

# Cambodia New Vision

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**18 June 2005** (Unofficial Translation of Selected Comments)

## Visiting a Bailey Bridge in Pursath's District of Kravanh



18 June 05 - Samdech Hun Sen with People in the District of Kravanh, Pursath province, at a visit to the Bailey Bridge over the Pursath River.

*On Saturday, June 18, 2005, Samdech Hun Sen accompanied by various Government and military leaders visited the Bailey bridge of Kravanh in the Province of Pursath and gave some comments on the local situation, the financing of the construction of the Bailey bridge, and the current political affairs of the country.*

... It is indeed a great pleasure for me to join with all of you today to oversee the final phase of construction of the Bailey Bridge of Kravanh over the river of Pursath. My visit here has been mainly aimed for observing the construction site as is reported by HE General Khvan Siem. This is not an inauguration, but because the bridge is done, and we had a walk across from one side to another together with some monks along, it could be an inaugural move as well. Having said so I mean our people can start using the bridge as of now and we would continue to find a day in which an

official inauguration could be held.

... Starting from the day when I first pondered what to do – on March 08, 2005, up to the moment, June 18, or 100 days later – the bridge has been put in place in response to demands from people in local areas around who have the necessity in crossing the river of Pursath everyday. During my visit to Pursath at the time of drought affecting rice cultivation in the area, the MP of Pursath approached me for assistance.

... I told him I have limited resources to respond to the need here. I then asked him to choose between addressing the water need for irrigation and a bridge. He was so bold to keep on asking for both. In his report to me, after conducting a study by the engineering team of the General Staff, HE General Khvan Siem took my attention on the point that up to one or  
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**29 June 2005** (Unofficial Translation of Selected Comments)

## National Fish Day at the Lake of Boeng Sneh, Prey Veng

... Today, I have a great pleasure to join with all of you and monks to celebrate the National Fish Day (NFD) of July 1<sup>st</sup> because I will be busy in the month of July. HE Minister for Agriculture Chan Sarun already made the case of would-be enormous interest in releasing about half a million fishes into the natural system in the village of Prey Angkunh, the commune of Prey Kandeang, the district of Peam Ro of Prey Veng Province. As today falls on the Buddhist fast day I have the belief that they would be alive and well and will be re-productive for generations to come.

... The release of fish today is the third time in a row after the issuance of the sud-decree number 99 on September 2002 leading to the first release of fish into the natural water system in the canal of Prek Kompoeus in the village of Tuol Thnung, the commune of Rokar Thom, the district of Chbar Mon of Kompong Speu in 2003, and the release for the second time in the lake of Pun-nareay in the village of southern Phum Thom, the commune of Punnheapun, the district of Punnhealoeu of Kandal province. As is listed out in the report of HE Minister for Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries Chan  
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**15 June 2005** (Unofficial Translation of Selected Comments)

## New Graduates at the RU of Laws and Economics

*In addition to the prepared text, Samdech Hun Sen addressed the graduates of Laws and Economics on issues of traffics and accidents in the capital city of Phnom Penh and the request for power offered to the Head of the Supreme National Border Council (SNBC)*

... May I take this opportunity to speak to our new graduates of laws and economics on two issues that my reactions was anticipated. I bring this matter up today because of the audience and the place are right for such a topic to be discussed. First I would say a few words about public order in the capital city of Phnom Penh.

tion here, not only the divider that is small, even the Independence Monument, which is huge and standing right in the middle of the roundabout was knocked in with sudden and far-heard noise of brakes. So, divider is not the cause of the problem, but driver's behaviors and/or his drunkenness driving should be the guilt.

... In relation to this remark, I heard police Gen. Heng Peo responded to the Free Asia radio reporter that it was because Samdech Hun Sen builds many good roads, while people also  
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... About two weeks ago there was a remark that the city is plagued by traffic accidents because of the recent installation of dividers along the main roads. Let me have your atten-

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two kids died from drowning a year in crossing the river to school. This to me is a matter of life of our people so it is to be taken seriously.

... Having processed the given information I contacted the Ministry of Economy and Finance to review the allocated budget for infrastructure and other columns from which money could be readjusted for the sake of constructing the Bailey bridge over the Pursath river. It was fortunate that we already had the Chinese-made Bailey at disposal in the Ministry for Rural Development. The engineering team moved into the area on March 15 and it was March 18 that the Governor of Pursath, HE Chhay Sareth together with the engineering team celebrated the groundbreaking ceremony. In just three months (March 18 – June 18, 2005) the bridge is done.

... What I should say as my impression to this achievement today is that the engineering teams of the Royal Cambodian Armed Forces, the Ministry for National Defense and the Infantry Armed Forces have all been the forces for final intervention of the Prime Minister. As is said by HE General Khvan Siem, the cost of the construction of the bridge, using own engineering skills, is Riel 2,930 million.

... We would not be able to achieve it with this amount of money. The feasibility study alone would cost us about US\$ 200,000. That is why some say that foreign assistance to Cambodia always went back out half or even more than half the amount declared given. If we do not agree with the conditions they set, we would not be able to get the assistance. What is worse is we would not have a bridge in place today, but may be more than a year or so.

