

Cambodia New Vision

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Samdech Hun Sen's Letter of March 28 to His Majesty the King

(Unofficial Translation)

Your Majesty,

I have humbly received Your Majesty's letter sent to me asking for consideration about the proposal made by the wives and daughters of the following convicted individuals - Nhek Bun Chhay, Serei Kosal, Chao Sambath, Thach Suong, and Sin Song.

His Excellency Ung Huot and I have forwarded these proposals to His Excellency Chem Snguon, Senior Minister and Minister of Justice for consideration and presentation of his opinions to Your Majesty.

May I humbly and respectfully present some of my thoughts to Your Majesty on the particulars of the situation which, I believe, is of great concern to Your Majesty.

Following my initiatives in proposing the amnesty to be granted to Samdech Krom Preah Norodom Rannariddh, national and international opinions have warmly welcomed this gesture and waited for the position to be taken by Samdech Krom Preah Norodom Rannariddh as to whether he would make any efforts in clearing his guilt, or would bring about new problems to the nation.

Recent reactions of public opinions are the concern over the fact that Samdech Krom Preah Norodom Ranariddh is not willing to sever his relations with the Khmer Rouge, to

nullify his illegal appointment of convicted Nhek Bun Chhay as Chief of General Staff, to hand back officers and soldiers whom Samdech Krom Preah have employed to fight against the Royal Government of Cambodia and against the law, to return the seceded zone, etc.

Furthermore, the public opinions in the country are awaiting the apology that Samdech Krom Preah Norodom Ranariddh has to make to the people for the destruction caused by him during the July-1997 incident. Even though the publics have welcomed my initiative and Your Majesty's decision in granting the amnesty to Samdech Krom Preah Norodom Ranariddh, they have expressed concern as to what Samdech Krom Preah Ranariddh would do so that they could be assured that His Royal Highness would not repeat mistakes.

As far as I am humbly concerned, I have already done everything possible for the sake of Your Majesty the King and the Second Monarchy of Cambodia, for peace and happiness of the people, and for the elections. Now it is high time that Samdech Krom Preah reacted to the good will.

Public opinions are demanding Samdech Krom Preah, after being granted amnesty, to clear his guilt, namely:

- *Samdech Krom Preah Norodom Ranariddh should declare publicly whether HRH is con-*

tinuing or has severed relations with the Khmer Rouge

- *When will Samdech Krom Preah Norodom Ranariddh agree to hand over the convicted individuals -- Nhek Bun Chhay, Serei Kosal, etc. to the Royal Government so that their legal sentences could be implemented?*

- *When will Samdech Krom*

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US\$ 10,000 Each for Ten Provinces in the Name of Mme Di Pok to Provide Drinking Water

Mme Di Pok, the mother of Samdech Hun Sen, passed away on March 9, 1998. Samdech Hun Sen and family expressed deep thanks and acknowledged receiving generous financial contributions from near and distant relatives, and friends.

Samdech Hun Sen has decided to allocate US\$ 10,000 from the contributed amount to each of the following provinces Kampong Cham, Svay Rieng, Kampong Thom, Kampong Speu, Kampong Chhnaing, Prey Veng, Kandal, Takeo, Kampot and Pursat for the purpose of drilling wells in the name of Mme Di Pok as donations to people in water-scarce areas. All wells should be ready by April 10, 1998, the date on which Mme Di Pok's one-hundred-day parting ceremony will be held. □

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Preah Norodom Ranariddh abandon the seceded zone and hand over officers and soldiers to the Royal Government so that they can return to their previous positions and tasks?

- *When will we hear the apology, which should have been made by Samdech Krom Preah Norodom Ranariddh to the people for the destruction caused by HRH in July 1997?*

I humbly think that the public opinions have expressed their correct viewpoints to which attention should be paid. Furthermore, the public opinions have raised relevant questions as to whether Samdech Krom Preah Norodom Ranariddh would return to Cambodia bringing along the Khmer Rouge leaders.

I humbly think that if we wait until the officers and soldiers break away from Samdech Krom Preah Norodom Ranariddh, and return at their own will to the Royal Government, the hand-over will be meaningless, although Samdech Krom Preah Norodom Ranariddh could have declared handing them over to the Royal Government at that time. The seceded zones will no longer exist while Samdech Krom Preah Norodom Ranariddh would not have cleared his guilt yet after having received royal amnesty.

If this is true, we wonder whether Samdech Krom Preah Norodom Ranariddh is prepared to participate in the forthcoming elections without any obstacles in HRH's way.

As a political party, with seceded zones, a private army and Chief of General Staff, Samdech Krom Preah Norodom Ranariddh certainly understands that he has failed to fulfil conditions appropriate for ballots from voters who would realize that HRH is still involved with the Khmer Rouge, and does not meet re-

quirements for his political party, which has to refrain from violating Article 6 of the Law on Political Party which stipulates that "parties are eligible for elections only when they have no private armed forces and/or seceded zones."

