

Cambodia New Vision

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July 29, 2002 [Extensive Excerpts]
Launching the Cambodia Socio-Economic Development Plan — 2001-2005 (SEDP-II)



04 July 02 - Samdech Hun Sen is warmly welcome by villagers along the Kantuot river of Kandal Stoeung district, Kandal province, before proceeding to observe the renovation of NR 38.

“... On behalf of the Royal Government of Cambodia, I congratulate and sincerely appreciate all the efforts made by the Ministry of Planning, the Government’s concerned ministries and institutions, provincial and municipal authorities, the national and international organizations, the civil society, the private sector and especially, the Asian Development Bank for their proactive cooperation and technical assistance that helped produce this Second Socio-Economic Development Plan. I strongly believe that the implementation of the SEDP for 2001-2005 will produce better results than of the First SEDP. In the past 5 years, we have had good experience and lessons learned, which are very valuable for the successful implementation of the Second SEDP.

The launching the SEDP-II is, by itself, a major achievement – another added to the many successes that our Royal Government has attained so far. SEDP-II proves to us all that we have completed another major chapter in the history of Cambodia’s development.

We have come far up the road to restoring and rebuilding our economy’s fundamentals supportive of sustainable growth – and are proceeding resolutely to the next stage. We are marching, together, on the path to ensuring that our economy shall take off on a higher and faster level of sustained growth into the long term. This is what we need, since higher growth is a basic prerequisite for poverty reduction and prosperity of our nation.

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July 01, 2002 [Unofficial Translation]
Inaugurating the UNESCO/JSA Project Office in Siemreap

The followings are extensive extracts of the prepared text in Khmer pronounced by Samdech Prime Minister Hun Sen, which have been selected and translated into English for the purpose of posting on the www.cnv.org.kh.

“... Today I have great honor and great pleasure to be able to participate -- with Samdech Preah Ream, princes/s, Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen - in the inauguration of the UNESCO/JSA (Japanese Government Team for Safeguarding Angkor) project of-

... fice that is a material foundation for the protection and conservation of Angkor in the province of Siemreap.

... I think that our meeting today in front of the new building with feature of the Sambo Prey Kuh eight-dimension temple is another event of historical importance in the work to conserve and repair Angkor temple aimed at preserving and promoting the cultural heritage and national civilization...

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July 18, 2002 [Extensive Excerpts and Ad-lib Comments]
Inaugurating New School Building and Presenting B.A. Degrees at the National Institute of Management

“... It is a great honor and pleasure for me to participate in this ceremony to present the diplomas signifying the graduation of the third, fourth and fourteenth batch of 885 graduates. I am also happy to officially inaugurate the new school building containing 20 classrooms of the National Institute of Management.

This event is another achievement contributing to the development of human resources in Cambodia. We all take another step in building our country and in ensuring that all Cambodians share in progress... I am sure you have all worked hard and studied very intensively to deserve your diplomas and degrees.

On behalf of the Royal Government of Cambodia, I express great appreciation for the commendable performance of the management, staff and all the faculty members of the National Institute of Management. Your whole-hearted efforts have again contributed to the development of the human resources of Cambodia. Your work has transferred valuable knowledge, educated and trained our youth, and is helping to create a socially connected, educationally ad-

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In fact, I am certain that all of you can appreciate with your own senses the progress that has been achieved since the launching of our first socio-economic development plan in 1996, that many positive changes have happened in Cambodia.

During the last four years, the Royal government of Cambodia has achieved considerable successes with our bold implementation of the "Triangle Strategy."

Our triangle strategy aimed to achieve three main objectives:

- 1) *Ensure and maintain the peace, stability and the security for the nation and its people;*
- 2) *Integrate Cambodia into international community and normalize Cambodia's relationships with international development and finance institutions; and*
- 3) *Promote sustainable socio-economic development through the intensive implementation of reforms in key areas including demobilization, public administration reform, judiciary and legal strengthening as well as economic and financial reforms.*

Note that these wide-ranging reforms include strict measures aimed at improving the operations and management of our natural resources – the forests and fisheries; of our public finance and state assets, strengthening the banking and financial sector, management of land, environmental protection and ultimately the improvement of social welfare. In implementing the triangle strategy, our long-term vision is to have a socially cohesive,

educationally advanced and culturally vibrant Cambodia with peace and stability, and without poverty, illiteracy, and disease, in a society that enables each person to be the best that he or she can be.