... That is why I used to say for the retarded projects that we are

waiting for the donors to take back their money. Having said so I do not mean to criticize the donors at all but to illustrate as to why I like to have things done by the Cambodian, when we can. Taking this opportunity I wish to express my sincere appreciation to the engineering team and their work forces as well as the people of the area for their efforts and contribution making the bridge construction possible in such a short time.

... More ferryboat owners ceased their business today but I am sure they would in the near future convert their service from ferry to boats for tourists. To attract tourists to this place I think a song should be written and melody should be composed “visiting the Kravanh (mountain area),” as in the old day we had a song “visiting the Sampeo mountain” in Battambang province.

... What is remarkable is that the river has water in both rainy and dry seasons while in rainy season the water current is strong and some of the people could never cross the river for many reasons. I used to live in hardships in area prone to flood. I understand these difficulties completely. This is a remote place so I think there might not be many who come to give you promises, which normally are empty.

... The bridge is now in place without any promises made from our part. In addition to the bridge, we also have solar energized lighting and I would urge the local authority to take care of them as they have to cover the cost for repairing or replacing them in the future. Another important factor, as this is a forest area, the heavy load transportation which would lead to the damage of the bridge should be taken to serious consideration. We already had a damage case of the Bailey bridge caused by over-loaded transport in Kompong Cham's Rokar Khnor bridge.

... Let me now address Satre commune on rice seed issue. We now have agreed to cultivate the IR rice species in replacement of unspecified rice species and we have agreed to cultivate and harvest rice in water rather than having no rice to harvest. The spill from the Pursath river would not last more than a few days.

... I have just visited the commune of Sangke, and instructed HE Lim Kean Hor of the Ministry of Water Resources and Meteorology to dig a canal and to provide two mobile water pumps and machines. I also instructed a set of the Hun Sen brand-0.5 meter water pump to be sent and installed here as the Hun Sen Pump Station 48. Today we have the achievement of the bridge and the major canal for our people in the area.

... Some people may scoffed of me flying to and fro and they may be told that I visited one bridge construction out of about more than thirty bridge construction sites all over the country, one water pump station out of hundreds of them throughout the country, etc. These people are mainly compared to what a comedian says “the flattered” as they have to flatter about their record of democracy and blamed others as undemocratic so that their actions could be kept alive by foreign sponsorship. Some foreigners like spending money so as the country's leadership is being scolded.

... I have made it clear in the Cabinet's meeting yesterday that anyone discuss about setting up a provisional Government would have to face arrest because I consider this as a move to launching a coup. The country is in need of building roads, canals, schools, hospitals, Buddhist pagodas, etc. and not war and power thirst. With regard to the border issue, if they found places where the Cambodian land is lost, they

should point it out to the Government. When I returned from Japan, Samdech Krom Preah called me on phone and told me that in the near future a prince, whom I do not need to mention his name here, will organize a large insurgency on count of failing to solve the border issue. I also asked Samdech Krom Preah to warn the conspirator for doing so.

... Samdech Krom Preah and I agreed with one another that they would start with restlessness of border issue and lead to a turmoil. The contemporary world is talking about peace and development, and not anything on the contrary. My rhetorical question is how could they mobilize insurgency at the time when people enjoy peace? Take for instance this area traveling to and fro through here used to be very life threatening danger because of the presence of the Khmer Rouge.

... As we now have peace throughout the country I would tolerate no excuse for starting a war. All I have said so far has been to avert bloodshed, as it had been too much since 1970. Will we let our blood to shed again? One should turn to people's votes for victory and I am now a voted-in power holder by the people, and I would tolerate no one for the attempt to plunder this power.

... I may need to warn regarding this issue that under my power there has not been any incidents as the Eun Tropeang Kraloeung (the death sentence of a person name Preap Eun in Tropeang Kraloeung of Kompong Speu province), and more so in the Kravanh district... It is absurd that in this contemporary world, leaders making efforts of construction of roads, bridges, schools, hospitals, water canals, etc. are named diktats, while those bombarding on other countries, are coined democrats...■



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improve their living condition proven by their increased number of car uses leading to the jam of traffic everyday. If we were to have a situation like in 1979, when everyone walked instead of driving, we may not have a traffic problem like today. I would accept the responsibility of building new roads and creating an environment in which more cars are bought and used by our people, but I would not accept to keep our people living in the 1979 situation, which there were no traffics indeed, but also no food to eat.

... Let me now turn to power issue. Samdech Krom Preah (Norodom Ranaridh) and I have taken the efforts to propose for the establishment of the Supreme National Border Council (SNBC) with Samdech Preah Norodom Sihanouk as its Chairman. The proposal was then signed by HM the King Norodom Sahmoni, outlining clearly its role and duty.

... The National Assembly, the Senate, the three main political parties with seats in the National Assembly have been requested to assign a representative to the SNBC. It is absurd that in its meeting, some have requested for the power offer to the Chairman of the SNBC, I stress -- not Samdech Preah Norodom, but some people driven by their personal or clan interests, who have demanded so. I was talking to Samdech Krom Preah twice on the phone clarifying this matter and to stress the importance of leaving the work to be done by the Government.

