the southern water reservoir, Viang the northern, Lumpang the western and Sral the eastern reservoirs. So, to commemorate to those four major commanders, aside from Hluong Preah Sdej Kan, we will see to it that four more statues to be made because we are now using water from reservoirs that were before built, managed and taken care of by them.

Some people have said that I am
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and tomorrow through the final decision by the Extra Ordinary Chamber in the Court of Cambodia on the case of Duch or Kaing Gek Iev of the former S21 torture camp of the regime.

For those who supported Pol Pot in the past, and later continued to punish us, what sort of moral and humanitarian responsibility they should have, if not resources that are relating to development of the country. At least they should recognize in their mind their responsibility as a moral obligation. Those who have come to our rescue at the time that we were being punished politically and economically have to be bestowed with our gratitude.

I wish to thank the five organizations plus two international organizations—CICR and UNHCR, and on the Cambodian people's behalf, deliver our deep respect and appreciation to the late Madame Onesta Carpena, who died three years ago and was one of the pioneers in the Cambodian survival after the liberation, for her tireless efforts. Let's bow for her contribution and share with her our dream—may she be here with us today to celebrate the 30th anniversary of the Government and NGO in partnership.

Having said so don't take me to an extreme that I do not appreciate those works that are being implemented by those who have come to help Cambodia after the Paris Peace Agreement at all. What I have mentioned is to explore more the meaning of "indeed when in need." This was the highest value Cambodia provides to initial actions that were taken by the non-governmental organizations as their contributions to the country, people and government at that time.

Without referring to political difficulties, I would just recall two most serious issues we had to challenge together in those days—hunger, which was left from the Pol Pot's genocide and a constant

threat to our people's lives, and prevention of Pol Pot's return. Pol Pot was indeed no longer in Phnom Penh but its military and political organizations were intact, with a Government that enjoyed support from foreign countries to continue to occupy the Cambodian seat at the United Nations. This had been a concern that without proper forces to protect the country and people, Pol Pot might eventually return to power.

Secondly, because of property's ownership elimination under Pol Pot's, whereas tools needed for production had been disorganized and scarce, we were left with no inheritance from the regime. In this case, let's us see what former General Lon Nol, President of the Khmer Republic, had had as state inheritance—infrastructure, financial and human resources, etc. from Sangkum Reastr Niyum (Popular Socialist Community) of Samdech Preah Norodom Sihanouk, who had built the country 16 or 17 years after winning independence from France.

After five years in power of the Lon Nol's regime, Pol Pot, who took over the Lon Nol's regime, also had had the state inheritance to a certain extent. If they were not to send people out of the cities, there remained to be factories and other means of productions. But their vision and action were to eradicate private ownership, not only materially but also sentimentally. They left us no freedom, starting from our beliefs. The only thing we had was to be a machine or tool at their commands.

If we were to put then production relation into picture, we could compare them to those between slaves, which were the Cambodian people, and slave master, which was the Pol Pot's organization. What do we have left from Pol Pot? We had family loss, division and death. Our people did not have the right to choose whom to love and to marry with. This has let me to conclude why was Cambodia able to get out of this mess and to come this far?

There have been many factors involved indeed. However one major reason I would single out here is the fact that we have people's participation. By saying so I would bring to light the fact that people have joined in eradicating Pol Pot's mode of production in a very short time. It is factual that Vietnam had come to our rescue, though some may disagree, providing their assistance to the forces of the National United Front for the Salvation of Kampuchea led by Samdech Heng Samrin, Samdech Chea Sim and myself. However, if our people did not participate in overthrowing Pol Pot and his regime, could this task have been done?

What I wanted to pinpoint here is the mode of production that was eradicated with a quick replacement by new one. After Pol Pot's collapse, our people took their initiatives to redevelop a new mode of production by themselves without waiting for the state intervention in reorganizing it. It just came out. Whether one may or may not agree with it but our people were determined to do away with the Pol Pot's collective system which obliged practicing of common ownership. That is why I say people's participation has been a key and without it no success could be guaranteed.

In theory, a mode of production consists of two main elements—productive force and productive relation. Just now I mentioned about the mode of production under the Pol Pot's regime is to be characterized as slave and slave-master or people and organization relation. More from the theory, it is productive force that determines productive relation. I do not intend to discuss Marxism-Leninism but just to clarify relation from one phase to another in the case of Cambodia. They say the stronger the production force, the more it demands collectivization. Take for instance a handicraft production system has to depend on many other factors in order to become an industrial setup.