Convicted individuals such as Nhek Bun Chhay, Serei Kosal, etc. are merely rebels; not only are their political value zero but also their military one is not worthy of note.

The declarations made by Rear Admiral Khieng Savorn, Colonels Touch Kim Sean, Ouch Savann, In Sitha together with 350 officers and soldiers who no longer recognize the order and leadership of Samdech Krom Preah Norodom Ranariddh and the convicted Nhek Bun Chhay are the evidence that one can not turn a blind eye to.

A few days ago, ex-Khmer Rouge soldiers in Anlong Veng and their leader, Mr Ke Pauk, have risked their lives in order to eradicate the illegal occupation of Anlong Veng by Ta Mok hardliners.

These sacrifices have made a significant contribution to the safeguard of peace in Cambodia, enabling the July-1998 elections to be held in a more peaceful environment than the one held in 1993, and even the one in 1973.

As for the convicted individuals -- Nhek Bun Chhay and Serei Kosal, what are they doing? Despite knowing that their stubborn efforts together with their dwindling followers would make no influence on the July-1998 elections, why these convicts have no wisdom in declaring a cease-fire, and handing over their soldiers to the Royal Government in order to redeem their guilt?

I humbly understand that an election, which is not open to the participation of Samdech Krom Preah Norodom Ranariddh, could be diffi-

cult and unacceptable. However, an election in which Samdech Krom Preah Norodom Ranariddh does not take part on his own accord could not be unacceptable. The convicted Nhek Bun Chhay and Serei Kosal should understand by themselves that the last stronghold of the Khmer Rouge in Anlong Veng is being put to an end without negotiation with Ta Mok hardliners.

The amnesty has been granted not with an aim of allowing those amnestied to make no efforts in abandoning their guilt or to continue to commit further guilt. I humbly understand that all demands made by whatever sources should be considered as to whether it is for the sake of Cambodian people as a whole or for the sake of a faction that may commit further illegal actions. I personally and the Cambodian people who have been forced to swallow injustices for a long time think that it is now high time that we were allowed to survive as a nation with sovereignty and rights to determine our own destiny by ourselves according to democratic principles as in other countries.

My initiative by proposing the amnesty to Samdech Krom Preah Norodom Ranariddh for the sake of national reconciliation has put me in between the pincers' jaw. Even people who support me have been unhappy with my decision to do that. Currently were the convicts granted amnesty, I think that Cambodia would face a bad fortune because, by then, there would be no respects of law. Weapons and forces would be used as an effective means instead of free, democratic and pluralistic elections. Every one will witness a situation where one takes power when one wins by military means, and one calls for negotiation when one loses militarily, and one might be amnestied even if one had been sentenced by a court.

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There are people who have suggested granting amnesty to the convicted Nhek Bun Chhay and Serei Kosal for the reasons that if there are no amnesties, there will be no cease-fire, or the elections can not be held. I certainly understand their good intention. However, they should bear in mind the past of Cambodia.

From 1970 to 1975, especially in 1973, the Lon Nol regime occupied only 10% of the territory while war covered almost everywhere, Phnom Penh city included, but the elections at that time were recognized as just and fair, and then the elected regime was allowed to occupy the seat of Cambodia at the United Nations.

As for the 1993 elections, the Khmer Rouge, as a signatory of the Paris Peace Agreement boycotted the elections. A number of places were not able to organize elections. Not only were elections not possible but warfare was still going on in areas like Pailin, Samlot, Mealai, Anlong Veng and a number of leopard-skin zones. The elections at that time were held under threats from the Khmer Rouge to such an extent that UNTAC had to set up safe havens. However, the elections were considered just, free and fair.

At present, when the above mentioned zones are controlled by the Royal Government, the forthcoming elections shall be held in the localities where there were no elections in 1993, including Pailin constituency which now has one seat of representation.

For these reasons, why can we not conduct the elections on July 26, 1998? How great is the influence of the convicted Nhek Bun Chhay and Serei Kosal that it can destroy the elections or can broaden the extent of war frustrating the elections?

In case that the convicted Nhek Bun

Chhay, Serei Kosal continue fighting, they are war criminals. It is the responsibility that Samdech Krom Preah Norodom Ranariddh has to bear according to the Japanese four-point peace plan.

If Samdech Krom Preah Norodom Ranariddh understands that these two war criminals do not abide by his order, he must declare clearly that the convicted Nhek Bun Chhay, Serei Kosal are rebels and sever all relations between HRH and these rebels. By doing so, Samdech Krom Preah Norodom Ranariddh and his political party respond to the 6th Article of the Law on Political Party.

The Royal Government and I have fulfilled everything possible and there is nothing left to offer to those criminals. It is high time that they stopped their war crimes, rather than using war as a threat pushing the Royal Government into trampling on laws.

