

Cambodia New Vision

Issue 84

<http://www.cnv.org.kh>

January, 2005

25 January 2005 (With Unofficial Translation of Selected Comments)
Inaugurating SOS Hermann Gmeiner Kindergarten



Samdech Hun Sen and Madam at the Inauguration of the SOS Hermann Gmeiner Kindergarten in the Town of Siemreap Province (Photo: Virakmuny).

... Today my wife and I have greatest pleasure to participate on behalf of the Royal Government of Cambodia in the *Official Opening of Angkor Seam Reap SOS-Hermann Gmeiner Kindergarten*, which is the valuable donation of SOS-Kinderdorf International (SOS-KDI). On this occasion, my wife and I would like to extend our warmest welcome and appreciation to H.E. Helmut Kutin, the President of SOS-KDI, for this valuable gift that will serve the best interest of our orphans, abandoned and neglected children and children from the poor families in Cambodia.

After listening to the report of H.E. Ith Samheng, Minister of Social Affairs, Veterans and Youth Rehabilitation and Chairman of the SOS-Cambodia Committee, the speech of H.E. Helmut Kutin, the President of SOS-KDI and the speech of Ms. Ingemo Bonnier, the President of SOS-Sweden, my wife and I

would like to extend our warmest congratulation and appreciation for this indispensable humanitarian mission of the SOS-KDI that has furthered and expanded the many achievements of Dr. Hermann Gmeiner in serving those affected children around the world. Thus this Seam Reap SOS-Hermann Gmeiner Kindergarten, which we are going to inaugurate now, would present another new achievement of SOS-KDI in Cambodia.

Through the efforts of H.E. Helmut Kutin and the Swedish people and especially those of the SOS-Sweden presented by Ms. President Ingemo Bonnier, support has been mobilized for the construction of this beautiful achievement which is now standing before us all. This great result is indeed a positive response to the initiative of Dr. Hermann Gmeiner, the first Austrian founder of SOS-KDI
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22 January 2005 (Unofficial Translation of Selected Comments)
Three Bailey Bridges for the District of Prek Prosob, Kratie

... I have a great pleasure for the return this time to meet all of you in the district of Prek Prosob after my last visit to provide emergency assistance together with other charitable persons at the time of flood. May I take this opportunity to express first of all my regret for keeping all of you waiting for the three bridges to be built in such a long time owing to the fact that partly we had a study to be completed, and partly waited for the supply of bailey from the People's Republic of China, and also a bit of financial constraints. HE Kung Ieng has mentioned just now that late

is still better than never. A number of projects have been placed in the eastern side of the River Mekong at Chhlong district of Kratie, but also we have to day three Bailey bridges to inaugurate on the western side of the River Mekong at Prek Prosob. We now have on the Chhlong side built the Chhlong Bridge, the Peam Te Bridge while to downstream of the River Mekong from Chhlong we will have to build the Oknha Tit Bridge and a number of other bridges so that the district of Kroch Chhmar of Kompong Cham is well con-
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08 January 2005 (Unofficial Translation of Selected Comments)
Inaugurating the Tamouk Water Reservoir in Kandal

... It is indeed a great pleasure for me to come back today to put into use the Tamouk water reservoir after its ground breaking ceremony 367 days ago. According to my record in just one year I came three times to the district of Punnhealoeu of Kandal province. Today we all are happy to witness another achievement that is the result of Cambodia-(Republic of) Korea friendship and cooperation. May I on behalf of the people of Cambodia express our sincere appreciation and thanks to the people and Government of the ROK through HE Kim Suk Hyun, president of KOICA and HE Ambassador, for the grant for the people of Cambodia, especially those who are residing in the area. In shaping up this water reservoir, we have used, according to HE Lim Kean Hor, Minister for Water Resources and Meteorology,

US\$ 1,369,000 grant from the RoK together with the Cambodian Government's counterpart fund of US\$ 60,000. Though the reservoir of water could irrigate a size of 1900 hectares of cultivation land for about 20,000 people of 3500 households, I think it is still a huge achievement in my vision of developing are north of Phnom Penh... I am very glad to see that the relationship between the RoK and the Kingdom of Cambodia flourishes since its re-establishment in 1996. In my first visit to RoK I requested to the then Korean president Kim Yung Sam to give
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that has been widely supported by people in over 131 countries and expanded their activities around the world, with noticeable results including those here in Cambodia.

On behalf of the Royal Government of Cambodia, my wife and I would like to take this opportunity to convey our deepest thanks, through H.E. Helmut Kutin and Ms. Ingemo Bonnier, to the government and people of Sweden for providing fund to support the development of the SOS-Angkor Seam Reap and the SOS-Angkor Seam Reap Hermann Gmeiner Kindergarten.

In the last 5 years, Seam Reap has made substantial progress after implementing a national reconciliation policy that I introduced as a "Win-Win" policy. The full peace that we hardly earned has created necessary prerequisite conditions for development, especially the construction of infrastructure such as roads, clean water, telecommunication, irrigation system and hotels serving tourism sector. All these have helped create a lot of jobs for Cambodian people. Cambodia will step forwards with hope. While at the same time, a number of people, especially those vulnerable groups such as women, children, handicaps or other unskilled people have not been able to fully participate in this development process. In this sense, the Royal Government of Cambodia in cooperation with development partners has been trying to help these groups, and this Angkor Seam Reap SOS-Herman Gmeiner is evidence to this effort. Indeed, our difficulties are countless as we adhered to the many consequences of genocidal regime and protracted civil wars in over 3 decades.