However, in the case of Cambodia, after the fall of the Pol Pot's collective system, we have had a reversal development to this theory. The weaker the productive force prompted the productive means to be collective. A group of 30 households for example had only two pairs of oxen, they had been happy to share their means of production. The means of production were so limited but our people were united and shared them so as to survive the worst. This has proven that it is not always true that collectivization happened only when the productive force grows stronger. It could also happen when it is weaker as well.

There had been no country with higher number of orphans than Cambodia according to the number of its population. Countries ravaged by both world wars in Europe, or in the Korean War in the 1950s or those ethnic cleansing wars in Sierra Leone and Rwanda did not seem to have higher orphan figure like Cambodia. How did Cambodia deal with this situation? Families in Cambodia had taken care of orphans who were either their own or not their own bloodline relatives. Then NGOs came in and helped. Local NGOs did not exist yet at the time. No orphan had been left to die. I am so proud of this. We set up what we called "Rose" Centre which was truly orphanage. We called it a different name to make orphans feel that they have a bigger family and they are not left uncared for.

The state capacity was limited and could not do the job all by itself. A bigger and more effective duty and care had in those days been provided by Cambodian families for every other reason. As of now some people do not know who their parents are. They have been well brought up and educated according to their abilities and wisdom. Some have graduated from high schools and from universities too. Some are now pilots, etc. Again I mention this in order

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to illustrate our history to you about the case that can be a success because we have people participation.

One more example would be our win-win policy. It is a story of great success and there does not seem to be successfully implemented elsewhere yet. Again if it were not for the people's participation, it would not have been such a success. Take for instance, the policy was there, but if the Khmer Rouge forces did not cooperate or a part of the Royal Government did not support it, how could it be implemented to this level of success? Or if the people under different factional occupation disagreed, how could we achieve a unity between forces. From A to Z, I would again stress that participation, including those by NGOs from the hardest time to the present, is key. We have a lot to talk about. Thirty years is a long time. It is half a life time too. I started working with NGOs on behalf of the Government of Cambodia since when I was 27 and now I am 57 years old.

Another point I wish to share with you in this solemn anniversary event is about my time as a Foreign Minister who had to face with many awkward situations. Once I was in Moscow. I was never allowed to meet then Soviet or other leaders of the Eastern European socialist states on ground that they considered me, literally speaking Cambodia, to be a liberal. In Paris, I was considered to be a communist and I was treated no different to way I was in Moscow. I came to a determination that no matter what classification they gave to me, I would be still Hun Sen and I have got nothing to lose for being myself, or Cambodia to lose for being Cambodia. Cambodia has got nothing else to lose more for than it did already.

Betting one's life for liberating and rebuilding the country, while one of my eyes has lost, my only child then died, my wife and relatives

had been missing, what would cost me more, even my life? It would not be too much or too little to lose even my life then for the country's liberation and development. My late mother and grand aunt came to see me when I returned from the Khmer Rouge's stronghold at Pailin in my mission to complete a reunification there. They were worried I was to be assassinated. I said to them it would be an ill fate only to me and a few of my colleagues there, if the mission did not work. But if it worked we will have the whole country united. If I were not to go there, how could I convince our people there?

I also would take this moment to thank Ms Eva Mysliwiec for the book she authors "Punishing the Poor" which I think that it will serve the best interest for research on Cambodia and I truly and strongly agree with her that it was a real punishment on the poor. Many NGOs have been working on their plans according to different phases of development of Cambodia. Many families in Vietnam, at the time that we were just liberated packed their food or utensils and sent to Cambodia, which in those days and circumstances had been valuable and thankful as they saved millions of Cambodians from death.

As is mentioned by Ms Eva, in the course of working together, we discovered mass graves one after another in the 1980s. Remains have been collected as evidences and stored in various places in the country. I had to fight for the preservation of those evidences after there was a move to cremate them en masse. In 1981 and 1982, they said those remains were fake ones and were recreated for media purpose. How painful it was when the truth was unrecognized and fault was blamed on the victims. I think it is now time to show their sorrow, at least as a moral obligation or else, why should we try the Khmer Rouge? However, the court continues. In 1980s, we had less than 30 NGOs while as of now we have up to

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sor to the Prime Minister and the Royal Government of Cambodia.

