



23 August 2017—Samdech Techo Hun Sen Visited Workers in the Phnom Penh Special Economic Zone

## Meeting Over 16,000 Workers/Employees

(23 August 2017 — Unofficial Selection and Translation)

Today I am so happy to be able to meet our workers for the first time in the Phnom Penh Special Economic Zone (PPSEZ), though it is not the first time for me to come here. I had been here three times before – to inaugurate PPSEZ, to launch the anniversary of Minebea Company, and to put into operation the Coca Cola Company. This is my fourth time here but the goal is to meet with our workers.

### Monitor Industrial Progresses and What Else to Do

Previously, people saw me going to meet farmers in rice fields or along water canals, dams, while the Royal Government was implementing agricultural policy to produce and export rice. It is now time that we are implementing our policy for the development of industrial sector for 2015-2025. It is high time that I have to meet our workers in factories in the whole country to monitor and review progresses in industrial sector and figure out what remains to be done for the sake of our workers. We are doing this not only for those in garment but workers in general.

I thank the Ministry of Labor

and Vocational Training, representatives of the PPSEZ, factories, and enterprises for the get-together here today with our workers. Workers that are busy in one factory can listen to my audio speech too. They work and listen at the same time [...]

### Salary No Less than 153 USD

I have asked workers over there. I found out that they earn a minimum salary over 153 USD now. They said their salary is 184 USD, and they could earn over 200 USD if including other benefits. The important point here is that we will do everything we can to ensure that salary of our garment and apparel workers are not less than 153 USD. However, if factories could increase their salary to 200 USD or even 300 USD, we would be very happy and give them a big applause. I also do not mean that factories who pay their workers now at 180 USD or 190 USD to pay less to meet the minimum salary as defined and agreed upon by the Royal Government, employers, and ILO – what they call tripartite mechanism.

It is a great pleasure for PPSEZ  
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## Cambodia Royal Academy New Leadership

(11 August 2017 — Unofficial Selection and Translation)

### Royal Academy of Cambodia Progress in Nearly 20 Years

I am so happy today to join with all of you to bestow upon four new full right academicians – HE Aun Pommuniroth, HE Hang Chuon Naron, HE Hing Thoraksi, and HE Chan Samnab, of the Royal Academy of Cambodia (RAC). I also take this opportune moment to congratulate new titles and roles of HE Aun Pommuniroth who will become President, and HE Hang Chuon Naron and HE Sok Touch, who will become Vice Presidents. I also congratulate HE Chan Samnab for his promotion to the position of Vice President of

the RAC. As for HE Khlot Thida, former President of RAC, is now taking up her role as my advisor. I am taking this chance to express my sincere thanks to her leadership, after her taking over from former President Som Samnang up to the present. Their efforts have brought RAC to the present progress in the past nearly twenty years.

It is true that RAC came into being under my premiership and people may see that it could be my own child. I am so sorry that in the past years, as a father, I have not paid enough attention on it. However, as you can see,

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## RUPP Graduation, Diploma Presenting

(14 August 2017 — Unofficial Selection and Translation)

### The Twenty-First Presence in RUPP

Today I am so happy to return once again to the Royal University of Phnom Penh (RUPP) to present 3,302 graduates with their diplomas. It is my 21<sup>st</sup> presence too [...]. I would like to take this opportune moment to express my pleasure for the progress achieved by RUPP. Frankly speaking, you all are my juniors and I say that not because I built here a library.

Everyone knows that RUPP was in ruin under Pol Pot regime, and (after we liberated the country) we put it back into operation with three different departments – a school of pedagogy, foreign language training institute, and a school of political science. In a later stage, we combined the three altogether.

In 1998, I registered as a student in RUPP to work on a bachelor

degree, and concerned level in order to proceed to my thesis for Ph D degree. I could be the first student of RUPP who had written a thesis.

You may want to check my book “Ten Years of Cambodia’s March.” It was my thesis to gain my bachelor degree at RUPP when HE Hang Chuon, the late father of HE Hang Chuon Naron, was Deputy Minister of Education, with HE Pen Navuth, the late father-in-law of HE Hang Chuon Naron, was Minister. I could recall that HE Academician Aun Pommuniroth, when he prepared his thesis in the former Soviet Union, also had reference to my book “Ten Years of Cambodia’s

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and I wish to affirm that though I am president of the Cambodia Development Council (CDC), which is in charge of investments, in order to ensure smooth works, I also take up leading position of PPSEZ, while HE Sok Chendasophea is the general secretary. All this is to ensure that PPSEZ would grow in a lively and progressing manner.