The Cambodian people across the country just finished cele-

brating the 26th Anniversary of the 7th January Victory Day. It is an historical day that Cambodia was liberated from the cruelest genocidal regime, which had never existed before on the Angkor motherland. The Cambodian people, suffered from this cruelty, always remember this victory day as their second birthday, which had saved millions of lives from the killing. They had survived and have been able to have opportunity to rebuild the country and to have everything like we have now. Indeed, full peace is the prime opportunity for all of us to participate in the reconstruction and development of the country.

With the government's effort, Cambodian children have gradually received their basic rights. We have thousand and thousand school buildings. Even it does not respond to the real demand but it can be our reasonable base for our national education. Up to now, we are able to have 3 million students every year. Every student has to receive basic education of at least 9 years; so that, they have reasonable knowledge to continue at the vocational training for their future jobs, which is in accordance with the saying "Education for all and all for education".

At the same time, within the framework of the people's well-being, all the people including infants and children have been properly cared through a number of preventive programs to reduce the infants and children's disease such as polio, diarrhea, acute respiratory infection, lack of iron nutrition, lack of iodine nutrition, lack of vitamin C nutrition, lack of food nutrition, HIV virus and AIDs etc. At the same time, the government has issued a lot of stringent measures through the 5-year national plan to combat the children and women traf-

ficking, to promote the implementation of the international laws and regulations and to enhance good cooperation with a number of countries in the region aiming to effectively crack down on the exploitation and violation on children.

Indeed, even we have got full peace, Cambodian children are still under serious threats from criminal gang, who always want to exploit and traffic them, especially the threat from drug, which is now spreading to almost every corner of the country. In the present time, there are around 5,000 orphans, who are under the care of the Ministry of Social Affairs, Veterans and Youth Rehabilitation and NGOs.

These are the major concerns of the Royal Government in preventing and eradicating antagonistic acts. These fall into the RGC's highest obligations and considerations. As I have mentioned above, child development is key to poverty reduction and sustainable development. This is the time-consuming task but it suits the Khmer saying "*education is bitter with its roots but sweet with its fruits*".

At the same time, we note that even with great efforts of the Royal Government, there remain homeless children and families in Phnom Penh and some other cities. This is because of the genocidal regime, more than 3 decades of prolonged wars and natural catastrophes such as consecutive droughts and floods in the last few years. The latter factors have caused family separation, handicap and poverty. Children in these groups are vulnerable or exposing to dangers such as drug use, HIV-AIDS, prostitution, gang activities, health issues, dark future and other underworld activities. In recent years, many NGOs have coop-

erated in hand with local authorities and concerned ministries/institutions including many key leading figures to help the children to become good citizen in the society, by exerting their efforts and resource on the name of humanity.

As noted in a Khmer saying: "*children are the bamboo shoots*", meaning they are the future pillars and strength of the nation. For this reason, we must exert our utmost efforts and comprehensive cooperation with other partners, both national and international community, to resolve all the remaining issues.

In this regard, the Royal Government in its third mandate has adopted the 73-point political platform and the "Rectangular Strategy", which stress on the importance of good governance as the core of the strategy for growth, employment, equity and efficiency in Cambodia. Within that framework, child development is well defined in the fourth angle of the "Rectangular Strategy", and it is stated that "Children are the future of the nation".

In this sense, the Royal Government will further promote the four basic rights of children as accorded in the United Nations Convention on Children Rights. To this end, the Royal Government will exert more efforts to strengthen the National Council for Children, expand the system for child protection in every community and promote vulnerable childcare program such as for orphans, handicaps and children from poor families in rural and urban areas. The Royal Government is committed to adopting all necessary measures to prevent child oppression and exploitation such as illegal child labor, prostitution, trafficking and sexual offense and harassment. These tasks must go in hand with child development,

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strengthened law enforcement, rehabilitation and professional training for children to empower them to be good citizens in the society. Investment on children is the investment for better future of Cambodia.

On behalf of the Royal Government of Cambodia, I highly appreciate SOS-KDI and H.E. Helmut Kutin for cooperating with the Ministry of Social Affairs, Veterans and Youth Rehabilitation since 1999 and for building the children villages SOS-Phnom Penh Thmei, SOS-Angkor Seam Reap, SOS-Batambang and other schools from elementary to secondary and professional training centers. The noble humanitarian activities of SOS-KDI clearly reflect the hard work and keen interest of H.E. Helmut Kutin and his colleagues in taking care of orphans in the "Peace Village" program. These all confirm the statement for children made by Mr. Hermann Gmeiner in February 1967: *"The future of humanity can not only be defined by technology and political progress but it also by the process of taking good care of young generations in the world"*.