There should not be any confusion here. Let me stress it for you – people, army, paramilitary and people of Thailand – HE Thaksin, HE Chaovalit Yongchaiyuth and HE Somchai Wongsawat were all Thai former Prime Ministers for whom you voted for in the past. What I have done with Thaksin is

3,207 NGOs, among which 1933 are non-governmental organizations and 1274 are associations. I would assure you that I am open to appreciate every contribution. I wish to make a note here though that some organizations have disguised under NGOs in conducting their political actions. Why else they do not come out as political parties? We have political pluralism as well as NGOs and associations. I think these are some of the experiences we have learned from working together in the last 30 years as cooperation in this Government-NGO partnership has evolved from one stage to another. Many works we have done together from institutional and human capacity building to rule of law, democratization, good governance, anti-graft and many sectoral issues relating to agricultural development that are being pursued the Royal Government and helped by NGOs.

Preparing a law on "NGOs" is underway in a careful manner that after passing it will ensure a fully responsible action by NGOs as well as way to manage the more than three thousand organizations as well as issue of transparency relating to their sources of financial assistance. The Royal Government is also happy to be knowledgeable of the share contributed by development partners, and NGOs is one of the sources. Having access to such a record would allow us to compile together actual figures that we together put into all fields of investment. This will surely help us ensure transparency and a smooth operation thereon...◎

nothing else but maintaining friendly relations, and helping each other out. The Abhisit Government has now come to oppose this positive development. Would you help seek me justice? The conflict is not between our two countries and people but between Abhisit and Hun Sen, the Governments of Bangkok and Phnom Penh...

Question on Preah Vihear

It is true that Preah Vihear issue has come out from the motive of Democratic Party of Abhisit with the support rendered by the yellow-shirted people, who efforts jointly had brought about a failure to the People's Power Party represented by HE Samak Sundharavej. The issue went all the way to (Thai) courts and HE Noppadon Pattama, then Foreign Minister of Thailand, has become a political hostage in this Preah Vihear issue.

In Thailand, Preah Vihear issue has been used for the sake of bringing down Government and it has been effective so far. So they wish to keep on using this as long as they can. Records of three meetings between the Foreign Ministers of the two countries have yet to pass the parliament. During the visit of the Thai Speaker, he told us, when we sought his cooperation in passing the said minutes of meetings, there has been nothing left, all had been done. I told HE Chai Chidchob he should try and resolve some of Thai problems – yellow-shirted, red-shirted, blue-shirted and white-shirted, the South, issues with Laos, with Myanmar and with Malaysia. I said he should move fast the minor problem with Cambodia. They have left them all unresolved. They look into the possibility of turning all internal matters into issues of Preah Vihear and Thaksin.

A commentator whose article had been run in the Bangkok Post recently, said if they do not cry fool of him, Thaksin would not be so famous. Now Thaksin is ...◎

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back in the brigade 11 and the armed forces under the supervision of Siemreap province and Kompong Thom and 50% of the forces from the bodyguard unit. We have now come to a confidence that withdrawal of the Brigade 911 is possible. We also ask for an understanding from the Brigade 1 to stay until further notice. This has indicated that the border situation between the two countries – Cambodia and Thailand, through to the border of three countries – Cambodia, Thailand and Laos, has returned to detent.

The Preah Vihear area is no longer embraced with tension except some remaining issues to be resolved, and the two sides have committed to avoid armed conflict and military confrontation. This should not be understood to have happened because of the pressure put by the yellow-shirted demonstrators who had surrounded the Cambodian embassy in Bangkok demanding the so-called withdrawal of the Cambodian troops from overlapping area, which we do not even know where that was. The yellow-shirted protestors should not by any means understand the withdrawal to be a bow to their cause. Troop movement and adjustment in the Cambodian territory has nothing to do with no one's will but only a decision made by the Royal Government of Cambodia and the Cambodian armed forces.

I wish that the pressmen and historians take a good note on the following. Prime Minister of Thailand Abhisit Vijjajiva has in fact met with me three times – firstly, at Hua Hin in February, secondly, at Pattaya in April, and thirdly, his visit to Phnom Penh in June. We have come to an understanding that both sides will use bilateral mechanism at all levels to resolve on contentious issues. What has been the most regrettable thing here is that while an approval is given by hand signature, it is noticed that foot has been used to disapproval it. It is tangible as when he returned to Thailand,

there was this move to raise again issue of Preah Vihear.