Their wish to continue war is their responsibility, and given their actions, these war criminals should not be taken into consideration for granting amnesty. The suffering of the people is that of the Royal Government, regardless of being headed by Hun Sen or other Khmer political personalities, and also the suffering of Your Majesty the King. Therefore, if a Khmer "individual" wishes to take advantage of the suffering of the Cambodian people for their own political benefits, that "individual" is not worthy of being a Khmer.

May Your Majesty forgive me for my innate nature of frank speaking, if my message is inappropriate.

May the sacred objects on earth, the guardians angels of the Throne, and the souls of the late Kings and Queens care for Your Majesties the King and the Queen as cool shade and refuge to all your children, grand children, and great grand children forever. □ **Hun Sen**

Construction of Bridges as of January 4, 1998

Province	Bridges	Length (m)
Kandal	31	41,625
Kampong Cham	16	35,700
Kampong Thom	05	2,000
Takeo	08	10,600
Svay Rieng	02	1,400
Pursat	02	n.a.
Phnom Penh	01	1,650

Water Pumps (Immobile & Mobile) as of January 4, 1998

Province	Station	# of Pumps
Kandal	12	14
Kampong Cham	1	1
Takeo	6	n.a.
Prey veng	3	3
Svay Rieng	1	1

Message from Cambodia New Vision

The Cabinet of the Second Prime Minister has a great pleasure to share with you its monthly publication of Cambodia New Vision bulletin which carries to you excerpts of speeches/statement/interviews etc. made by Samdech Hun Sen. Comments on and recommendations for the publication and its contents are welcome at the following address:

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Hun Sen on Land Issue in Kampot

Presiding over the inauguration of a mosque in Kampot province on February 28, 1998, Samdech Hun Sen hailed progress on the eradication of anarchic activities in the sea as part of the implementation of the eight-point security plan, while hitting on two main problems concerning land issue:

Reclaiming Land

"... there have been so many land disputes in Kampot that they have been reported to me in the period of 1996, 1997 and early 1998... Based on a report, I put a question mark about reclaiming land... I think we should allow our people to clear land anywhere but not the inundated bushes for fish to recuperate and other areas restricted by the Government..."

"... As long as our people are making use of this land, whether for shrimp farming or salt making we should be happy. What concerns us should be the fact that they do not have access to land, and some well-to-do government officials put up fences on land for speculation... and they are no ordinary people but people with power and rich merchants... I will never side with them but support our people's claim..."

"... if the authorities are concerned about people reclaiming land, they should prepare a map of land restricted by a royal decree and a sub-decree like we have done for a number of national parks and animal habitats in Sihanoukville and other areas... (but other than those types of land) we should encourage our people to claim it rather than discouraging them..."

"... if the authorities continue to do so, let me ask you 'for whom do you keep the land?' This land belong to

Cambodians, they must have prioritized access to it... not the investors..."

"... as far as land dispute here in Kampot is concerned, I suggest two suggestions 1) those of you (the local authorities) who took the land for investors, must return the offered money back to the investors, and return land to the villagers accordingly, or 2) you disburse the money to the villagers..."

"... I am looking forward to progress reports on this issue in one week... if one month later no solution is found I will inform the villagers to take back their land with my full support... (the Cambodian) people must have the priority to development, not the investors..."

Salt Farm

"... as far as salt farm is concerned I remember that salt production was put under the supervision of the Ministry of Commerce... Apart from being used as salt farm, I had recommended to the Ministry to hand it over to our people as single household or solidarity group to produce salt..."

".. Recently I have a report that this land have been taken back...'who are taking it? for what?'... I was told it was taken back and sold to investors for producing salt..."

"... so my immediate reaction is if they want land for making salt, they could just give credit to our people so that with such capital, our people become salt producers themselves... this matter has to be solved, otherwise I will not let it get away as long as I am a Prime Minister or even if I am no longer a Prime Minister, but still alive, I will be on the side of our people..." □

Water Canals Offered by Samdech Hun Sen as of January 4, 1998

Province	Canals	Length (m)
Kandal	95	174,427
Kampong Cham	20	20,812
Kampong Chhnaing	01	2,900
Prey Veng	12	38,110
Kampong Thom	06	23,900
Takeo	34	72,549
Svay Rieng	02	7,000
Pursat	05	8,540
Siemreap	03	11,150

Rural (Laterite) Road as of January 4, 1998

Province	# of Roads	Length (m)
Kandal	38	212,611
Kampong Cham	20	140,975
Kampong Chhnaing	01	1,000
Prey veng	04	1,260
Kampong Thom	03	18,000
Takeo	13	105,700
Svay Rieng	03	40,300
Kampong Speu	11	70,940
Pursat	08	7,940
Battambang	01	15,000
Phnom Penh	01	2,500

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