Indeed, human dignity basically implies that children should have home, regular daily food and adequate education. Thus in all the International Children Villages, the orphanage or children—who their parent is unable to feed them due to poverty, domestic violence and unfavourable environment for growing up—have been provided permanent shelter with family-like environment, happiness and safety. Those children receive appropriate education, wide knowledge and suitable professional training so that for them to well integrate into community life. In this sense, on behalf of Royal Government of Cambodia and myself, I strongly hope that Angkor Seam Reap SOS-

Hermann Gmeiner Kindergarten is to support poor students enabling them to go to school and develop Angkor Seam Reap SOS-Hermann Gmeiner Kindergarten to be a good and warm educational organization which is inducible for knowledge transfer and shaping their future.

With pleasure, the Royal Government of Cambodia reaffirms close cooperation with the SOS-KDI to further expand SOS-KDI's network and schools in Cambodia. As Prime Minister and the first Cambodian who became a member of SOS-KDI, I will exert my best effort to implement the principles of SOS-KDI and urge good cooperation between SOS-KDI and SOS-Cambodia Committee and Ministry of Social Affairs, Veterans and Youth Rehabilitation, thus to promote development of this Children Village project or building more schools in Cambodia for that will promote human well-being and basic rights of children, and finally contribute to poverty reduction, as stated in Rectangular Strategy.

Taking this opportunity, I would like to appeal to all the civil servants, staff of SOS-Cambodia and the staff of this school to exert utmost effort to take care and teach the children to learn to respect the elderly, have good moral and discipline standard and listen to teacher's advices, so that they will be well educated and become good students and good citizens in the future.

I would also like to urge the local authorities and all the relevant ministries and institutions to facilitate the operation of the school and that of SOS-Cambodia so that this historic achievement of SOS-KDI will function properly and be prosperous that they will contribute to building and developing a

dynamic child capital in Cambodia.

Again, on behalf of the Royal Government of Cambodia, I would like to extend my deepest gratitude to H.E. Helmut Kutin, Ms. Ingemo Bonnier, Mr. Sida Thacole and all the colleagues who came from Sweden to participate in this ceremony, and I would like you all to consider the possibility of providing a fourth SOS project in other province like Sihanoukville. Finally, my wife and I would like to extend our best wishes to H.E. Helmut Kutin and his delegation.

Selected Comments

... My wife and I are very pleased to join our people and honorable guests today in the inauguration of the SOS Hermann Gmeiner Kindergarten, which I think is the biggest and most qualified kindergarten in the Kingdom of Cambodia. We are grateful to the people of Sweden, whose contribution, through Mr. Helmut Kutin, President of SOS-Kinderdorf International (SOS-KDI), has brought the Cambodian people this modern kindergarten. I learned that Mr. Kutin and his wife were married in January and this event could be a souvenir for them on the land of Angkor, while it is also the 29th anniversary of my marriage as well. January is also the month of the fifth anniversary of my first granddaughter and also of many couples of my children's marriages. In January 2006, we would have organized another marriage for another son of mine. What is the most important is that the people of Cambodia throughout the country remember January 1979 – as the 26th anniversary of the day of liberation from the Pol Pot's genocide regime.

... Following its signing of a memorandum of understanding

for cooperation between Cambodia, through its Ministry of Social Affairs and War Veteran, and the SOS-KDI, Cambodia has become the 131 full member country of the SOS-KDI and as HE Ith Samheng mentioned just now that Ukraine would become this organization's 132nd member.

... On January 10, 2002, we put into operation an achievement in Phnom Penh – the Phnom Penh Thmei Children Village. I became a member of the organization since then and I think that Mr. Helmut Kutin could also raise fund from me to build more villages of this kind throughout Cambodia. Later in Siemreap, on January 20, we put into operation various achievements in the Siemreap Children Village and today we are inaugurating this kindergarten with a strong hope that one more kindergarten of its kind would be built and inaugurated in Battambang province.

... Why SOS Hermann Gmeiner kindergarten? We named the kindergarten after Mr. Hermann Gmeiner who, after noticing abysmal situation for children in the Second World War period, with only 600 Austrian Schillings, built in the first place a school and a children's village in 1941. In the present SOS-KDI build 385 schools and children villages throughout the world, while the 386th one would hopefully be inaugurated in Battambang.

... It is with this meaning that we have tied Hermann Gmeiner with the Siemreap province. Though 26 years has passed since the day when Cambodia was liberated from the genocide, which brought about a large number of orphans in comparison to our population figures, other incidents also left us many others. What is worse is that some of the children are HIV carriers, if not only being or-

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phans from deceased parents of AIDS.

... In the name of the Royal Government of Cambodia and its people, I wish to express my sincere thanks to Mr. Helmut Kutin as well as for Ms. Ingemo Bonnier, and all the Swedish people for their invaluable contributions. Also through them on behalf of the people and Government of Cambodia, I would express my condolence for families and friends of over two thousand Swedish nationals who deceased because of the Asian Tsunami. It is indeed fortunate that Cambodia is spared from the disaster. This also reminds me of a situation in 1989 when we had a storm blowing down many trees in the Angkor vicinity. It was also fortunate that none of the trees fell over the temple. It was sixteen years ago when I was here to figure out with HE Tia Banh how to thwart of the Khmer Rouge's attempt to overtake the capital of Siemreap. 16 years later I am here again to think about reconstruction.