Realizing our vision of development will require continued adherence to the principles of the market economy, the values of Democracy and social justice and the formulation and implementation of policies to reduce poverty by promoting sustainable economic growth and social development – the most important agenda of our nation.

To highlight some of the achievements, I should recall the major events that have occurred during the past four years. Due to the "win-win policy" of the government that Cambodia, for the first time, has finally turned a corner of history, putting firmly behind the darkness of its recent past and emerging into new light, vision fixed toward the future.

The entire territory of Cambodia has come under the jurisdiction of the Royal Government without undue upheaval or internal conflict. Moreover, we have contributed positively to the regional and international cooperation and integration under the frameworks of ASEAN, ASEAN + 1, ASEAN +3 and the Great Mekong Sub-region.

During the last four years, economic growth and macro-economic stability has been restored.

Progress was achieved across a very broad range of structural reforms: fiscal, banking, administration, legal, and military, further implementation of land, forestry and fisheries

reforms and the assurance of environmental protection.

The recent quantitative indicators of Cambodia's economic performance, as issued by the National Institute of Statistics are very encouraging. The updated report shows that Cambodia's real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) grew by 7.7% in 2000 and by 6.3% in 2001 against the estimates of 5.4% and 5.3% respectively.

Average inflation declined from the-already-low one-half of one percent in December 2000 to MINUS-one-half of one percent in December 2001. The Riel/US dollar exchange rate continued to be stable and international reserves increased.

These results are beyond our expectation as the world and regional economies continue to suffer vicious cycle of recession. The budget performance has improved steadily. During these years, due to strong budget discipline, we achieved a current budget surplus and limited the overall deficit to a manageable level. We also increased tax collections and spent much more on social sectors and much less on defense.

All the necessary criteria agreed upon with international, financial institutions, especially those under the Poverty Reduction and Growth Facility (PRGF) have been strictly observed and achieved good outcomes as planned. As a result, on July 22, 2002 the IMF Executive Board has approved the Fifth Review of the PRGF.

I strongly believe that there are not many countries that have such a commitment as Cambodia's to enforcing the structural reform programs.

... In June this year, for the first time, the annual meeting of the Consultative Group (CG) of Donors was held in Cambodia to assess the progress in the performance of the government's reform programs based on which the new pledges are made.

The Royal Government of Cambodia presented its achievements for the past year since the 2001 CG meeting, and requested continuing assistance for its development efforts.

The Royal Government submitted a request for only about US\$ 430 million, yet the international community pledged more than US\$ 600 million in assistance -- excluding the US \$ 50 million pledged by NGOs.

The increased level of assistance is clearly a vote of confidence in Cambodia. It is an important encouragement for the government efforts in bringing peace and political stability, strengthening the foundations for democracy and human right respect in the society, and especially in promoting sustained economic growth and substantially reducing the poverty.

In this sense, the success of the CG signifies the approval of the appropriateness and success of the government reform policies implemented so far.

On behalf of the Royal Government of Cambodia, I would like to state again and again about the government's strong commitment in continuing the necessary reforms in all areas and sectors for development, advancement, and prosperous

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and bright future for Cambodia and its people.

We, the Cambodian people, have reclaimed our destiny and become a genuine participant and partner in regional and global affairs. Our national unity has strengthened, and we are well and truly on the way toward our destiny as a free, independent nation, blessed with the fruits of sustainable socio-economic growth.

May I recall that during the official launch of the preparation of this Second SEDP in May 18, 2000, I had indicated the importance of broad-based participation in developing this Socio-Economic Development Plan. Broad participation provides incentives for active and close cooperation among government agencies, the donor community, private sector and civil society in ensuring the success of the plan.

I had also raised some key strategies for the government to step forward in promoting sustained economic growth and reducing the poverty incidence as fast as possible.