### **From Imperialism and Genocide to Win-win, Peace, Reconciliation and Unity**

Meeting our nephew and grandchildren workers today has proven the fruits of what I and other leaders have been doing for our country. We are the ones to have created such situation. Well, from where shall we start? Where were you before coming to SEZ, factories, enterprises, hotels, etc.? It is true that our country had gone through uncountable sufferings and tragedies. We had war of imperialist invasion. Then we suffered from the regime of genocide. We made our efforts altogether to win back our right to life and for the national revival. We finally bring back peace together with national reconciliation and national unity through implementation of win-win policy. You could have not been born yet but you may seek this knowledge from your parents and/or grandparents.

Though we had liberated our country, peace and war existed in parts of the country. We had to go through a time when parts of the country enjoyed peace and parts of it were at war. The situation had negative effect on our country reconstruction. We had the necessity to make more efforts to eliminate this state of country but many controlling factions. We need to unify our country. I think some of our workers in these factories could have understood it as some of them might have come from those places where war was imminent.

### **With Peace, More Factories, More Workers, More Exports**

Win-win policy allow various

factions to reconcile and our country to unite for the first time under one Constitution, one King, one Royal Government and one armed forces. This is our gold and diamond opportunity for our country. However, these successes are not falling to us from the sky. We are the ones to make it happen. Looking back to between 1997 and the present, things have rapidly changed. In 1997, we had only 64 garment factories and there were some 82,000 workers. Our exports recorded at over 200 million USD. At present, we have some 11,168 factories registered with the Ministry of Labor and Vocational Training in the whole country, where they employ 1,187,227 workers. Female workers are over 830,000 among them.

As for garment factories that we had only 64 in 1997, we now have 1,107 factories that employ over 740,000 workers. Exports value that earned over 200 million USD before has now reached over 7,000 million USD. Including other goods, Cambodian export ability could reach over 12 billion USD [...] we are talking billions not hundreds of millions as before. Our workers here for instance are not producing only for local market.

### **Industrial Development Policy to Draw World Class Factories for Local Resource**

HE Ith Sam Heng already mentioned about goods manufactured in PPSEZ are going to ASEAN countries, South Korea, Japan, China, India, Australia, European Union, the US, and to South Africa [...] it is possible because of our industrial sector development policy and we will promote it not only in garment, which generates over 7 billion USD. We are putting into practice our industrial sector development policy for 2015-2025 to attract investments for local resource processing and for adding value to products of Cambodia. We are also looking to attract high-tech industry, world-class ones, as I mention about the Minebea factory and technology, whose

production cater to needs everywhere in the world.

### **The Three “Don’ts” – Don’t Assist, Don’t Invest, and Don’t Buy**

You may wonder and ask a question to yourselves, whose efforts have given you jobs? This should bring us to two groups of people. I would call one of them the “Three Don’ts.” I call the other one the “Three Dos.” Let me explain about the Three Don’ts. You may judge whether they are for national and people interests. People in the “Three Don’ts” group would go everywhere in this world to tell other country not to give assistance to Cambodia. They did that at the Consultative Group Meeting on Cambodia. Secondly, they told those countries not to invest in Cambodia. While detesting Hun Sen, and being eager for power, they had gone this far to destroy their people’s living standard. Thirdly, they told other countries not to purchase any goods from Cambodia.

You may want to think about the “Three Don’ts” group. You may figure out whether what they had been doing is for the national interest. They deny our workers interest here. Have the “Three Don’ts” that they pursued served our workers interests? If those countries were to agree to do the three things as they requested – not to assist, not to invest, and not to purchase, would thousands upon thousands workers have jobs, personal incomes, and even contribution to their families’ development? [...]