... Sweden was the only western country that I visited at the time when Cambodia underwent its wartime. We had an office of representation in Stockholm and in 1984, when I was Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs, I visited Sweden. Sweden had made a great impression on the people of Cambodia. I wish that the Cambodian's Ministry of Social Affairs and War Veterans and SOS-KDI continue to foster good cooperative relation and I would urge them to go to other places throughout Cambodia. Thanks also go to the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, especially the School of Pedagogy for the allocation of a part of its compound for this children facility. In Phnom Penh we have provided SOS-KDI a part of needed land and in Battambang we will buy a plot of land for

them, which I think are necessary counterpart fund for the construction of the children villages. Along with the fact that we would offer SOS-KDI more places and contribution for their projects, we have to pay attention for the sustainability of those programs in addition to care and maintenance to be given by teachers and children while working and residing in the facility. I want to see children brought up and educated in these facilities in Phnom Penh, Siemreap and elsewhere of Cambodia become valuable human resources in the future.

... My tour in Siemreap yesterday was a rare one as my previous visits were made with heavily guarded entourage. Yesterday I had a chance to sit next to the driver which allowed me to see many things with my own eyes in Siemreap. Many big hotels are shaping up and I think that we would host the next ASEAN Summit -- I do not know if I will still be the Prime Minister -- in the capital of Siemreap Angkor. Maybe I am not too old for 2011 or 2012 and this will depend on our people whether they need me or not. If I were not to be our people's need I would turn to be a tourist. My vision for the future is that if we host the next ASEAN Summit, we could also someday host the non-aligned movement summit, which means Cambodia would one day become the head of the non-aligned countries, and Siemreap will be the meeting venue.

... In 1993, when the United Nations was in Cambodia under the name UNTAC (United Nations Transitional Authority for Cambodia) the Khmer Rouge opened attack on Siemreap, and I was called upon by HE Yasushi Akashi, the UNTAC Head, for intervention. At that time UNTAC was biased in

its position, especially its spokesperson who always commented the clash between the SOC and the Khmer Rouge forces as a violation of the Paris Peace Agreement. I warned the UNTAC Head if he could not control his spokesperson I would then leave the Khmer Rouge to fight wherever they want, especially the UNTAC posts of command. Later the UNTAC Head called on my assistance in relation to the encroachment of the Khmer Rouge into Siemreap town. We then ordered the military region 4 to push through into the airport, and put the Khmer Rouge forces on the run. Some UNTAC officials were wounded, but not by bullets but by hitting themselves on sharp objects while running. We should not ignite any war and should not go for help from foreign countries as they may not be able to protect themselves, let alone to protect anyone else in what they called peace keeping operation. Cambodia also requested to send our forces to keep peace but in area of demining in countries with close cooperation with the United Nations. Comparing to only two hotels in those days -- Grand Hotel and Apsara Hotel, we now have dozens of them. The only reason to why we could have so many hotels built is because we have peace and this peace is the product of the win-win policy, after which there is no loser and winner. Why do we have orphans? One of the major causes is war.

... What is a concern here is the need for the Ministry of Tourism and related institutions to spare no efforts in bringing development to the region, making it a tourist attracted place with a potential to sustain. I still think that my decision to implement an open-sky policy which allows all airlines to operate direct flight to Siemreap. At that time there was an

attempt to organize demonstration against my policy of opening the Cambodian sky, Mr. Moeung Son was one of them if I am not mistaken. Soon later he accepted that the policy is correct. His main concern was that allowing direct flight to Siemreap would bring about fewer visitors to Phnom Penh, but on the contrary it increases the number of tourists in Phnom Penh as well. I wish that all policies put forwards by the Royal Government should be well analyzed and the best time of doing so is after the implementation is underway. Early and hasty remark would mess things up and lead to incomprehensive conclusion. In other words, we have moved from a few hotels to dozens of them is partly because of the implementation of the open-sky policy. It is in this remark that I have put out policies to open access by road and water so that tourists could decide on how to arrive and leave Cambodia. As far as this area is concerned, only one more road that needs to be built -- between Poi Pet and Siemreap. We have the project financed already but the financier decided to go for bidding and it has taken us two years already for doing so.

... The road is financed by the Asian Development Bank and what remains to be solved is the project bidding which whether to accept consultants from Japan or Korea has been a heated discussion. If the money is in the Cambodian hand, it would have been done already and could have served tourist traveling to Siemreap directly from Poi Pet. With the assistance from Thailand, from Chuam Srongam to Anlong Veng, down to Banteay Srey, and to Siemreap, another road would be built so as to get more tourists from this side. What is a shortcoming here as is presented by H.E the Governor of the province is the fact that formalities has slowed down the in-

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crease line of tourists. We also have a couple of roads to build so as to evade traffic from the Angkor and national heritage sites.