They have requested formally UNESCO to remove the Preah Vihear temple from the World Heritage registration. They sent a big delegation to Italy, where the World Heritage Committee conducted its meeting in an attempt to revise the issue. This could be asked if it is a substance or nature of sideshow from this Prime Minister's part that he used his foot to disrespect what he has approved with his hand. He have come to a conclusion that all should be settled through bilateral means but he happened to have raised the issue directly to UNESCO, which I am sure is understood by all to internationalize the Cambodian-Thai issue.

They then said there is nothing to do with the conflict between Thailand and Cambodia but a matter to be followed up between Thailand and UNESCO. How can we understand this matter? The temple belongs to Cambodia, but they said it is a matter between Thailand and UNESCO. That was a heinous insult that the Prime Minister (of Thailand) did.

Later, on September 19, when the yellow-shirted protestors came toward Preah Vihear, Prime Minister Abhisit himself met with the Secretary General of the United Nations and raised this issue of border tension that it is caused by the registration of the temple by UNESCO as the World Heritage. That has prompted Cambodia to take a stand that if the matter has come this far, the issue should be brought up for ASEAN. At the time there was this rumor that Minister of Foreign Affairs Kasit Phiromya proposed an arbitration to resolve the case. Deputy Prime Minister Hor Namhong wrote him a letter asking him to get the issue down on the ASEAN Summit agenda.

Up to this stage, they have rebuked the press for misquoting. It is the press rule that if they misquoted, the Bangkok Post and

other Thai media, they could have run a correction note. None has been done so far. However, I have brought my patience to a high level that I did not raise this issue at the ASEAN Summit. If it were to be done so, the summit would have had its failure and I think I have thought of saving Thai image as a country.

Yesterday, we have seen a letter written by Surin Pitsuwan, General Secretary of ASEAN, to ASEAN foreign ministers proposing for a consideration by all ASEAN member countries. I welcome whatever ASEAN mechanism that could come out and intervene in the matter. As an initiative, I propose that the whole package of issue should be resolved. The issue has involved the problem of Thaksin today. It should start from September 19, 2006, when Thaksin was ousted from power by a coup through to when there followed by invasion on Cambodia and the appointment of Thaksin as economic advisor to the Prime Minister and Royal Government of Cambodia. So this is how the whole issue should be resolved as a package.

I wish that HE Surin Pitsuwan get a good grasp of it. HE Surin Pitsuwan used to be Foreign Minister of Thailand too and he also had acted within the troika framework on the Cambodian issue as well. So HE should bring the matter up as there has a whole package of issues. Hence, I would reaffirm the Cambodian position that Cambodia is ready to play by with whatever mechanism that is to take place and to cooperate with efforts made by those countries as long as the mechanism resolves the matter as a package.

I may need to affirm this because the Thai side has declared that the issue of Preah Vihear is in fact the collusion between Thaksin and Hun Sen whereas a step has been taken to revoke the (2000) MOU that was signed in the Thaksin era. So all issues related have to be brought into the process. I would suggest it is good if Thailand also

take the time to resolve all issues around with Myanmar, Laos and other countries related and also issues concerning Thaksin's administration. This should bring to light if the current Government has been inherited as a state or not, and a clarification of diplomatic position by the Kingdom of Thailand as "has been considered a state of civilization."

I wish to make comments on the recent declaration of Thailand. Days ago, my counterpart Abhisit made numerous declarations and I have had no chance to do so. First I wish to make my comment on the declaration by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Thailand on November 5, 2009. I will take two points of concern as follows:

Firstly, therefore, the Royal Government of Thailand could not stand idly but to take Thai people sentiment into consideration. Whatever is being done by the Royal Government of Thailand aimed at informing the Cambodian Government of the Thai people's discontent. I wanted to ask HE Abhisit and other Thai leaders if they know of a mixture of reaction in Thailand. Were there only reactions in the form of anger or also congratulation? Have you known your country well? Now the red-shirted protestors welcome the news and greeted the fact that Thaksin has become the economic advisor to the Royal Government of Cambodia. There certainly is a group that is discontent but there also is a group that is content with. As Thais, they are proud that one of their nationals has been appointed advisor of the Prime Minister and the Royal Government of Cambodia.

Could you tell how many groups of people in your country? I may tell you that there are red-shirted, yellow-shirted, blue-shirted and white-shirted and multi-political tendency groups. Because of so many factions of political tendencies, it is impossible for you to say anything like Hun Sen does. Hun

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Sen holds power based on a two-third majority basis, whereas you have plundered other (party's) forces. I do not mean to interfere in your internal affairs but your comments have involved me and I have the duty to react to an extent that your affair has to be involved.