### **The “Three Dos” – Beg for Assurances, Investments, Purchase of Goods (Trade)**

Fortunately, we have here the Three Dos group. What are they doing? They have been begging for assistance. This group has gone everywhere to seek for help with human resource training, infrastructural development, healthcare, etc. They would blame Hun Sen as a beggar but our country is poor. We are not shy to beg. When we are richer, later we will be able to reciprocate in kind to

other countries. We are providing assistance to foreign countries nowadays, as you can see, when we are sending our troops for the UN flagship peacekeeping operations.

Secondly, the group has been begging for investments. We have done many works, more than anyone could have imagined. I met with investors, for example Japanese investors, in Cambodia and in Japan, wherever we could to assure them to come to Cambodia. One of our productive results was when we have this PPSEZ established between local company of Lok Chumteav Lim Chhiv Huor and their Japanese partners. There are many Japanese factories here too. We also have here factories from America and other countries as well.

Investors are looking for favorable conditions – price of electricity and workers salary. We did the best we could to seek better pay for our workers on the one hand and to create favorable conditions required by investors on the other so that they would not move out of Cambodia. We pursue a policy to keep those ones we have and attract new comers.

Thirdly, the group begs other country to purchase our goods. We have asked countries to allow more imports from Cambodia. We asked them to impose no tax and/or reduce tax on imports so we can export in larger volume. We have been lucky that our markets expand and our exports to the US alone have stood at over three billion USD. We are picking up also roughly three billion USD from our exports to the European Union. Bilateral trade between Cambodia and Japan last year reached 1,500 million USD. Our trade volume with China this year aims to realize at five billion USD. Our trade volume with Thailand scored at over four billion USD and over three billion USD with Vietnam [...]

You may want to grade which group did a more successful job. It was because of the Three Dos that you are here and earn no

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we have moved the construction equipments in for opening of the construction site already. I am asking HE Sok Touch to find the best time to celebrate the Krong Pealy session (session held to seek permission from concerned spirits) to build an office building suitable for intellectuals who are going to work here.

What I have to say to HE Khlot Thida is that after the demise of Samdech Vibol Panha Sok An, the late President of the Academician Members Council, you have requested that I take up the position of the President of the Academy.

I think that would place you and me in a difficult situation. You are already in retirement a few years back now, considering your public function age. I would not be able to shoulder the jobs of an Honorary President at the same time as the President of RAC [...] after my discussion with Academician Sok Touch I have come to a decision.

I am seeking understanding from other academician members that I did not consult with them. I had to bring the matter to the attention of HM the King to bestow HE Aun Pommoniroth, HE Hang Chuon Naron full right academicians. The main idea of this plan is to resume position held by Samdech Vibol Panha Sok An, while I continue to be academician member.

### **HE Sok Touch to Lead RAC**

We are working at this stage to organize everything in accordance with the statute and regulation existed in the RAC concerning its roles and functions. Prior to my departure to Japan, I had seen that HE Hing Thoraksi appointed academician member.

After my trip, I approved the proposal from Academician Sok Touch to appoint Chan Samnop academician member and Vice President of RAC. We now have a whole body of the institution set up. Academician Aun Pommoniroth will be

chairman of the Academician members, HE Hang Chuon Naron and HE Sok Touch will be deputy chairmen. HE Sok Touch will also be permanent Vice President of RAC [...]

Please allow me to have your attentions on this point that you may see that three out of four Academicians here are educated in former the Soviet Union and only one in France. It is not discrimination.

I hope that in the time to come our academician members will continue to recruit members according to RAC's statute and formality. There will be 79 academician members in all. I would leave this job to academicians President, Vice President, and members to see what they will do on that [...]

What we should note here is we are reaping the fruits from trees that we planted some 38 years ago. This has brought me to a memory that when we liberated Phnom Penh, there were not many intellectuals left.

We had sought for them and put them all to whatever positions their expertise can be of help for the country. As then Foreign Minister I the worked hard with three people to build the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Every other institution also started with bare hands [...]

Whenever I was on a foreign trip, I never forget to as relevant countries for scholarships. In my meeting with then Foreign Minister of the former Soviet Union, Andrei Gromyko, who was then 72 years old, and I was 27 years old, I brought my request to his attention that Cambodia needed scholarships the most. That was why we could send many for education in the former Soviet Union, and in former East Germany, Hungary, Bulgaria, Poland, there later. Local training of human resource also continued [...]