These strategies include:

- 1) *Strengthen peace, security, stability and social order through the improvement in the rule of law, protection of human rights and the promotion of democratic governance that enables a favorable political environment and security favoring long term growth;*
- 2) *Sustain long term growth at an annual rate of 6-7%;*
- 3) *Equitably distribute the fruits of the economic*

growth among rich and poor, urban and rural, and all citizens whether male or female; and

- 4) *Sustainably manage and use our natural resources.*

Based on the above positive philosophy, we have spent considerable time and resource to facilitate open discussion and inputs, repeatedly, to improve and fine-tune the draft of the SEDP2 before it was submitted to the Council of Ministers and later to the legislature for final review and approval.

Thus the Second Five-Year Socio-Economic Development Plan (2001-2005) is truly a product of a free and fully participatory process. It incorporates various inputs and the broad-based agreement of all stakeholders on key policies and strategies for development of Cambodia for the next five years.

The SEDP-II will guide us all in the management and implementation of changes and reforms and for measuring our performance to achieve the government's motto: "Poverty Reduction through Long Term Higher Economic Growth with Environmental Sustainability and Social Equity."

There is little reason for me to cover the details of the plan. However, I wish to highlight some of the essential strategies, which form the cornerstone of the Second Socio-Economic Development Plan.

These are:

- (1) to foster broad-based sustainable economic growth with equity, with the private sector playing the leading role;

- (2) to promote social and cultural development by improving the access of the poor to education, health, water and sanitation, power, credit, markets, information and appropriate technology;
- (3) to promote sustainable management and use of natural resources and the environment, and
- (4) to improve the governance environment through effective implementation of the Governance Action Plan (GAP).

The Second Socio-Economic Development Plan has been formulated based on the review of the performance and the progress of the First Five Year Plan and the assessments of the implications of the plan on the economy so on and so forth. The experiences and key lessons from the implementation of the first plan have been incorporated into this SEDP-II.

The main challenge we now face in implementing SEDP-II is the very difficult government budget constraint. Indeed, our SEDP-II sets out clearly the visions, policies and strategies for successful development up to year 2005. But, with those things alone we cannot expect to achieve our overarching and ambitious goals, without considering the mobilization of resources to implement and monitor the activities.

In the current situation of Cambodia, everything tends to be priority, but clearly we lack the resources to meet all priorities. That's why we should prioritize our priorities by setting out specific reform programs and projects with clear schedules of actions within the reach of resources available,

and step forward to implement those programs and reforms measures successfully.

This requires strengthening even more our efforts to reform the budgeting system and process and link development priorities with spending decisions.

By this, I mean the efficient and consistent coordination through the rolling three-year Public Investment Program, or in other words, Public Investment Programming and Public Investment Budgeting.

As you are all aware, we have generated very little fiscal surplus to finance public investment projects. Most of these surpluses are reserved for the counterpart financing the projects that are supported by international development partners. The budgets remaining after allocation to counterpart financing is very small. This is the reason why I myself as Prime Minister, have directly contributed my own meager resources in order to respond to the very priorities of the government. It is a reality that Cambodia continues to rely heavily on external resources to finance most of its public investments. Therefore, I think we should discuss ways to find a model where key foreign-financed projects are incorporated into the government's budget process. In this way, the efficiency, coordination and management of public investments can be improved further.

Another important task that needs to be implemented is the system to monitor the implementation of SEDP-II (2001-2005). The main inadequacy we found from our experience with the First SEDP (1996-2000) was the lack of a

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mechanism to monitor and assess the implementation of the plan. Therefore, I call on all ministries, concerned institutions and agencies to work together on the setting up of an SEDP monitoring and evaluation system. This task will be led by the Ministry of Planning. The system will be linked with the PIP management system and thereby also allow us to assess the outcomes and the performance of specific projects. Together, the system will enable us to make corrections to the policies, strategies and programs as the economic and social environment and situation also changes.

The Second SEDP-II covers a period beyond the term of this government. Until the end of 2003, I will make any efforts to enforce the monitoring and control of the implementation of this plan constantly and efficiently. Nevertheless, as this five-year plan is the vision of the nation representing the broad views of all stakeholders, I strongly believe that its contents and provisions will be accepted by the next government for further implementation.