If the PPP (People's Power Party) had not been divided, how could you stand a chance to be Prime Minister? There must not be confusion here. That is my first message in return. As far as the appointment of HE Thaksin is concerned, definitely, Thai people in Pheu Thai or UDD would grant their full support. But of course, a small section of population with the yellow-shirted PAD and/or a handful of historically-misled people would be in opposition.

Secondly, concerning what have been said, including what has been said this morning by Abhisit about consideration between individual and national interest, I would raise a question here, whether it is Hun Sen or Abhisit who committed mistake and should take the blame?

As far as the matter is concerned, in my declaration on October 23, while offering rights to settle in Cambodia to HE Thaksin, stress has been made that relations with the Royal Thai Government would continue. On October 24, 2009, as we appointed HE Thaksin economic advisor, we also expressed clearly that intergovernmental relations between the two countries would go on. (Political) parties' relations should not be brought into picture here. In fact the Cambodian People's Party and Pheu Thai, stemmed from former Thai Rak Thai, have had their relations established since Thai Rak Thai's inception. Coming to this, it is you who have thrown national interests of the two countries in the dustbin.

How come you are so afraid of Thaksin? In fact Thaksin has been to many places. When we had the ASEAN Summit in Hua Hin,

Thaksin was in Sri Lanka. The fact that Thaksin had been to many places, why else you did not seem to react? Conclusively, as far as this issue is concerned, it is you who have brought up matter of scaling down diplomatic relations. Cambodia only followed suit. So you have gone to a great lengths of confusion to have said or understood that Hun Sen could not distinguish individual from state affair.

On the contrary, I would emphasize, it is you who could not distinguish the matters. How else because of individual Thaksin you dare plunge national interests of the two countries in the dustbin. Are you afraid of Thaksin? Do you have no courage for an election? My advice is to show your boldness, go for the election. Are you afraid that you cannot maintain the Premiership? Are you afraid of PPP's victory? I do not mean to stir your anger, but you have gone too far in the last few days, leaving no tiny stone unturned. (Listeners may) read the Bangkok Post on November 7. Get yourself informed of reactions from foreign diplomats on measures taken by the Bangkok Government.

I hate to exchange but my patience has its limits. I have been trying to keep myself quiet but you have made video conferencing from Tokyo to Bangkok, and even that you don't leave it a chance to miss. So now I have to get my message in return to you. I would argue that there has to be a clear distinction between Thai people, army, Government officials and the Royal Government. This is a conflict between the Government and Government, or to be exact, between Abhisit and Hun Sen. After scaling down diplomatic relations, you now threatened to close border.

Always, I wish to inform you, Cambodia will follow suit Thai's measures. When you called back your Ambassador, Cambodia followed by doing so too. When you order three embassy staff to

return to Thailand, we also call back three of our staff to come home too. When Thailand return their Ambassador to the job, we would do the same. However, as far as border closure is concerned, what's up? I would stress here that Cambodia does not initiate such a closure at all and we welcome what Abhisit had to say about refraining from causing any clashes that might harm people's livelihood.

In light of this, if Thailand decides to go ahead in closing down the border, Cambodia will follow it up. Closing means the two sides cannot go to-and-fro. Cambodia would then take a number of measures to fence off imports from Thailand within the span of border closure period. That means there would not be Thai goods anymore in the Cambodian market. You may want to have figures of trade in 2008 between the two countries. Imports of Thai goods to Cambodia had been recorded as two billion US dollars while from Cambodia to Thailand was only 90 million US dollars. The figure is provided to me by the Ministry of Trade.

What is ironical is that as chair country of ASEAN, which will establish an economic community by 2015, Thailand would resort to closing down border which eventually cut off trade relations. I am not an extremist. I always oppose to suggestions raised by my compatriots, upon aggression by Thailand, to use no more Thai products. I have prevented that from happening and also instructed them to continue to do business as usual. However, if Thailand feels obliged to close down the border because this matter, that would leave us no further options. Closure would be applied for both humans and goods, and not one but not the other. It is not my wish to see this thing happens.

Thailand seems to have increasingly threatened us. There is one thing they should understand. Cambodia, however small it is, has had abundance of experiences

from traveling through a long war, war-cum peace period, and integrated economies. I just wish to bring to light for Thai leaders that if this is what they are going to do, they would be in opposition to their people's interest than to the Cambodian. However, it is clear to say the conflict should be between Bangkok and Phnom Penh.