### **Chance for Youth**

... We need to give chance to youth. We must allow those in junior positions to access chance to go up. Only we do that, we will be able to put to-

gether a national movement for the construction of our country with ample intellectual resource [...] there was a time, when I was Foreign Minister, whenever someone was incapable in his job, they would propose to me to make them ambassadors. I then had to clarify that how could we do that because those guys would ride in cars that hold the national flags beside HM the King, Prime Minister, Foreign Minister, and/or Minister of National Defence [...]

We offered chances for our youth in those days to continue their studies in foreign countries and inside the country too. We have now passed the time when those who knew more would teach those who knew less, and those who knew less would teach those who did not know.

I am bringing this matter up just to portray our development, and so that each one of us can rethink about our personal development from the time of weakness and lack of education to the present one of strength and knowledge. With those efforts that we have made, we lead our country out of destruction, from the city of Phnom Penh, where there were only 70 people, to the city that is growing as any others.

We have brought poverty level from 100% to within 13%. We have made this country's per capita income at 200 USD per annum in 1998 reach 1,300 USD in 2016. We are not yet satisfied with these achievements. We are doing more to reach to new level. Prime Minister Shinzo Abe of Japan, I thank him for promising to work with me, said many words of encouragements and assured assistance so that Cambodia would realize its goal of becoming a middle-income country in 2030 [...]

### **RAC and Relevant Institutions Should Be of Mutual Assistance**

... I am calling on academician Sok Touch to conduct reform in necessary fields to make RAC a serious institution. Failing to do so would leave a bad example for other institutions as RAC

would be the highest place where the country's brains gather. I wish to see that RAC would be of assistance to other institutions and other institutions would be in kind reciprocation. They should be of mutual assistance. One institution that is working with me always is the Supreme National Economic Council, which HE Aun Pommoniroth also chairs.

My children had some exposures from it too. We have another one with CAP as an abbreviation, where many educated brains are in it [...] it would be difficult to work with intellectuals because they would have different opinions on things but it is important to gather them together and even more so to work together [...]

### **Appealing to Laos to Withdraw Troops Unconditionally from Cambodian Territory**

I have a strong belief that our youth will be taking active parts in the leadership of RAC and continuing to implement reforms in any sectors they see fit. Should there need to have royal decrees, or sub-decree, we could also do that to make RAC a working structure. There is one other thing I have to share with all of you today. If I choose to keep it away from you, our neighbour friend would continue to stay the way they are doing now.

Since April, our Laotian friends sent their force into the Cambodian territory in O Alai area of Stoeung Treng province on reason of obstructing construction of road on our side. We are building road on our land, and Laotians stopped us. They crossed the Mekong to stay on our side. I order our military engineering teams to stop the construction eventually but the Laotian troops continue to stay.

In May, prior to my meeting with President Xia Jinping, I made a phone call to Prime Minister Thongloun Sisoulith of Laos from Beijing. I told him my clear position that Laos must withdraw its troops. I told

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him we at the top level would understand each other but people down the line would not. We agreed to send out joint border committee to visit the place. The Laotian committee did not show up for reason that his boat was impassable. We failed to sort out the problem. I just wrote a few days ago a letter to the Laotian Prime Minister requesting Laos to withdraw its troop that is stationing across the Sekong River, on the Cambodian side. That is unacceptable and unforgiveable. We have been so patient.

... Please circulate and make public my letter that I sent to Laos. I have ordered the Governor of Stoeung Treng to meet with the Governor of Lao Attapeu province to seek withdrawal of its troops.

I told HE Prak Sokhon, after we fly the ASEAN flag to celebrate the fiftieth founding anniversary, to meet with Lao Ambassador. I would be ready to fly to Laos anytime to meet with the Lao Prime Minister to clarify the matter. I just want his clear answer whether Laos will or will not withdraw its troop?

I am seeking our people's understanding and awareness if they see troop movements towards the border area with Laos [...] I have issued my order to commander in chief Pol Sareoun, Defence Minister Tia Banh ... Should there be any problem, they may not reproach Cambodia.

However, before anything would happen, I would have to go meet Lao Prime Minister. If he would not want to see me, Laos would have to withdraw its troop. I did write. I did call [...]