... This is Constitutional issue. Whether or not we keep the current Constitution, which I think is very well balanced by the fact that the King rules but not reign, power comes from people through the National Assembly, or the parliamentary regime.

... Taking political development in the country, despite previous

stalemates after the elections, Cambodia always come out of problems without having had to establish a provisional Government. I would make clear to all that Cambodia would allow no provisional Government, and there will only be one formal Government, and it will continue to rule if the new Government is not yet in the making. Any move for a provisional Government is tantamount to a coup, which would bring about legal actions to be taken against immediately.

... This recalls me of a man who proposed to Samdech Preah Norodom Sihanouk to take power from Samdech Krom Preah, at that time the first Prime Minister, and me, at that time the second Prime Minister, while the man himself would take the actual leadership. This analogy appears to have resurfaced. One should go back and study the Constitution of the Kingdom of Cambodia, while refreshing all existing power system in the world.

... One may have to decide on three options – 1) should we keep the current Constitution as it is, the Constitutional parliament, liberal democratic and pluralism, and 2) should we suspend the current Constitution, the political parties, and all power will have to come only from the King, which to my mind is outdated, and 3) should we once and for all amend the Constitution, as I once said in Kompong Cham's Koh Sotin district, and call for a new election.

... This option costs dearly as we no longer have the Kingdom or the King. This is the move to give power to the President. However, above all else, I would suggest that we keep on the Constitution, the Constitutional monarchy and pluralism.

... Well as is said the move was not initiated from the Chairman of the SNBC but from those

driven by mounted interests. It is ridiculous to have come up with such a statement that Cambodia maintains only 120,000 square Kilometers, and then 140,000 square Kilometers. How could this territory be chipped away so easily?

... The map, as is said by them, shows no loss of land but it happened in reality. If they are aware of where the land is lost, they should come and indicate to the Government the coordination on which the territory is lost. I have warned all members of the meeting that they should not make border issue a political contest.

... I would warn the power- and interest-driven groups behind this move to be cautious of their actions as I would not tolerate a coup at all. As for the land, Cambodia lost to its neighbors since before Hun Sen's birth. Take for instance some of our land was traded for some women by Jaya Chedha II, what would they do on this count? As of now I have acquired more documents, especially the recent publication of the Cambodian history by the French protectorate in 1914. We all must take a good look into this publication to get the matter into light.

... May I humbly report to HM the King as well as the King Father who chairs the SNBC that what I have just said is basically responding to those ill-will people who would see their interest and power driven behind the call for power offer to the Chairman of the SNBC, because of which there could be some misunderstanding from the people in general on the role of the King Father.

... My only wish in this clarification is to get the Government free from repression by inappropriate use of influence of the King Father, which could lead to more trouble for the country... ■



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Sarun, in the 1980s and 1990s, a number of works have been done already.

... If I was not mistaken, in its fifth Congress, the Cambodian people's Party had in its resolution listed a bunch of policies regarding the fishery issues in general, fish culture in particular, as if we would like to diversify the sources of protein from fish. It was from that time that actions had been taken to mobilize fish culture, first of all in the province of Svay Rieng. Later on we have this method of culturing fish in rice fields, which according to successive reports by HE Chan Sarun, Takeo province proved to be a successive story.

... What remains to be questionable for all of us in relation to the destruction of fish and fish breeding grounds are over-fishing and use of illegal and forbidden fishing tools. Take for instance in 2003-04 the flood level was insufficiently high leading to fall of the fish catch. However, in 2004-05, fish catch increases as flood level seemed to have reached favorably high level. But the catches in the two years mentioned would not be sufficient for an evaluation to be made on causes to the low catch in 2003-04 and high catch in 2004-05. I would urge the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries and, especially the Fishery Department, to continue its research to find out these causes, as I have seen that evaluations had been made so far on just some aspects of the issue.

... In general our people give their account of natural judgment on low or high catch of fish based on superstition that it would vary from year to year without scientific explanation. Here we have to look into this matter with scientific management and conservation. It is very likely still that fish catch this year, despite the fact that some fish species would continue to

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nurture high population, will see that some would definitely be less. Because of severe drought this year, and of and on over the past ten years as is mentioned in the report of HE Chan Sarun, certain species of fish take for instance snakehead fish, etc. would suffer a big blow on its population. Most of the lakes which conserve this kind of fish have dried up, despite sporadic rains. Shallow water ways compounded the problem.

... Some lakes dried and became dry-season rice field instead of fish breeding ground. Actions have been taken to conserve fish by means of keeping those conservation systems deep and desilting. The Mekong river system from its origin to its flow end into the sea, parts of which have been shallow and stuck. As I will leave the country on July 3 for the second summit of the heads of states and Governments of the Greater Mekong Sub-region's riparian states in the Chinese Yunnan's Kunming. The first summit was convened in Phnom Penh in 2002.