I wish to appeal to all the Cambodian international development partners, NGOs to provide all the support and cooperation necessary to ensure the successful implementation and monitoring of SEDP-II. I also ask all development partners to pay more attention on improving the capacity of our Cambodia civil servants, especially that of the Ministry of Planning in formulating, monitoring and implementing the national plan... □

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vanced and culturally vibrant Cambodian society. Such is the foundation of a sustainable, productive and globally competitive Cambodian economy.

Let me add that this five-floor school building which we shall inaugurate today bears witness to the success of the joint efforts of the NIM's management, faculty and staff. This new facility will not only ensure the continuing services of the NIM, but also enables the broadening of the NIM's capacity for training.

We should all be proud of today's graduation and inauguration, since these positive achievements of the development and policy agenda of the Royal Government. Human resource development is crucial to the socio-economic development of our country, especially with regard to the reduction of poverty and the improvement of the living standards of our people.

Today's event is also clear evidence of our educational investment strategy which enables us to build the physical as well as the human capacity to serve all of the young people from all over our country who complete their high school training and are then ready for university-level education. This achievement is made increasingly possible because of the flexible and innovative ideas of the management and staff of the NIM in implementing the government's development policies. On behalf of our people and the Royal Government of Cambodia, I take this opportunity to thank all friendly countries, the international community, national and international organisations that have been

making valuable contributions and technical assistance to the reform and improvement of Cambodian education. Thank you for providing much needed technical and physical assistance, including teaching tools and materials, overseas training for teachers and other educators, student scholarships abroad, and especially for helping design programs for higher education in Cambodia that respond to the need of national and regional labour market.

As I have stated on many occasions, it is our government's policy on human resource development that our country should not only just recover from the losses suffered through three decades of prolonged civil war and help resolve current unemployment. Our strategy is to ensure that our human resources shall serve as the foundation for the achievement of our long-term vision for investments, competitiveness and development in Cambodia in the 21st century. Human resource development is also crucial as Cambodia faces the increasingly critical imperative of opening up to the world through international integration in the context of the rapid globalisation process where knowledge and information dominates.

Of course, we all realize that if the higher education institutions cannot ensure quality education, then their graduates will face double burdens upon graduation: they cannot compete in the labor market and the labor market itself is slow to grow due to weakness in the economy. Many thousands of students are graduated each year, and many cannot find jobs in the aftermath. Increasing unemployment and disequilibrium results in the Cam-

bodia's labor market as more and more students are graduated while the market still faces the shortage of qualified human resource.

In this era of knowledge and information, the physical, intellectual and mental endowments of humans – strength and skills, knowledge, expertise, creativity and innovation will become increasingly crucial to transforming economic potentials and comparative advantages of the nation into real competitiveness. Without highly qualified human resources, any country will be unable to add value to production for the benefit of society. This is why the Royal Government during its second term of office has considered education, especially human resource development and efficient utilisation of human capital, as one of its top priorities.

The Royal Government of Cambodia is continually setting out policies aimed at improving the quality of education at the university level. I have asked the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports to establish an evaluation and monitoring mechanism for schooling quality. Such monitoring will help us improve the academic curricula and programs to the level that ensures responsiveness to labor market needs – both in terms of quantity as well as quality. The government has also given high priority to the improvement in the quality of vocational education that helps to transform Cambodian youths into skilled and efficient workers. The strengthening of education quality is crucial foundation for industrialization of Cambodia – which demands the skills for producing high quality, high-tech goods.

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In this regard, I welcome the proposal to establish a doctorate program in the National Institute of Management, as the director has just reported. The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports should consider this proposal seriously, paying close attention to international cooperation with established foreign universities in order to help ensure quality. Indeed, local as well as international partnerships greatly improve the quality of education, especially higher education. Exchange training programs and the sharing experiences and resources among schools, universities, ministries and other organisations will be crucial aspects of this process.

You all know that the government has implemented the policy of liberalisation and private sector investment in education. Some progress can already be clearly seen. The number of private schools and universities has grown as fast as mushrooms. The task now is to ensure quality. Thus, once again I ask the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports to focus on planning, regulative administration, technical and financial assistance and improving the control and monitoring system of the performance of all schools -- public or private. At the same time, strategies for education, vocational and technical training must be developed to ensure the consistency with the targets of our socio-economic development.