### **Lao Troop to Withdraw in Six Days**

I sent them a letter. I have not received a reply yet. I am conveying a message from here to HE Thongloun Sisoulith, Prime Minister of the People's Democratic Republic of Laos, to withdraw Lao troops from Cambodian territory unconditionally.

The ultimatum will be on 17 August, or six days from today. To avoid conflict they have to withdraw troop. Confusing may be happening on land area but this is the case of crossing the river to our side. I have no argument for my people. We are being gentle diplomatically and politically, but we will have to take measure when it is necessary.

... We are not going for conflict but they do not withdraw their troop. We have allowed this issue to go on for four months already, since April. There is nobody at its back. Should there be one, we would have to go for it too. I would not doubt there is anyone behind it.

Importantly, they themselves are doing it [...] Friends we are but we have to keep up national sovereignty. Being in charge of foreign and domestic policies, especially defending independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity, I find this gross position unacceptable and unforgiveable if they do not withdraw their troops on schedule. It is time to act. We will give it until 17 August [...]

### **We Would Go to Court, But First Withdraw Troops**

If it is unclear as who own the land, let us go to court in The Hague to avoid bloodshed. However, Laos must withdraw its troops first. They cannot talk about being friend and continue to send (their soldiers) in. Did they do that because we are busy with the elections? I am sorry that I have brought this issue up before intellectuals. However, it is a place where the best brains of the country are.

As the country's leader, I have had to bring it out or people would criticize me for being shutting up. Please understand that that I have been silent and patient was because I did not want to have a war with anyone, whatever country it may be [...] let me reaffirm to our people if they see any troop movements and/or anything happens, please note that we have the necessity to defend Cambodia independence, and national sovereignty ...■

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March.”

### **Supplementary Allowance of 3 Million Riel/Month for Librarians**

... I provided supplementary allowance of 180 USD in 2002 and then 360 USD in 2010 for librarians (working in the Hun Sen library at RUPP). It has been seven years now. They are entitled to their salary. I am providing them with such supplementary allowance so that they can work extra on Saturday and Sunday. I have decided to increase allowance for the librarians to 3 million Riels. They will work hard. This library may have the biggest book holdings in the country. They will be very resourceful person to help book users. This is part of our efforts to ensure sustainability of the library that I founded, and have contributed some books ... Users will find big smiling faces when they go to library to search for whatever they need [...]

### **Extra Courses for Students Prior to Exams – A Good Methodology**

... In days to come, it will be time when our students will take exams to end their secondary school education. The exams will take place on 21 and 22 August. I am calling on teachers and parents of our students to do whatever they can to help the students, who then will have to make their own efforts to score their achievements. So far, I have noticed that providing extra lessons for students prior to taking exams is a good methodology. Last year I took a trip to a number of provinces prior to the exams. I also conducted a more than 5,000 road trip to many provinces, where I stopped, and conducted observations in various schools.

I came across a classroom in the province of Preah Vihear, where students were taking extra lessons. Not only those who would take the exams in that year, but also those who would take the exam the year after (this year) also took extra lessons. I asked why they came

for the class. They told me it would be better for them to do it (sit down for lessons) twice [...]

This has illustrated also that our necessary and serious reform efforts in the secondary school exams has brought about a sense of responsibility and endeavors throughout the country among students. Parents also have paid more attentions to their children study efforts. It has been a visionary policy and it is the best option from which we have created a situation that everyone must study to be able to pass exams [...]

### **Vocational/Technical Training Options**

It has been a good point that we issue a policy to allow those students who failed to pass their secondary school final exams to take up vocational and/or technical training. We left no one unattended, even those failing their secondary school final exams. In my visit to Japan, I learnt that they paid serious attention on human resource training orienting them for enterprises. I am glad to see that Japan's Denso Co., Ltd is now in Cambodia to cooperate with various technical training schools. I would urge them to think about cooperating with the Ministry of Labor and Vocational Training.