Now let me give a background story concerning Thaksin. I have come to meet Abhisit three times and I have told Abhisit each time I met him that Thaksin and me are friends. Abhisit has said in return that he understands the feeling of being friend. At least that is what he said to me. However, when HE Prawit Wongsuwan, Minister of Defense, led a delegation to Cambodia, you press people may have remembered, there was this news that Thaksin was in Koh Kong.

On April 5, 2009, after the armed clashes on April 3, 2009, in the Preah Vihear area, HE Suthep Thaugsuban, Deputy Prime Minister, and HE Prawit Wongsuwan, came to see me at Takhmao residence. Suthep said to me then "there has been news about Thaksin coming in and out of Cambodia..." I told Suthep and Prawit "If I were Your Excellencies I would have sacked all intelligence people because their system has created two major mistakes – 1) to prompt a wrong decision by leaders and 2) to cause hostility between the two countries."

He then asked me further "If ever Thaksin came to Cambodia, would you arrest him and send him to Thailand?" I told him I would not betray friends. What has been the nature of extradition treaty between Cambodia and Thailand is that it is not applicable when it comes to politically related matter. As far as Thaksin issue is concerned, it is a political matter. Why? If he were not to be removed by a coup, the issue would not be here today.

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the reincarnation of Hluong Preah Sdej Kan. It is not my thought. However, I am not the one to threaten or take over the throne. I am a faithful defender of the throne and the monarchy. I wish that people do not confuse my presence here today as a move to declare myself Sdej Kan. Look, what I have done to Veang Jah (Old Palace) that was a place where ancestors of the current King stayed. I am the one to maintain and preserve the place. This should not be misunderstood and as we have learned from history, because of a misunderstanding, which was illustrated as a dream in the Sdej Kan story, the whole nation was brought to turmoil.

I would assure our people of no worry of that sort. Before the elections, everyone could see, the opposition had said that if the Cambodian People's Party came to power again, the CPP will consolidate its power and the monarchy would eventually doom. To your knowledge and observation, the monarchy in Cambodia is getting stronger by the day in parallel with the CPP's strength. No one could threaten the monarchy. In the press, though, a member of the Royal family has said about inappropriate manner of our Majesty and we will let this be internal matter of the Royal Palace. I would warn anyone of the Royal family against making critical remarks on HM the King and/or Samdech Preah Norodom Sihanouk and Samdech Preah Akka Mohesei (the Queen Mother).

Another good thing of this historic place has been the fact that the first Cambodian currency – Sloeng, which were coins in gold, silver ... were minted here in 1954. French researcher and author Leclere noticed further that the city was named Krong Sralob Prei Nokor Bura Riej Thiani, where three years later there lived a bigger population about twice the initial number. He also noted there were foreigners coming in to do business, which could be translated that the city was in peaceful

life or Sdej Kan had made a peaceful living real for the people. This was written by the French researcher and I just said what has been concluded by him.

The place had in fact been a trade center with Sdej Kan's currency that was minted in dragon sign. HE Chea Chanto, Governor of the National Bank of Cambodia, has helped in copying these coins and I have shown it to my visitors that Cambodia has got its coins or currency a long time ago. In fact, Preah Baat Ang Duong also had his currency minted too and it was symbolized by a bird - Hang.

Now let me talk a bit about Cambodian-Thai relations. Our people may have heard about a diplomatic note that has been brought to your knowledge by the Cambodia media. It was sent to our counterpart in Thailand on the fact that Cambodia has sought a termination of a sum of 1,400 million Bahts or about 41 or 42 million US dollars for the restoration of the road segment between Krolanh district of Siemreap to O Smaj of Uddar Meanjei or national road 68 with a total length of 117 kilometers.

To cut a long story short our spokesman said that Cambodia has got its own money to build the road itself. However, I would like to take this chance to clarify the matter to you. First I would recall for you that on November 27 I sent HE Tia Banh, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Defense to inform HE Prawit Wongsuwan and other Thai army leaders at a meeting in Pattaya that Cambodia would like to return to Thailand the 1400 million Bahts loan that Cambodia has been asked for the construction of national 68 and Cambodia will proceed to build the road itself on December 5. About 7 minutes after the notification, contact was established from Bangkok through to me.