... On this occasion I would like to have your attentions on a few points. First of all we have to have a common vision that Angkor and its area of vicinity must be preserved as a zone of cultural and natural tourism. This means any development plan for this area should be a long-term one. Many countries and institutions joined us in rehabilitating Angkor Wat, take for example the UNESCO. Our people and provincial authority should do their best in helping the Apsara Authority in its works especially houses should not be built adjacent to Angkor, while logging in the area is also forbidden. No more settlement is allowed from outside into the area and all construction architectures must abide by the recommended technical norm. I am glad to see that all hotel architectural buildings are bearing real Cambodian old-age styles and features. As for the people residing in Angkor area, I think they enjoy three rights – first, the rights to reside on the land descended from their ancestors, or in their native place; second, the rights to build their own homes according to the norm set out by the Apsara authority; and third, the rights to transfer ownership titles to one another in the area. I warn those land speculators who happened to buy lands and frozen them for price speculation, that though a five story house has been built, it would be subject for removal in all circumstances for the defense of Angkor.

... Having done all this, we have sustained the country's potential for cultural and natural tourism. We should also take a study by JICA on underground water management into consideration, because if we depleted water

from underground, we risk putting Angkor and other heritages in an endangered situation. We have to maintain an eco-balance between underground water and tree coverage on land. I wish to assuage our people's concern from provocative remark by ill-will people on relocation issue that those who reside in the area as their native place for a long time could remain so but those who encroached upon the forest, must leave immediately. If they were to have purchased land here, they would not get permission to build anything. I instruct the Apasara authority to take my instruction into account. We are talking about long lasting potential benefit and not just for a few years. It is important and prerequisite to use tourism to pull along other sectors because one tourist would involve jobs to be done at least by two people. If we were to have one million tourists, we could be assured that job is created for at least 1.5 or 2 million people.

... Being orphan is far from easy, though we have a good facility for them. Loss of loved ones – mum or dad, son or daughter, etc. is a misfortune. One way to prevent such a loss is to create no war, while building a stronger peace, achieving political stability, and promoting development for the reduction of poverty. Siemreap is one of the three economic development poles in Cambodia – with Sihanoukville and Phnom Penh being the other two. Once the poverty reduction objective is achieved, children of poor families would also decrease, but on the contrary, if we were to continue to have poverty on the increase, we then would have increased the figure of 540 orphans in the village by the thousands. It is good that we are living in peace.

The fortunetelling handbook

06 January 2005

Remark at the Special ASEAN Leaders' Meeting on Tsunami

At the outset, on behalf of the Royal Government and the people of Cambodia, I would like to take this opportunity to express profound condolences to the governments and people of all countries, especially Indonesia, the host of this Special Summit, who has been severely destroyed by the Disaster including the great loss of hundreds of thousands of lives and properties caused by this tsunami. I would like to thank the Prime Minister of Singapore for taking the initiative of convening this summit timely and to the Prime Minister of Indonesia for its excellent arrangements.

Indeed, this tsunami is not the biggest in recorded history, but the effects may be the biggest ever in our contemporary history as there are increased

yesterday had me on a page that my life would be safe and sound and this is a good thing because as long as I am alive, the Cambodian people will also be happy and safe. According to the Constitution, if the post of Prime Minister is left unoccupied, a new Government needs to be set up. This means if I die today, the whole current Government will also cease to exist and only the officials at the provincial level will maintain their positions. There is a need now for more mutual trust.

... Religion should not be a barrier to relations between peoples and development. Take for instance the peoples of Sweden, Austria, Germany, etc. came to help Cambodia and they are no Buddhists. So what I like to see is a unity for development. If bad people praise us, we should think out that there must be something wrong with us. If they insult us, we should be happy that we have done things right...■

population and the frequent outbreak of natural disaster in exposed areas than ever before. Hundreds of thousands of people died and millions were made homeless and lost all kind of property.

In this circumstance, providing timely emergency relief to affected people on the ground effectively and efficiently is very critical. Cambodia has responded with a symbolic gesture of assistance during the first day when this tragic event unfolded. Cambodia is ready to cooperate with all international partners, as much as we can, to cope with necessary needs in this emergency relief operation. For this meeting I would like to briefly elaborate all issues as follows:

Firstly, Coordination of Emergency Relief Assistance: We have seen instant and active responses from all levels in the world to this disaster. With great damages and emergency relief needs and the flow of humanitarian aids from everywhere, we have noticed a sine qua non for a coordination response: (i) timely; (ii) smoothly; and (iii) effectively and efficiently. In general, coordination should be made at all levels from international level to local level, especially in the direct victimized communities.

Cambodia is one of the countries in the region, which has occasionally been affected by disasters, especially floods and droughts. Therefore, we have given high priority on disaster management and emergency relief. Our experience shows that the strengthened role of national institution is the critical key for the effectiveness and efficiency of disaster management and emergency relief coordination. Cambodia herself has established a structured, well-coordinated National Committee

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nected to this system.

... I used to compare the road 73 (a juncture from the national road 7) from the district of Damber (Kompong Cham) to Chhlong as a rake handle with one end of the rake on the right goes to Kratie and another on the left goes to Kompong Cham province. In the past we had our famous singer Sin Simuth's song of "Kratie and Phnom Penh – not far from each other" because of the engine boat service, which normally took a full-day trip. In building the three bridges, we have put the ferry services to an end. Together with HE Ngy Chan Phal of the Ministry of Rural Development and HE Ngy Ta Yi, I have contributed a sum of 16 million Riel as ferry charges for our people to cross the three water passages. Along the national road 7, we had put to a stop of ferry service in the Tonle Bet by the construction of the Kizuna bridge, and more will cease service along the Se San river after the construction of the last part of the national road 07 is over. I should take this opportunity to recall that we also will have a bridge built across the River Mekong at Neak Loeng.