... With efforts made by Cambodia, the Mekong River Commission which in those days registered only four countries – Laos, Thailand, Cambodia and Vietnam, with the support of the Asian Development Bank, we have come to the establishment of the Greater Mekong Sub-region summit, which also include Myanmar and China. In a recent press article, I have read about impacts from the construction of dams in the upper part of the Mekong in China and the deepening driveway for navigation down the Mekong system based on the Agreement reached by four countries – China, Myanmar, Lao and Thailand. In its conclusive remark, the article gives its analysis that Myanmar gives less attention to the Mekong river because they have small number of people living along the water way. As for Thailand, the article said he is supporting China, while Hun

Sen considers China a priority in his foreign policy. Vietnam has been taking reserved position on this matter.

... I remember that in the ASEAN + China meeting in 2000 HE Premier of China Ju Rongji informed the meeting that China had reached an Agreement with Myanmar, Lao and Thailand, in deepening the water way for navigation down the river system. In that instance I reacted quickly for due inspection and consideration to be given on environmental condition for riparian countries down the stream. We then had successive explanations from China and we finally had sent a delegation of the five riparian states to visit China to study what might be the impacts on the Mekong. We have taken a coordinative approach vis-à-vis the Mekong of concerned interests. I hope that China as a country on upper Mekong would not neglect interests of riparian states down the stream.

... It has proven positive result as so far we have coordinated different interests vis-à-vis the Mekong without getting stuck with any conflicts at all. Coordination efforts have all been done and documents will be laid down for signing in the Kunming's GMS second summit. We should also be aware of the fact that some also raised this issue for the sake of environmental consideration but also hindering close cooperation among the riparian states of the Mekong. In my prepared text I have mentioned clearly that the greater Mekong sub-region would not be turning into a free trade area but more likely to be a cooperative zone.

... Previously in Thailand they wish to divert water current of the Mekong for irrigation purpose, but Cambodia disagreed. When Laos planned to build its hydro power, not only the Lao authority, but also the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank, whose loans are

given to Laos for the construction, have also come to consultation with Cambodia before the project was given the green light. Only in Pol Pot time that in its five-year plan, Pol Pot planned to build a dam across the Bassac, a trunk of the Mekong, and divert water for irrigation in Kompot province.

... Coming back to our fish situation, I would have your attention that most of the water reservoir, no matter how deep and never-dried water resource, have mostly dried out this year, while rain has yet to come in plenty. As we have taken measures for natural disaster, attention should also be made to prevent possible and further man-made disaster. Man-made disaster would eventually be destructive to our fish availability. I would therefore advise our people to use no illegal fishing means to catch fish especially in the no-fishing season. One fish has a reproductive capacity of 500,000 fish at a time. If we eat a fish this time of the year is like we destroy 500,000 fish as well. I also recall that about 56% of the fishing area of more than half a million hectares have been opened for people's fishing access since 2000-01.

... I have to admit once again of the three things that I was late to instruct reforms. First, the land reform in the 1980s, which I later understood that I should have done it earlier. Second, I was late in introducing reform in the forest sector, and eventually left the forest sector to suffer anarchic loggings in between 1993-98. I proclaimed the fight against the anarchy only on October 22, 1998. Third, it is the fisheries reform that I was late to declare. I was encouraged by the fact that France was forced to re-configure the fishing zone in Prey Veng in face of protest by the Cambodian fishermen. It was inappropriate that we used the fishing zone mapping in the early 1910s or 1920s for a situation in 2000, when we

have more population... What remains to be done is that we have to set up about 375 fishermen communities in accordance with sub-decree that allowed our people to be the master of their own resources. I would once again urge our people not to fish in time of fishing prohibition, while not destroying inundated forest. We will continue to release more fish into the natural water systems, including in the water canals and other irrigation systems.

*Samdech Hun Sen offered a building of six classrooms to the College of Kandeang, two buildings of twelve classrooms to the Primary School of Babaong, with many others that local CPP leaders have brought for the province earlier...■*

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there needs to have a correct policy from the Government side... Political mistakes would bring about obstruction to the people's efforts for development. We had had so many examples of this in the recent history of Cambodia – where because of political shortcomings Lon Nol plunged the country into war, while Pol Pot created a genocide landscape for the country. As of now the Royal Government's policy has been to help our people draw benefit as much as they possibly can from the improvement and construction of infrastructures ranging from roads, bridges, schools, hospitals, Buddhist pagodas to the imposing of no tax on land and various other items just yet.

*On that occasion Samdech Hun Sen offered six tons of steel for roofing to the pagoda of Munnii Sophea, Riels 7.5 million to the pagoda of Preah Put Andet, to level a school yard for the Primary School of Samraong Choeung, a school building raised above the flood level with ten classrooms to the College of Kompong Luong, to finish the construction of a concrete bridge for the People of Kompong Oh commune...■*

Today I have great pleasure and honor to join you all, leaders, commanders, deputy commanders and representatives of all sections of Royal Cambodian Armed Forces (RCAF) in the closing of the stock-taking workshop on the achievement of five-year work, 2000-2004, and direction for the next five years, 2005-2009, of the RCAF.

I am proud and consider the workshop organized by the Ministry of Defense and Supreme Command Headquarter to be important and as a contribute to the implementation of **Policy Agenda** and **Rectangular Strategy** of the third legislative of National Assembly, since the workshop took stock and evaluated the main outcomes attained together by all units of RCAF in the implementation of five-year military reform, 2000-2004, and thoroughly discussed a new direction for the next five-year plan in line with the Royal Government's policy agenda.