Firstly, HE Suthep Thaugsuban, Deputy Prime Minister of Thailand, wished to send a letter to me

directly. I had not had a chance to talk with him on phone. In between 4 and 7 pm, during which I had a meeting with the Lao delegation, including Head of State and Prime Minister, there was another contact and when I came out of the meeting, I was informed that HE Abhisit Vijiaviva, Prime Minister of Thailand wanted to talk to me urgently. It was the first time that the Prime Minister called to me. This has been new because normally I had phone contacts with all former Prime Minister of Thailand – from HE Thaksin, Surayuth, Samak through to Somchai, but not with HE Abhisit until November 27.

He asked me right away if it is true as it was conveyed by HE Defense Minister to HE Prawit (Defense Minister of Thailand) that Cambodia would send (the Thai Government) a letter to return the money. I told him it was true because Cambodia has had a moral impact that you have said to cease assistance and loan. He said it was not true. I said if it was not true, why didn't you deny it if the press said it wrongly. I told him I need a letter from him to clarify this matter because act of revising what had been said has been too frequent. So the two sides agreed that we would exchange letters and he proposed that Cambodia withdrew its diplomatic note first and he would send me the letter through HE Prawit confirming that the loan continues.

It was planned to exchange letters at 10 am on November 28. Before appointment time, three calls were made to me via my assistant's phone and because he was far from me the call reached me in Siemreap. Abhisit said because of prior engagement in Songkhla province, and he could not be Chiang Mai, so the letter exchange should be rescheduled to Monday. I just wanted to have the attention of HE Prime Minister Abhisit on one point. You can deny it whichever way you may see fit, but is it really necessary to fly to Bangkok from wherever you were to sign a letter in this

modern world of communication technology?

This fact has brought us to a suspicion that there has been a higher degree of political and diplomatic confrontation in Thailand. Why does Cambodia take this position? I wish to inform our people that Cambodia could not longer take the shame and underestimation from the Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Thailand. If HE Abhisit needs proof Cambodia could provide him with that because we have compiled a rather good documentation of what had been the discussion and broadcast in the Thai media. We have in our file also what Kasit Phiromya had insulted me when he was with the yellow-shirt protestors.

On November 5, 2009, in response to a suggestion by Surakiat (former Foreign Minister of Thailand) to initiate a reconciliatory gesture to negotiate the differences with Cambodia, Kasit said "Cambodia is the one who started the issue and should therefore resolve it ..." Surakiat even suggested that in Copenhagen, it would not be a loss of face if Prime Minister Abhisit should ask to see Prime Minister Hun Sen. Kasit said it all began by Cambodia that appointed Thaksin and refused to arrest him. I would like to clarify this matter to Kasit Pyromya that all has started on July 15, 2008, when Siam invaded Cambodia. This is not to be confused. It is not Thaksin issue which is a year after all that.

It was Kasit, who led the yellow-shirted protestors and abused the Preah Vihear temple of Cambodia. You called me gangster in the Thai parliament. When Pheu Thai got you on that and I demanded an apology, you revised your version to have said that I was "a person of brave heart." To reaffirm this "it all started when you invaded my country ..." You promised to protestors that you will take Preah Vihear and it is there to stay with you. Cambodia would not be finding peace as

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long as these ambitious Thais are in power. It is totally up to the Thais to decide. It is a government coming out of minority and a military coup, so there is nothing to be concerned about ...

On November 5, 2009, ... On November 11, 2009, ... On November 12, 2009, Abhisit said after the National Security meeting ... considers measures to apply more pressures ... On November 13, 2009, Abhisit said ... more measures are being considered, include the 1,400 million Baht loan ... Here Abhisit himself involves the money issue ... Abhisit argued annulment of MOU on overlapping areas along the sea ... On November 16, 2009, The Nation, Abhisit threatened to take further measures ... that might include cutting off financial assistance ... On November 17, 2009, Reuters, Abhisit told the press he has more time to think about slashing financial assistance and loan ... instructed the Thai Ministry of Foreign Affairs to gather bilateral cooperation projects so that the Cabinet works out a response to Cambodia.

On November 28, 2009, after the phone discussion, according to TNA, Abhisit reasoned that Cambodia cancelled the loan request in advance because it misconceived that the Thai Government could reverse its loan of 1400 million Bahts ...

Look at it again. It is because you have ordered to pile up all cooperation agreements so that they could be used to apply pressure on Cambodia. Have you used all your measures? Border closure, as I have said many times already, would lead to all forbiddance of Thai products for Cambodian market. I would seek Thai people's understanding on this matter. They should understand that it is the current Thai Prime Minister who has incapacitated our market relations ... Cambodia could not be affronted anymore. Professors in many Universities in Thailand have said that in fact the road to be

built will also be used by Thai trucks to take goods in and out of Cambodia too. I would reaffirm that though the road is not going to be built by the Thai money, but Thais also can use the road for their transports. I never declare myself enemy of the Thais along the border or the whole Thai nation at all. It is the current Thai Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, who have underrated us extremely ... I have the duty to explain to my people as to why Cambodia sees it a must to return your offer.