... Let me take this opportunity to thank the Ministries of Rural Development, Public Works and Transports – who are the principal financial officers to this development project. Thanks also go to HE Finance Minister Keat Chhon – whose native place is Kratie – for his saving manner allowing us to get the three bridges built at this time. I also thank the engineering team of the Ministry of National Defence for its thorough study for the construction of the three bridges. The CPP working teams in the area also deserve praise and appreciation as well. The three bridges – Prek Roka, Saok Kraom, Prek Chik – is 222 meters altogether stretching on a length of 70 kilometer-road,

without which traffic in the district of Prek Prosob would remain disconnected. Because I was living not far from here, the Peam Kohsnar commune of the district of Stoeung Trang, I have a good knowledge of the geographical setup here. I used to come by a lake called Boeung Rai and next to it there is a lake called Boeung Veng with so much fish.

... Talking about fish, I wish to remind all fishermen that it is because they electrocute the fish they can not complain of having less and less fish to catch. They should stop pointing their fingers at the Royal Government because of the result of their own actions, take for instance using explosive to kill and catch fish. They also are the ones who trap fish in congested net – in which small and big fish and water products are caught. When they found out that their fishing activities are worse they blamed the Royal Government. Listen to what they may say, before I spent just a short time to electrocute fish and I got a lot, but I caught none or less now. So they should all think of their actions, which indeed have brought them this hopeless result. Making the false accusation worse are indeed some of the human rights organization.

... The Royal Government and myself have been accused of doing nothing by those people and organizations, but as we all see it today, the Royal Government build just three more bridges along with various water canals, school buildings, roads, etc. Let me warn them that no one would lose in the circle of peace and national reconciliation, including my opponents. I will pursue a policy of that no one is left defeated in the cause for peace, national reconciliation, democracy and development leading to the reduction of poverty. I

am grateful to the rebukes with words like "a diktat" as by using terms like this will indeed reflect that Cambodia is fully democratic and of course in certain countries, ASEAN included, doing so would be severely reprimanded. On the other hand, these people never rebuke Americans because they would enjoy no more money if they do so – Well I do not mean the US citizen or institution in general, but institution like the International Republican Institute (IRI).

... I was born right at the final stage of war against the colonialists in 1952, which brought Cambodia its independence in 1953. After we had independence, the area between Prek Prosob and Stoeung Trang, we had rulers named Put Chhay and Bun Um, and after them we had a group of robber led by Meam, Kai Chheang, who were arrested by the Government forces in 1965 and 1966 respectively. Later the Pol Pot's central headquarter was no where but right behind Prek Prosob. At that time Cambodia won independence and peace, but there was still instability. The Sangkum Reastr Niyum's development lasted about 16 years, and after that war broke out. Since 1970, Prek Prosob area was named Special region 304 under the command of Ker Pork and Koi Thuon. Chhlong was part of region 21, and Kratie's Snuol district and Kompong Cham's Dambe was Special Region 505. What did we gain from this evolution? After the liberation in 1979, when my nephew came for a wedding of his brother in 1994, he was shot dead by the Khmer Rouge, and my father in law who lived across the river was also shot dead in broad daylight. That's what the war brought me as well as our people in general.

... Because I was born in a

place not far from here, I know very well how people cope with tremendous difficulties because of their villages located along the waterway. Without a bridge, people depend on ferry service which is time consuming, and relatively unsafe. Once the road is built it means poverty has been reduced through infrastructural development. For people living in this area bridges and roads are their hope. We notice the increase in marriage and there is often a case of three-baby birth. I remark that it happens mostly in families of the poor. This time of the year is the wedding season and Cambodia's birthrate is somewhere around 2.4 and 2.5. In the city we notice increase of birth spacing, and it is my disappointment because I wanted more grandchildren, but my children do not like it. This year I married two children and my eldest son perhaps will get married in 2006.

... By quoting a statement "the third term legislation Royal Government is focusing on irrigation and hydrology," the provincial Governor just mentioned that the water reservoir of Rolum Phnov that was built under Khmer Rouge time could be restored for irrigating an area of 1300 hectares for about 870 households in their dry season rice cultivation. According to the study by the Ministry of Water Resources and Meteorology, once finished, the reservoir would have an irrigation capacity up to 3000 hectares, and I wish to declare today that I order the restoration of the reservoir. Because it is an inundated reservoir, I would urge the Ministry of Water Resources to expedite additional studies and because its cost is not high I would recommend HE Keat Chhon to invest right away. Sanmdech Krom Preah Norodom Ranaridh, President of the National Assembly and President of FUNCINPEC, and I have come to an agreement that