On behalf of the Royal Government of Cambodia and my own self, may I express my sincere applaud to the participants of the workshop that have actively participated and I agree to the stock taking report on RCAF five-year reform, 2000-2004, and next five-year plan, 2005-2009, as well as the evaluation and recommendation from H.E. **Tea Banh** and H.E. **Nhek Bun-chai**, Deputy Prime Minister and Co-Ministers of National Defense, and H.E. **Ke Kim Yan**, RCAF Commander in Chief of RCAF. This reflects the historical mission fulfilled by heroic commanders, deputy commanders, military officers, non-commission officers and all sorts of military forces of RCAF in the causes of protecting national independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity, peace, political stability and development.

The Royal Government of Cambodia expresses warm and honest appreciation to those achievements attained by all units of RCAF for its five-year works. I

**16 June 2005**  
**On RCAF's Five-Year Achievements and Directions**

would like to convey my greeting to handicap militants, hospitalized militants and families of life-sacrificed soldiers and I would like to bless them great happiness.

Taking this opportunity, on behalf of the Royal Government, the Ministry of Defense and RCAF's Commander in Chief, I would like to welcome military attaché of friendly countries who are present in this workshop and through them may I express thank to governments, armed forces and people of friendly countries that have supported the reform, development and the strengthening of the RCAF.

If we re-examine the five-year, 2000-2005, RCAF reform, which was disseminated in RCAF conference on 19<sup>th</sup> April 2000, we can proudly confirm the achievement of the reform; even though we have faced some difficult challenges. During my address to the RCAF conference last five years, I notice that the RCAF reform consists of **work-axis** or **two-line work**:

**First:** 55,000 soldiers were demobilized and conformed to the plan.

**Second:** the strengthening of remaining forces to be disciplined soldiers by maintaining at an appropriate number with high quality and capacity based on restructuring of administrative structure; strengthening of leadership, giving order through the chain of command; promoting training, discipline and skill; and reducing size and number of units.

The 2-day workshop highlighted all achievements of the five-year reform. Therefore, I am not going to bring back what have been examined and discussed. However, I would take this opportunity to request

commanders, deputy commanders, military officers, non-commission officers and all sorts of military forces of RCAF to continue your efforts to expand the achievements by concentrating on the following practical works:

**First** - Continuing the implementation of **Policy Agenda** and **Rectangular Strategy** of the Royal Government, the plan of RCAF reform based on Defense White Paper as a compass for concepts and general status for militant of RCAF, and some realistic strategies of the Royal Government's policy in national defense.

**Second** - Enhancing the political spirit of all militants through psychological training in particular from the mini-book on **8 must and 6 must not rules** in order to build up motional principle, to strictly follow discipline, to be courageous in all circumstances for the sake of motherland, and to respect laws of the nation, military regulations and commands, democracy doctrine, human rights, high morality and dignity and the respect of civil people.

**Third** - All soldiers have to be neutral to politics in their duties in which they must not serve any political activity by using its duties and state's military equipment as stipulated in general status of RCAF. We must continue to restructure the forces, structure, rank and position as well as strengthening efficiency of commanding.

**Fourth** - Promoting training both inside and outside the country as planned in human resources development to transform RCAF to be professional aiming at developing capacity in commanding, strategies, tactics and technical skills.

**Fifth** - Continuing to ensure the supplies to RCAF such as uni-

form, fuel and medicines as determined and based on actual ability of the Royal Government with high responsibility and active innovation. It should be combined with cultivations to elevate living standard and health care of each militant. At the same time, we should pay attention on building military bases and appropriate infrastructure network in each institution and all units based on the state budget, the domestic and international fund mobilization and the affordability of the units.

**Sixth** - Continuing to implement the government's policy to sacrificed and handicap, demobilized, retire and lost-capable soldiers. The policy work is really important and it can have an impact political commitment and mission's fulfillment of RCAF. Within this framework, we should continue to pay attention on professional training and creating favorable condition to improve the living standard of demobilized soldiers who have been reintegrated back into civil society. In this regard, all ministries, institutions and relevant units must put all-out efforts and close cooperation to effectively tackle soldiers' political regime.

**Seventh** - Keep going to strengthen the national defending arrangement, especially along borders by connecting the national defense to the economic development, paying attention on building up boundary defending armed forces and organizing people living along the borders in order to develop those areas as much as possible.

**Eighth** - All institutions and units of the RCAF must keep cooperating with the national police, municipal-provincial headquarters and all level of authorities in order to protect public security and order through contributing to fight against crimes and offenses, such as armed robbery, murder, kidnapping, cutting crime network, drug smuggling, women and child trafficking,

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24 June 2005 (Unofficial Translation)

## Selected Responses to the Press on SNBC

*After the Cabinet's meeting on June 24<sup>th</sup>, Samdech Hun Sen gave some responses to the press on power issue of the Supreme National Border Council (SNBC).*

... First of all I would like to share with all of you my pleasure to have the King Father and the Queen Mother returned to Cambodia from their medical check-up in the People's Republic of China. You know that I did know about comments made by the King Father, and the declaration by a group with vested interest of their repetitive remarks that I have launched the Constitutional coup in the face of HM the King. I wish to take this opportune moment to clarify those issues of concern.