The Ministry should make every effort to develop a master plan for the development of higher education as quickly as possible, and this plan should be subject to open discussion by all stakeholders.

A major concern of the government is the status of students from poor families and from remote areas. To help solve the problem, since 2001 we have implemented the priority action plan for higher education to provide incentives to teachers and scholarships to poor students. The government will set out more measures to improve the system for disbursement and management of funds for education in the coming year. In addition, I welcome the opening of the National Institute of Management in Battambang. This provincial branch will serve many more students in the remote provinces.

Today, you are very proud of your accomplishments in your life and deserve to be awarded with B.A. degrees in management, accounting, marketing and tourism. You are the new technocrats ready to enter the labor market and to contribute to building and development of our nation. I urge you make every effort to use of your knowledge and training to contribute to our country's development. Enter the labor market quickly, without needing to wait for a job that exactly meets your background. Gain work experience as soon as possible and continue to learn from new job. This will prepare you for responsibilities and positions that fit your preferences more exactly.

... I encourage you all to explore entrepreneurship. Set up your own business -- this is a big challenge, but also rewarding to both yourself and your country. In addition, I would like you to remember that the knowledge you receive today is appropriate for the time being, but it will be less appropriate overtime in the future when science and technology

are expanding and progressing endless. Therefore, it is important that you continue your study and research and take this as an endless process which requires polishing and retraining of new skills and know-how. I hope some of you will take the effort later to further your studies at the level of masteral and doctorate degrees.

[Ad-lib Comments] ... *Let me add a few comments. We are now having a dry season within the rainy season. Sitting here we all feel very hot, while our farmers are facing with great disaster due to the lack of rain and the increasing level of flood in the Mekong River. Despite the heat, I wish to share some ideas with all of you, all 855 of you, before you all leave the institute.*

... *Just now I was talking about creating jobs etc. but what I wish to advise you today is that you all have to actively search for jobs and do not wait for jobs to search for you. This point has been practically important in our experience. Not only people who lack knowledge and know-how, but those with education, some technical experts, and also a number of Government officials, high-ranking official included, seem to have yet understood what searching for jobs means. They seem to sit and wait for the jobs/works to come find them. While waiting, they say they have got nothing to do. I find this idea unacceptable as in such a wide world, there should be plenty of jobs.*

... *As you have finished your study, and some of you have also attained master degrees, some of you seem to have concerns about getting jobs. It is correct to have the concern*

because we have to go looking for jobs like we say we have to go looking for money and not wait for money to come to us. In some case I also find it hard to understand because some of our officials in positions in the Government saying they have no work to do. Are they waiting for the works to come sit on their desks? Like in the present time, we could observe that how many Governors, Government officials go to the villages to help deal with drought. Some might go to Karaoke instead.

... *Yes Karaoke parlors have been instructed to shut down. But it seems only the signboards that are brought down but the activities inside are still in operation. In Phnom Penh as well as in other provinces, those parlors have continued to operate disguising themselves as restaurants. As far as this issue is concerned could we ask those Governors why they do not act on them. Do they wait for the Prime Minister to tell them what to do and when to do the works? This is one example. Some people have requested for instruction of order from the Prime Minister once again. If the Prime Minister has to give his order over and again, why should we have so many Government-paid officials?*

... *In the cause of going to find jobs yourselves, it is very important to bear in mind that not all jobs suit expertise that you have from the universities. Take for example you learn accounting but out there you are offered a job that is nothing to do with accounting. Would you accept it or would not? You should accept it and starting from there you learn more from your work. More importantly, you have to re-*

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member that no companies would reform their structures to fit your skills or expertise. We also do not have to change our diplomas but to accept what is offered.

... What is more important still is the fact that we could create jobs to self-employ. Some of the students are sent to the universities by their parents and after their studies they have to help their parents to manage their family business. This would eventually contribute to increase of their family capital. You may keep in mind that science and technology are making fast advancement requiring that you update your knowledge everyday. Please do not reduce your study efforts even when you finished your studies at the university...

In terms of career ladder, I wish to say that you all have to move step by step and do not wish to have any person to get you installed. If you were to depend on someone's power to get you installed, your position would not be stable.