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clusion is whether one could place confidence in them since they turned their backs on the truth. I invite our people to consider the analysis. 26 years ago, our people in all parts of the country were set free from the genocide. They wandered collecting necessary utensils – plates, spoons, etc. But what was important for us then was survival. Some people were liberated right on January 07, but some were liberated since January 06 or even since end of December 1978. Liberated on January 07, and within the past 26 years, Phnom Penh has changed a great deal. But some politicians made an unrealistic remark that the country is getting poorer. That was an irrational remark. Phnom Penh turns from a ghost city to a traffic-congested one. Well, I may have to make clear that all I am talking is not to restrict anyone from expressing their different views but I have to share my side of rationality. I used to talk about two ship owners and a sailboat possessor in Sihanoukville while putting into operation a dry port at the seaport. The sailboat possessor came shouting from behind the ship that his boat was going to get to the shore before the ship. He invited people aboard the ship to join his boat. In fact the sailboat possessor would want very much to be invited aboard. As a matter of fact the ship owners also would like to have the sailboat possessor on board but could not do so because of the sailboat possessor's greediness.

... The package vote that solved the political deadlock was announced from here and the Royal Government was named a package Government (or resembling a ship). The sailboat possessor remarked that it was wrong to focus attack on the younger owner of the ship because he is stronger. Later the sailboat possessor plans to direct attacks on the elder owner of the

ship because of his weak strength and to eventually replace him in 2008 in steering the ship with the younger one. The younger owner of the ship told the elder owner that the sailboat possessor wrote him twice and promised him with no more blame. It is ironical and I advise him to go on discrediting me as the more he does the more people will see who is to blame. Take for instance as he discredited me irrationally on various things, I gained more votes as a result. From 53% in the parliament, CPP now has 60% -- largely because of its hard works and partly because of such insults. Now the target has shifted from Hun Sen to Samdech Krom Preah.

... The third legislature Royal Government, Samdech Krom Preah Norodom Ranaridh and I have agreed, is the Government of hydrology, while the second term Royal Government was the one for road construction. We have to start with water management or we could not make a jump-start in our economy. The realization of the Tamouk water reservoir is an achievement that comprises not only economic benefit for the people, but also their basic human rights and democracy for our people in this area. Or a question could be asked if all were dead under the genocide, what could one preach about human rights? Some of them dare not show that they remember the killing field because they are afraid of losing financial donations. In Iraq, Saddam Hussein was toppled by the US led forces because he killed people, how about Pol Pot? Saddam killed even less than Pol Pot, but the US fight against Saddam was justified. Now that Iraq is approaching its January-30 election date and I doubt how are they going to organize it in face of disturbances almost everyday...■

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on Disaster Management as a permanent mechanism under the leadership of the Head of Government, to deal with all needs caused by all kinds of disasters in the country.

Secondly, a global response to disaster: Cambodia strongly supports and highly appreciate the establishment of the UN Emergency Fund for Earthquake and Tsunami Disaster and the Early Warning System for tsunami, earthquake or any other disasters. In addition, I highly appreciate the US-led "Core Group" initiative announced by President Bush on 29 December 2004 which intends to support the UN's role in leading global response. Indeed, the UN should play a central role in coordination of responses.

In this regard, we want to see that all United Nations agencies and bureaus play more active and effective role to support the authorities of the affected country in managing and responding to all types of disasters.

Thirdly, Enhancement of regional mechanism for disaster response and management: In order to cope with uncertainty created by natural catastrophe, we should strengthen regional mechanism on Disaster Management by formulating a sound framework, which includes: (i) sharing of information, expertise and best prac-

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we will focus on hydrology in this term, while in the second term we allocated more resources on roads and bridges than hydrology. In this term the bigger slice will go to hydrology. That does not necessarily mean we no longer build road or bridge because while water is prime in one place, road would be in another...■

tices in disaster management; (ii) coordinating policy development to protect environment and promote disaster prevention; (iii) developing an early warning system; (iv) coordinating logistics and financing in emergency relief and rehabilitation; and (v) strengthening partnership relations with all stakeholders in order to enhance the capacity of regional response to natural catastrophe...

Fourthly, the development of a Regional Warning System in the world and the region: I agree with the idea on the development of early warning systems, so that individual country is able to be prepared appropriately to face eventually with the disasters. At the global level, I believe that this task should be carried out under the umbrella of the United Nations with the support and participation of developed countries through the following measures: (i) advocating for better early warning systems in important regions in the world (ii) collecting and disseminating information on best practices in disaster management, and (iii) stimulating cooperation among early warning actors and the development of new ways to improve early warning systems.

In this regard, Cambodia welcomes Japan's initiative to establish a tsunami early warning system for the Indian Ocean region, and

Fifthly, Rehabilitation should be our top priorities: Cambodia welcomes the proposal by the international community to provide assistance to affected countries in the rehabilitation of infrastructure and livelihoods of the people. Based on experience of the biggest flood in Cambodia in 2000, I would like to express my high appreciation to the World Bank, the ADB and bilateral and multilateral donors for the efforts of rehabilitation...■

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to me, the donation for my personal account, in form of road construction machinery. I have offered them to the engineering team of the Ministry of National Defense for their task of building roads in Cambodia. My later visits to the RoK brought about more achievements such as donation of information technology, the establishment of vocational training schools, and among many other valuable things, the renovation of a large part of the national road 3. This is what I wanted to share with our people today on achievements scored from the positive relations between the two countries in the past ten years. Let me take this opportunity to express my sincere appreciation to the Ministry of Water Resources and Meteorology for making this happen. I also thank the local authority of all levels, especially the district authority of Punnhealoeu for their joint efforts in making the project going smoothly from beginning to end. My thanks also go to local people whose participations have proven to be significant for the overall operation of the project.