... First, the amendment of the Royal Decree (to establish the National Authority on Border Issues - NABI) that was issued in 1996 for a revision with regard to the current situation. It was signed by then HM the King Samdech Preah Norodom Sihanouk. Samdech Krom Preah Norodom Ranaridh and I, who were at the time co-Prime Ministers, and then the First Prime Minister and the Second Prime Minister, were the NABI's co-chairmen. As we have now evolved into a situation where there is only one Prime Minister, we decided to realign the NABI with the new situation, while including a number of operational officers into the authority.

... With the above information, I would urge those problem-seeking people to once again study the Constitution, the Law on Operation and Conduction of the Council of Ministers to find out what is the power of the Royal Government. As the Prime Minister, I would not urge anyone to add more power to me, while I do not expect my power to be reduced whatsoever. I wish that from now on if they were to make any comments

about the power of the Prime Minister or the Royal Government as a whole, they should seriously study the Constitution and the Law on Operation and Conduction of the Council of Ministers.

... On issue of duty performance relationship between the Supreme National Border Council (SNBC) and the National Authority on Border Issues and the Royal Government of Cambodia, I wish to clarify the matter sounded out by an organization that the Royal Government has violated the power authority of SNBC. They suggested that SNBC is the supreme body of authority because it is headed by the former King, the Representatives of the Senate, the National Assembly, the Royal Government and the three political parties. My response on this matter is that even though the body is represented by Heads of those institutions themselves, it would not be made more powerful because it is stipulated nowhere in the Constitution.

... The Article 7 of the Constitution stipulates that HM the King reigns but does not rule. In the Article 17, it stipulates clearly that the Article 7 that says HM the King reigns but does not rule is irreversible. Now they demand that power be given to the former King as the representative of HM the King as Head of SNBC. I would warn them they cannot in anyway demand power be given to the former King, even if they would do so for the present King, they tended to be unconstitutional. As a matter of fact, the former King as well as HM the King has never demanded power, but those who have vested interests did. Cambodia is not Nepal in any way, where their King stripped the Government of its power. The King of Cambodia does not

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the conflicts appear, we should together solve by basing on the principles of law and peaceful mean.

RCAF needs the assistances from others countries and international community in various fields. This is not only benefit to the soldiers, but contribute to national reconstruction. It needs to be ready to participate in peacekeeping cooperation in United Nation framework. Royal Government's essential goals in the third term of legislative is the gradual reconstructions of a Cambodian society disposing of peace, stability, social order, firm democratic practice, human right and dignity, sustainable development and equity, connecting cells, high educated people and culture of dignity, good standard of living and harmonious life both in family and society.

In this spirit, the Royal Government holds firmly the solidarity and unity policy in order to mobilize the whole national forces from all strata, all political tendencies both inside and outside the countries under the motto of "Nation, Religion, King" for the sake of forming a unanimous solidarity for the reconstruction, national defense and social achievement of the Kingdom of Cambodia in the context of national independence, sovereignty, territorial solidarity, peace, democracy and prosperity. The Royal Government's political platform and its rectangular strategy are designed basing upon national poverty reduction strategy, second economic and social development plan and Cambodia's millennium development goals, which serves as the road map for action plan and the measurement of government's outcomes toward the essential targets. The Rectangular Strategy has clearly defined the peace strengthening and keeping, political stability and social order, which is a covering part of implementing the Rectangular

lar Strategy. Good governance is internal core, while the military reform in generally RCAF reform and in particular part of good governance. Besides, this reform is designed not for show, but is targeted to deeply operate in order to enhance the quality and effectiveness of all fields.

I would like to bold out that the implementation of five-year reform program 2000-2004 of the Royal Armed Forces (RAF) has been greatly achieved in strengthening and reforming the RAF structure. Nonetheless, there remain challenges ahead of us that we need to confront and resolve such as: demobilization, building up defense capacity at border lines, cracking down delinquency and crimes, preparing organization and improving roles, duties, psychological education, training, ensured budget and technical equipments as well as improving soldiers' livelihood, especially their limited salary.

For this reason, the Ministry of Defense, and the General Headquarters of the Armed Forces must continue to overcome difficulties and mobilize forces to implement the strategic reform plan of the RAF in the years to come and to achieve the following targets:

1. Continue to clearly verify soldiers' enrollment and implement demobilization process as planned by coordinating with the Cambodian Council for Demobilization of the Armed Forces, concerned institutions and international organizations.
2. Continue to build and strengthen the RAF to become an united national army with adequate enrollment and sufficient capacity in order to defend our independence, sovereignty and full territorial integrity, to defend all achievements of our nation, the constitution and the people. The

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13 June 2005 (Unofficial Translation of Selected Comments)

**On Achievements in the Pagoda of Chan Borei Vong**

... First of all I wish to offer my humble respect to our people who have all been gathering here in the inaugurating celebration of the achievements in the Buddhist temple of Chan Borei Vong. I am glad to return to the pagoda after my previous visit back in 2001 to join with our people to extend the best wishes upon the birthday anniversary of Samdech patriarch Teb Vong. I wish to underline that I am glad to see that after four years the pagoda has scored so many achievements under the leadership of the venerable monk Nay Chroek and followers. Today we have eight achievements to put into use – the roof of a temple, a concrete Buddhist hall, seven concrete residential buildings, a common residence, two Buddhist school buildings, a library, five entrances to the pagoda and the fence around the pagoda compound. The total cost of the achievements was US\$ 828,562.