... Once you are moving up the ladder, you should refrain from removing the ladder on which you climb. What I wanted to advise our graduates today is that you all have to observe the surrounding environment for career development but not to get yourself installed by somebody with extra power. Get yourself installed by your own capacity and you will not easily fall. If you are getting helps from somebody, and you lack the capability to fulfil the jobs, you would stand a chance of being disappointed ...□

July 03, 2002 [Unofficial Translation]

Selected Address to the Opening of the 2002-2003 Buddhist School Year

"... All our fellow countrymen and countrywomen still remember well that lives under the prison without wall of the genocidal Democratic of Kampuchea regime for 3 years, 8 months and 20 days, all Cambodians of all statuses lost all their freedom including religious beliefs. As an old saying states that "The religion falls, the nation melts" where Cambodian society under the Democratic of Kumpuchea regime lost all its essences. People all over the country were living their miserable lives under barbarous treatment and killings beyond description. Social morale was deteriorating beyond one's imagination.

After the liberation day of January 07, 1979, Cambodian people were given back all of their freedoms. Though we were all then in poor health, skinny and affected by all kinds of diseases, with new hopes, we work together to restore and rebuild our country. On the our destroyed nation, we have worked our best mentally and physically to mobilize very little left resources to rebuild our national economy and restore our national culture that had almost been completely ruined. For Buddhism, up to now, there are many achievements built from time to time including: temples, residences, schools, wells and ponds in pagoda's compounds and these are basic infrastructure to restore Buddhism...

... We should also point out that these achievements are an important part of the efforts to implement the Royal Government development policies that highly focus on the expansion

of the role of religion in the society especially Buddhism in order to achieve the necessary balance between the evolution of materials and mentality to ensure the lasting and continuous development and pleasantness in all societies.

... Buddhism and Buddhist temples are not only the symbol of the essence of our nation but as big barns that store good seeds for providing intelligence, ideals and social morale that are important mental basis for rebuilding the country in all areas. Equal and lasting socio-economic development can be carried out and society can exist with pleasantness only with the development of morale and conduct education... Histories and experiences of some countries showed that a society would face enormous disaster if morale and conduct in that society deteriorate. Therefore, the improvement of and efforts for morale and conduct education in a society is the very important key to ensure the lasting development. For this reason, the Royal Government considers education through Buddhist teachings as the important source for educating and spreading of seeds of social morale and conduct education.

Buddhist teaching is a close partner ... in developing human resources in Cambodia since a great number of our youth population have devoted themselves to become Buddhist monks and they have got their education from pagodas and from the religion just like laymen. In addition, pagodas are important accommodations for a great number of poor students...

In the past, most of our people who became educated, scholars, poets or civil servants all got their education from Buddhist teaching as there were not many schools during that time. Even today, some of our people who have knowledge, morale and good conduct also have been educated by Buddhist teaching. Personally, I used to be involved closely with pagodas and Buddhism. The life of pagoda boy that made me work hard, love justice and have sense of responsibility. Tens of thousands of Khmer intellectuals from farmer or poor families have been educated in pagodas. So we always thank pagodas and Buddhism for liberating us from ignorance and illiteracy and helping us in sharpening knowledge, improving social morale, sense of nationalism and love of social justice. It was not a coincidence that the Kingdom of Cambodia decided to have "Nation-Religion-King" as its motto but because these are the basis and factor that ensure the continuity of Cambodian society... I believe that some of the student monks who left this Buddhist university would remain in their monk-hood while some would become laymen, to be citizens with high knowledge, morale and conducts that are of rare resources contributing to the social development like those educated at schools.

[Ad-lib Comments] ... I wish to take this opportunity to clarify one thing to us all. I was the one who tied the knot at that time so it is quite right that I am the one who have to unknot it. In 1979, as Minister of Foreign Affairs, I had controlled quite a large area ex-

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... Taking this opportunity I would like express my deep thanks to Professor Dr. Nakagawa Takeshita, General Director of the Japanese Government Team for Safeguarding Angkor (JSA) and other Japanese and Cambodian staff for their active collaboration in offering supports, repair and safeguard of Angkor temple.