Cambodia may opt for imports from other markets, if ever border closure is to be applied. We have not forbidden Thai fishing boats yet despite your claim we did so. We needed them to register properly. Once again I may need to inform the Thais that Cambodia does not seek to apply border closure at all but will reciprocate in kind to whatever irregular measures to be taken by Thai authority. They had in the last few days fooled Thai companies that Cambodia would confiscate the air catering company and my daughter will take it over. That was how stern they could be and never had they given us their excuse.

I told Abhisit I have worked with ten Thai Prime Ministers already – Chatchai Chunhavan, Anan Pannharachun, Banham Silpa Achar, Thaksin, ... and Abhisit, is the most difficult to work with among all. Deepest Thai division could also be noted under his reign. None of the former Prime Minister ever threatens to cut off assistance. I would instruct Cambodian institutions to review if they have any projects relating to Thai assistance. They may return them so as to free ourselves from the Thai leader's negative judgment. That may also include sending students to Thailand. It would not be too late if we have to wait till Thailand has a new Government. We could find them good schools in the country.

Negotiation or no negotiation is up to them. Your decisions at Hua

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I do not know if it is true or not, but Abhisit has been reportedly said that Hun Sen should reconsider his appointment of Thaksin, stop interfering into Thai internal affairs and underestimating Thai judicial system. Thai judicial system is for Thais. Does the system investigate why else the matter of bringing Thaksin to trial has been brought up? The system does not constitute a systematic respect from Cambodia, especially politically related matter.

Hin prompted my response. You allowed 17 NGOs that the Government did not consent and an opposition MP to be seated in the ASEAN venue. A newspaper in Thailand said that Hun Sen slapped in the face. Some of our people could not imagine too that the Cambodian Prime Minister took such a strong position while on Thai territory. Well because it was about right time to respond to their provocations.

In light of this I would like to inform our people in Siemreap and Uddar Mean Chey that in my capacity as the Prime Minister, democratically elected, and not power-plundering minority politicians like others, I would declare responsible before the Cambodians on my national and external policies to revoke the loan request, which as a matter of fact they would not give us anyway. I have my and Cambodian honors and dignity to maintain. You might threat the tripartite coalition Government that took shelter in your territory before. But you may not do so with me.

They have inferred that in a demonstration ... there had been foreign involvement. Who do they mean? Cambodia would not be so naïve to be contracted soldiers in the Southernmost of Thailand. I made this point clear to Prime Minister Surayudh in 2007. If you have problem managing your country please do not point your finger at others for the mistakes you did ...©

Let's take a look at the time when we signed an agreement in May 1998, it was Thailand who was so nervous that we would propose an extradition of Khieu Samphan, Tamok, Nuon Chea and other Khmer Rouge leaders. But now they have come to abuse us for not extraditing Thaksin, a victim of political and military coup. I would not do that. The appointment is valid. On November 12, Thaksin will give a lecture to 300 senior Cambodian economists. I have told both HE Suthep and Prawit that when Thaksin comes to Cambodia I will let you know and I do openly. Your intelligence should keep on the mission of tracking him down when he leaves Cambodia. If every time they say Thaksin is in Cambodia, why else should I keep it a secret, let him come in open and give him job?

A question has brought up in Hua Hin to me to think about a phrase of "not being a pawn of somebody." Does this mean that Hun Sen is Thaksin's pawn or vice versa? I feel an urgency to reply to this statement along time ago. I wish to restate to HE Abhisit, please do not take it as I underestimate you, Cambodia is truly a small country but politically I have started since when Abhisit was a child. As a small but independent, democratic and self-determined country, Cambodia can never become Thaksin's pawn. Thaksin could never have Hun Sen as his pawn, even if he may want to. That is the first thing to clarify.

Secondly, Thaksin also could not become Hun Sen's pawn. He would not let himself be so, even Hun Sen wishes too. Contact and meeting between Thaksin and me is for resolving challenges of economic difficulties. Having come this far I would seek understanding from the Pheu Thai Party and red-shirted people to allow Thaksin help me and the Royal Government of Cambodia on economic issue. You all should take it as your pride as your beloved and respected leader has become advi-

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