... The pagoda has been in its 142<sup>nd</sup> years of age as it was first built in 1863 under the reign of Samdech Preah Norodom, after Samdech Preah Ang Duong. Due to unspecified circumstances, the pagoda has evolved with its name changing four times already. It was the second time of name change that the pagoda was called Chan Borei Vong or Blossoming in the country or the cool moon light. In between 1979 and 1984, the pagoda was called Chey Aram or the pagoda born of the victory on January 7. It was from 1984 to the present that the pagoda has reinstated its second name Chan Borei Vong. As of now we have in all a sum of more than 4 thousand pagodas throughout the country as residence of around 60,000 monks. This is in contrast to 1979 when the country started from without any pagoda or Buddhist monks left after the fall of the Khmer Rouge.

... One could come up with any sorts of evaluation to the development of the Buddhist world in relation to the secular world. However I wish to mention three of them that I think are basically important as the two – the Buddhist and the Secular worlds could never go disconnectedly. First, answering to the question why the Buddhist world develop so fast, it is because there is a strong belief in Buddhism among the people of Cambodia, as it would not be standing here if no one believes in it.

... This recalls me of a philosophy that Samdech Chea Sim, Samdech Heng Samrin and I have been putting out in response to the question how long Buddhism would last in Cambodia that Buddhism would last until the people cease their belief. Second, main reason that makes the Buddhist world develop this fast is because there is a high degree of solidarity which culminated in the spirit of resource sharing for the construction of necessary buildings for the pagoda. Third, it concludes that the living condition of the people has been made better in the secular world as they could set aside their resources for the Buddhist reconstruction efforts.

... If we were to be as poor as in 1979, could one imagine where can we make this much of money to build achievements in the pagoda of Chan Borei Vong? This clearly tells that the living conditions of our people are nothing like those in 1979. Some people said Cambodia is getting poor day after day while rebuking the Royal Government of not doing anything at all. It is unimaginable when this is said by someone – who had been living under the Khmer Rouge and had been sacked from his post as the commune head of Toek Laak (Phnom

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have a thirst for power, and even if they do they would not be allowed to by the Constitution.

... On the contrary if anyone would want to traverse this path, I would use all means no matter what it costs to defend the present Cambodian Constitution. They cannot demand power for the King, while the Constitution is not subject to any changes at all. Answering to the question how would the two – SNBC and NABI -- work with one another, I think what was suggested by Dr. Lao Mong Hay is no different from what I have affirmed. SNBC is a consultative organ who would feed in information and suggestions to NABI for taking concrete actions. Take for instance, the Royal Government would be the one to conduct negotiation on Cambodia's behalf or to go into signing agreements with foreign countries. The National Assembly is the one who delegates the power to the Royal Government to do so because before signing a treaty with any country or institution, the Royal Government will have to first ask the National Assembly for approval, and last but not least the signature from HM the King.

... As of now you would see that demanding power for SNBC is illegal or has it been stipulated any where in the Constitution that the Council is the body that ratifies, negotiates, signs or installs demarcation markers...? I am sure as far as the issue is concerned, both the former King and HM the King is well aware of.

... Based on the fact that the former King of Cambodia reigned 63 years, he would not be less knowledgeable on the matter. The problem here is that we have people who have proven themselves more Sihanoukist than the former King himself, or more Royalist than the monarchy... As I have clari-

fied above there would not be any overlaps of works between the two because SNBC would be the one to give consultation and suggestion to the Royal Government's NABI, while the Royal Government would be the one to act at operational level. After all, it is the Royal Government, and not SNBC, who would delegate power to NABI to conduct negotiations. Therefore I would conclude that at any price I would defend the Constitution, while demanding power for the former King and/or HM the King would be unconstitutional to the Articles 7 and 17. It is unacceptable...■

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RAF will become the strong force that actively contributes to re-building our nation, rescuing people in time of disasters and is ready in case of need to join the peace keeping force of the United Nations.

In short, what I have stated as recommendations above reflect well the main achievements of the RAF from the last five years and they bold out challenges and tasks that are laid down ahead of us in a long journey to overcome. In this sense, I urge the management of the Ministry of National Defense, the General Headquarters of the RAF, commanders at all level and soldiers to bring their physical and mental efforts in successfully implementing the targets set forth in the five-year plan 2005-2009. At the same time, I urge all ministries and institutions of the RG, especially representatives of ministries and institutions today present in this workshop to closely coordinate with each other and support the RAF in achieving their noble duty by considering the RAF as our family and servant. This is for the righteous interest of our nation and people. In the end, I wish you all, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, the five Gems of Buddhist blessing.■

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Penh) – on the count of stealing rice.