... The water reservoir is here now. I am sure the wish of the Government of RoK and the Royal Government is to see that our people are making maximum use of available water. If our people before harvested 1.2 or 1.5 tons per hectare, we want them to harvest four or five tons per hectare. And the living standard of our people will improve accordingly. We also have established here a water usage community and I am sure the reservoir will be in place for use not only by people of this generation but also of children and grandchildren to come. The only chance that the reservoir would be dismantled is the resurgence of the Pol Pot regime. I could guarantee that if Samdech Krom Preah Norodom Ranaridh, President of the National Assembly,

or I, or Funcinpec and CPP are standing together, such a chance would be unavailing. Yesterday was the 26th anniversary of the January-7 victory over the Pol Pot's genocide regime, and I was not present because I had to attend an urgent aid coordination summit to address the Tsunami disaster in the Republic of Indonesia. The meeting was even bigger than the one organized in Thailand last time to manage with the SARS situation.

... Due to the fact that Tsunami disaster has been unprecedented and affecting many countries in the region – Indonesia, Sri Lanka, India and Thailand, among others – Heads of States and Governments, and officials of ASEAN and the world – Japan, China, RoK, Australia, New Zealand, the European Union and the United States of America came to Indonesia for the Summit. Well all was going well. In between 2004 and 2005, Cambodia was badly hit by drought which damaged our people's rice cultivation. Thanks to our joint efforts, the country has seen to their own eyes how the Royal Government is making ends meet mobilizing the armed forces, local authorities of all levels, and the contribution made by the Buddhist monks in saving our people's rice from total destruction. The damage caused by drought in Cambodia is incomparable to that caused by the Tsunami, which has brought about up to this moment over a 16 hundred thousand deaths... The people of Cambodia would like to express their condolences with those countries and families while attending the above summit.

... To compare what was caused by Tsunami with what was destroyed by the genocide regime in Cambodia in the period between 1975 and 1979 I would draw a conclusion that

the latter is far more destructive. The destruction caused by Tsunami affected many countries with an extent, to my mind, far smaller than that suffered by the people of Cambodia in the time of genocide. They are lucky though as they enjoyed the assistances of many countries immediately and I am quite glad to see that happen. As I could recall it has been close to four billion dollars of pledge, and a problem for the rescue operation is whether they could get the whole money as they have been pledged or not. We see rescue and assistance provision operation rendered by armed forces of many countries. Let's imagine the three million people of Cambodia died in tragedy and in negligence of the world. It may be difficult for HE Ambassador of the RoK to imagine how destructive Cambodia was after the genocide because Cambodia today is very colorful. In 1979, the whole Phnom Penh city lived about 70 people. Monks were disrobed and killed with the punishment for practicing religion of all kinds.

... Seeing such destruction by Tsunami reminded me of what Cambodia was through and feeling sorry that the people of Cambodia could not in those days enjoy similar warmth and assistance spiritually and materially. What was worse was the fact that Cambodia continued to suffer from punishments. The Khmer Rouge represented Cambodia (after its fall in 1979) in the United Nations. But I felt encouraged when I met briefly with HE Kofi Annan at the Summit in Indonesia where he thanked the Royal Government of Cambodia for the completion of all tasks required (for the commencement of a trial of the Khmer Rouge's leaders), including the ratification of financial obligation for the operation of such a trial. I have also appealed to many foreign leaders

for providing financial assistance for a timely trial. I have an understanding that as long as the trial takes place then justice is given to the victims and those who lost loved ones. Unimaginably, a bout ten people took to the street to express their opposition to the January-07 rebirth of the people of Cambodia. January-7 is indeed putting an end to the genocide because of which many people of Cambodia died and monks were disrobed. Because of January-07 we now have a chance to be here altogether, we have monks and all basic human rights have been restored and respected.

... In Cambodia, seven people (the Khmer Rouge leaders) killed about three million people or one third of the then population. Some people blamed the slow process for the trial on Hun Sen by claiming that Hun Sen does not want such a trial. The Khmer Rouge leaders were tried in 1979 but no one recognized the effort. And I am glad that our people will enjoy justice this time. As for the Cambodian People's Party and Hun Sen, such a trial is of great significance as it will prove that punishment on Cambodia in the past was wrong or render the CPP with a justice it deserves, so to speak. Despite all difficulties, efforts will continue to be made to make relevant laws and Cambodia has an obligation to contribute 13 million dollars to the trial. Well, 13 million dollars is a fairly big amount of money that this country could instead make use of building water canals, etc. but the trial is indeed a must. Sometimes it is ironical to see that some politicians turn bad calculators because they hate the genocide and Pol Pot but they blame the one who attacked Pol Pot. I wonder what would they say when they go to pagoda to observe the memories of their loved ones who died under the Khmer Rouge regime. My con-

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