... JSA not only makes available funds, spirit, and care in their works to repair and conserve the temple but also transfers technology and skills to the Cambodian staff making them become experts while printing and disseminating research reports and organizing symposiums on the Bayon temple.

... I wish to express my appreciation and high evaluation to the continuing efforts made in maintaining the terrace of the Royal Plaza of Angkor Thom, in conserving and restoring the Prasat Suor Proat towers, in repairing the Northern Library inside the outmost enclosure of Angkor Wat, and in formulating a master plan for the conservation and restoration of the entire Bayon complex to be completed by 2005.

... The conservation and promotion of advancement of the national cultural heritage and civilization is an absolute will and determination of the Royal Government reflecting the actual need of development aimed at conserving and from conserving to developing the national culture and civilization that was reputed in the world for centuries.

... The reputation has degraded in the last decades because of internal conflicts and lack of care.

... In the present world, conserving and developing national cultures have become a prerequisite for all the weak nations in the strong current of globalization, for which they have to face with challenges and to stand influences of foreign cultures that have more economic and technological power than them.

... In this context the Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts together with every Cambodian have not only the task to conserve but also to develop and advance their national culture through the collaboration of idea and wisdom of our intellectuals and knowledgeable person.

... Political crisis and the stalemate of internal war over the past three decades not only destroyed the foundation of our social and economic infrastructure to naught but also devastated severely Cambodia's culture while degrading the national morale, originating increase of violence, and demolishing various pagodas, temples and feature sculptures. Some bad people have taken advantage by making excavation in search of national archeological objects and export them illegally for sale to foreign merchants.

... Successes in the implementation of the triangular strategies of the Royal Government has brought us peace and full territorial unity for the first time on the land of Cambodia in decades. This is a prime condition for opportunities to take place, especially in the creation of a solid base for major changes in all fields – politically, economically and socially – in Cambodia.

... The realization of peace and territorial unity also con-

stitutes the most important factor in the rehabilitation of the national culture.

... To make use of this rare chance, as Prime Minister of the Royal Government, I had issued a comprehensive policy aimed at safeguarding and promoting national cultural heritage and civilization by curbing illegal exports of archeological objects, restoring and reconstructing pagodas, historic sites and old temples of our nation.

... At the same time we have gathered resources of all kinds inside and outside the country for the sake of safeguarding, maintaining, repairing, registering an inventory list, making projects and plans to conserve and restoring the cultural heritage of our nation.

... We have for instance implemented various conservation and development of the national cultural patrimonies such as temples, resorts and historical parks as well as all sorts of natural culture property like forest, sea, rivers, lakes, canals and valleys since the 1980s with participation of conservation experts from India and Japan.

... In the 1990s and the present, experts from France, Japan and other countries have arduously in the conservation of the national cultural heritage of Cambodia.

... I wish to take this opportunity to express my gratitude to all the experts for making their efforts physically and spiritually in contribution to the maintenance of Cambodia's cultural property.

... The passing decades of wars had brought about declining morale, culture and

knowledge of our people, which culminated in various negative phenomena in Cambodia's society. Education is key for the uprooting of all these problems and the most effective measure in the combat against ignorance. Every Cambodian has to understand clearly that the Khmer culture is the Khmer national identity and soul. Destruction of the national culture and civilization is therefore destruction of own selves.

... In this meaning we all have a noble task in training and raising awareness of all Cambodians to understand about historical, artistic, cultural, scientific and architectural values of all the temples that are spreading throughout Cambodia. Each and every Cambodian have to know that the Khmer patrimony possesses invaluable value and the world has included it as one of the world wonders.

... To effectively respond to the policy of promotion of the cultural heritage and sustaining the civilization, the Royal Government has made effort in increasing resources from within its limited availability consecutively for the purpose of supporting and developing culture and fine arts.

... In the last five years, our budget reserved for culture has increased from Riel 3 billion in 1998 to over Riel 11 billion in 2002. So in just five years, the budget for cultural sector has risen three-fold.

... At the same time the Royal Government has tried and is trying to increase investment in area of culture through the Government-direct-investment budget as gathered from foreign assistance and to encourage

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age contribution from private sectors.

... Culture has contributed and is contributing to the country's development through its promotion of cultural tourists. Cambodia possesses a number of comparative advantages and potentials in area of tourism and other services relating to tourism.