... Talking about this it reminds me of a letter sent to me from the Pagoda of Chan Borei Vong that they would not send the pagoda's boat to the boat race ceremony in Phnom Penh as they saw that the political situation was in a difficult moment. I am grateful to their understanding especially a sentence that reads – when our parents are in hardship, children should not take to their joy. During the political stalemate I was under constant insults.

... As a response to the political move to work with anyone except Hun Sen, on December 29, I made clear that I would hold no talk with those politicians either. On January 18, I asked HE Hor Namhong to visit HM the King Samdech Preah Norodom Sihanouk if we could opt for a scenario of a two-party coalition Government. HM responded it is alright if one they could guarantee a two third majority. On January 19, on his way to Beijing, HM said it is up to you (children) if you want to have a coalition of two, and between whatever party you may choose to. It was exactly what we were waiting for. This gave us a conclusion that on November 5, 2003, the coalition of three was born, while on November 6, the triplets died. But there was no announcement of the death and the final ceremony was held on January 19. Some politicians – who are now in foreign countries – accused the pagoda of Chan Borei Vong to be a place from where a demonstration against HM the King would be planned and organized.

... The self-exiled politicians have requested for a letter of assurance from Hun Sen for their return to Cambodia. I would not move in this direction. Samdech Krom Preah Norodom Ranaridh said he would grant a meeting after the person sorted

out with the court on existing charges. My position on this matter is of no difference.

... On count of prolongation of the political stalemate vis a vis the establishment of the Royal Government, and it was in those days that Samdech Patriarch Tep Vong went to and from Beijing to beg for HM the King not to abdicate, I was prepared to stay as a stand-by Government no matter how long it would take. However, I requested everybody to pay attention to what was then written by HM the King that “if Norodom Sihanouk passed away, Cambodia will become a republic automatically, because there was no Throne Council” at that time.

... If HM the King did abdicate at the time Cambodia could have become the Republic already in reality because prior to the existence of the Throne Council, there was a Prime Minister, the Presidents of the National Assembly and the Senate, the two Buddhist Patriarchs, a two third majority in the National Assembly, while there was no law in existence. In fact I overtly said at that time the one who would score a real loss would be the Royalists.

... On issue of poverty alleviation policy, I would tell you a discussion between three elderly persons in Battambang province. Person A asked why do we have what we have today? Person B responded it is because we have made efforts. I agree with Person B completely. As of now the strategy to reduce poverty would score a success only if there is effort made from every individual, family and village to the whole country. Then Person C said, but in the regime of Pol Pot, we did great efforts why we did not have enough to eat? To synthesize the two hypothesis we could draw out two important lessons – one, every individual has to make efforts, and two,

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money laundering, deforestation, land encroachment, natural resources over exploitation, cultural heritage destruction, and immoral culture dissemination. For achieving these tasks, all military unit of the RCAF need to:

1. *Tightening the managing and controlling explosive weapons; seizing and taking legal measures on trading weapons smugglers to build people trust in social security and social stability; and especially participating in enforcing the Law on Management, Using, Trading, and Transporting Weapons that recently adopted by the National Assembly and submitted to the Senate.*

2. *Cooperating with local authorities and all competent authorities to strictly and constantly remove all form of illegal check points, or is called Kongtrol Chor Chous, that affects the rights of people and economy of our country.*

3. *Focusing seriously on cracking down offends on the sea and to protect natural resources in seabed.*

4. *Strengthening cooperation with national and international communities to prevent anarchy acts, terrorism and transnational crimes and to strictly prevent existing of political organization and illegal military forces that is a source of serious threatening to national security aiming at maintaining and strengthening to betterment security, public orders, social stability, and common security of human being in the world.*

**Ninth** - Continuing to contribute to the establishment of infrastructure, transportation systems such as bridges and roads to be in connection of all corner of Kingdom of Cambodia and to connect to the neighboring countries. This is a most affective way reduce poverty and difficulties of our people. More-

over, engineering unit of the RCAF has to pursue the close cooperation with the specialized institutions in rehabilitation and reconstruction the infrastructure and irrigation system, which were severe damaged by wars and natural disasters.

**Tenth** - Continuing to cooperate to clear land-mine for preventing people from mine accidents and making paddy fields available for the people to cultivate.

Meanwhile, we have to regularly reserve men, means and materials as well as capacity development training to timely and effectively rescue the people upon the occurring of natural disaster such as flood and drought. Furthermore, on behalf of Royal Government of Cambodia may I request our RCAF do not involve in any conflict with the people regarding land issues. For instance, if there were conflict between military and people on paddy fields, I would give that land to the people, who are landless for them to cultivate while military have to assist them. This is suitable to the word that goes “the soldiers are the people's children”

**Eleventh** - In order to bolster the strengthening of the spirit of solidarity and support for the armed forces, I have decided to bind good coalition between the state, all armed unities and state-owned enterprises as well as between local authorities and all armed unities. For this matter, I urge all state institutions and armed unities to effectively implement this measure.

**Twelfth** - Having to strengthen the unity and good cooperation with neighboring armies in the region and the world basing on the principles of equity, independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity for the mutual benefits and developing economy, technique and science. Continue to turn boundary line areas to be the centers of peace, unity, cooperation and development. In case

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