... More importantly, tourism is not only a high potential area in offering jobs and providing income. Tourism is also providing potential for mental progress of our people through the increase of education and mutual understanding, making them aware of and appreciating any differences from own national or country's identity, while promoting inter-relation, encouragement of respect and conserving natural environment... It is also true that tourism contributes in the strengthening of peace and creating favorable condition for different nations and cultures to co-exist.

... The Royal Government clearly realizes that the infrastructure and physical adapting mechanism like communication, water supply and electricity as well as telecommunications is foundation for transforming these great potentials and comparative advantages into reality... Looking into the speed of current external assistance and investment we hope that in just four or five years ahead we will realize an appropriate physical infrastructure in response to the basic need of development in tourism.

... One other important work is the training of human resources to a level of high knowledge and with sufficient

capability in both national and international standards so that they can respond to our need in coping with globalization.

... It is an urgent task that every institution pays due attention and advances the making use of existing human resources by placing them in jobs that are corresponding to their skills, working practice and learning while taking experience and making improvement. They have to refrain from narrow-mindedness so as to fulfil our objectives of conserving and developing for an equitable society.

Human resource training for the cultural and fine arts sector has to be conducted in conformity with the construction process of cultural infrastructure, which also includes the conservation site in Angkor area, Koh Ke area, Boeung Mealea, Preah Vihear temple area, Sambo Prey Kuh area, and other cultural tourist resorts.

... Achievements in area of culture and fine arts that we have realized so far have illustrated clearly active participation by Samdech Preah Ream, leaders and staff of the Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts, local authorities at all levels, the APSARA authority, UNESCO and other national and international organizations. It is true that there are more works to be done.

The Royal Government has specially pushed for the making of laws, sub-decrees, and various norms so that they could efficiently and comprehensively serve in a timely manner to urgent needs of our people, producers and private companies in making decision to invest in areas of culture and cultural tourism...□

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tending from the former Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the front of the Royal Palace. In fact we occupied the buildings near the Royal Palace, but because there were no people residing in this area (the current Ministry of Cult and Religious Affairs and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs) we decided to move to the current office while maintaining our control over all other areas. Every night there were burglars who either removed the doors or windows. To look after the existing buildings I had used my capacity as Foreign Minister to keep control over the places.

... I had my office on the other side of the street (the current Ministry of Foreign Affairs) and we used one of the buildings here as kindergarten and one other as the department of logistics and finance of the then Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Later the building was transformed into the Party's Central Committee for External Relations, for which I was the President. So in those days I had three offices – at the Council of Ministers, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Party's Committee for External Relations. The situation was like that... In Cambodia there are more pagodas than the military barracks and therefore there are more monks than soldiers. Why? In some districts, take for instance a district in the province of Kompot, there are up to 40 pagodas and there are only two military barracks only.

... I used to recall that soldiers should behave themselves with the monks otherwise they would have a tough time with their umbrellas. In our history, one of our patriotic monks --

Acha Hem Chiev, and colleagues used umbrellas to fight the French (colonialists) ... I wish to take this opportunity to reiterate that even if the cock does not crow, the sun is rising still. Take for instance Pol Pot destroyed religions, though he could survive for some time, he ended his life in a tragic way... We started to have monks since 1979 and this took its course without having to take anybody's advice that Samdech Chea Sim presided over the inauguration of the Buddhist studies. When I was Minister of Foreign Affairs, there were numerous horse carts coming here to load palm-leaf manuscripts from the other side of the building.

... Some pagodas in those days, though there were not yet Buddhist monks, they had gathered elderly people to look after the palm-leaf manuscripts. It was a correct decision to let those people take them to their pagodas for use otherwise termites would have eaten them.

... So I have some thing to reciprocate though part of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs had been given back to the Ministry of Cult and Religion in 1993. Let me inform Samdech Preah Podhiveang and all of our monks participating here today as follows. We have discussed with the Municipality of Phnom Penh to allocate land at the size of two hectares for the construction of new buildings for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs... The work is in progress and once the new buildings for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs are ready, the current buildings and location of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs will be returned to the Ministry of Cult and Religion Affairs...□