### **The Child Prodigy Kim Hong**

... I am glad that HE Ly Chheng is here with us today. We have resolved this issue relating to the divine child Kim Hong. What remains is working out time for his enrollment. Who is the child prodigy? He is one kid that I posted on Facebook. In his seven years of age, he could solve the 12th graders mathematics. I am paying attention on his education and I would urge the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports to follow up his education. He is still a small child. His parents told me he still have his milk. What to do here is that we could not bring only Kim Hong to town. We have purchased a flat not far from the BELTEI School at Stoeng Meanjei and it

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less than 160 USD, or not less than 153 USD, which is the minimum level. In the short time to come, your salary will increase. In the year to come, are to set a minimum wage policy at no less than 160 USD per month. As I asked some workers over there, they are earning already 184 USD [...]

### The “Three Don’ts” Have Appointed Themselves “The Three Insisters”

They paid little or no interest on people’s lives. What they are interested in is power. They would do anything they could, without shame, just to get to it. They have even appointed themselves those who insist to do three things. **They insist to exercise regime change.** We have transformed this country from one with war to one with peace, from one where people went shabby to one with colorful dresses and wears. Would it be a change of Prime Minister for them to transform this country? [...] **They insist on increasing salary** to win workers’ hearts and minds. Our workers should not confuse and should remember that only the Royal Government can negotiate for your increase of your salary. The opposition or parties that are not in the Royal Government cannot. **Thirdly, they insist to launch demonstration.** In that case, workers who refused to join them for protests met with their threats. I would not allow that to happen anymore. You have right to protest but you cannot forbid other people from working to join your action [...]

As I said, I would not let the 2013 incident to repeat [...] they held protest at 2 am. Now they claimed that certain people have gone missing. Have they registered their people taking parts in the protest? What would be the nature of your protest, when you held it at 2 am? It was for overthrowing. How could we know who was who and how many of them were there? I would talk this to the UN one day. They should apprehend protest leaders and question them [...]

### RGC to Attract Investments for Jobs

In order for you to earn your living, the Royal Government has done many works to ensure peace, because without peace, there could not be development. We need to put in place infrastructures such as roads, rails, ports, airports, electricity, etc. required for investments. Reducing cost of electricity would provide better productivity and increase wages for workers. We have also readjusted issues relating to taxation [...] we did all these to attract investors and for our goods to compete with strength in markets. One part of the benefit will of course return to our workers. We have about over one million workers in foreign job markets. We have over three million more working indirectly. We have not yet counted in workers in construction and hospitality.

I thank enterprises in the whole country for paying attention to resolving conflict in workplace to a minimum level. Factories owners must consider workers as their life partners. Without workers, there would not be employers, and vice versa. Without factories, there would not be workers too. The two are mutually coexisting for common interests. They must work together to protect their pots and make their food tasty. Their food is getting tastier, when they make and share profit [...]

### Sunday – Meet Administrative Clerks, Wednesday – Meet Workers

I would come here again to meet those of you in the management. I have made it my schedule in a week to meet the factories management on Sunday, and to meet with workers on Wednesday. My topic of talk will not be different. I will bring up again the Three Don’ts and Three Dos.

### Peace and Development to Ensure High-Middle Income Status for Cambodia

What shall we do next? Our policy for industrial sector development until 2025 and high-middle income endeavor by

2030 require us to do works in numerous fields – agriculture, industry, service, etc. We have two important things for our people to remember and do what they can to protect and safeguard peace and development. Peace and development are two inseparable elements. Without peace, we cannot develop the country. Look at what happened in Iraq, Libya, Syria, Yemen, Mali, Central African Republic, Sudan, South Sudan, and Somalia. Have they had the chance for developing their countries?

In the past, between 1953 and 1970, Samdech Preah Borom Ratanakaod headed the Sangkumreastr Niyum or popular socialist society, in which he led constructions of factories and enterprises. We also had textile factories that produced fabrics for local need. Cambodia was one industrially developed country that can manufacture fabrics for own people and serving needs of police and military. We did what we had to do to restore those factories but they were not sufficient. If Preah Borom Ratanakaod were to stay in power, and lead the country in those difficult years after, our country would not have fallen.

In 1969, per capita income of the Cambodian people was 260 USD, while that of South Koreans was only 74 USD. Now, South Koreans’ per capita is nearly 50,000 USD, and we are at nearly 1,400 USD. You may question why. It was war. You do not have to look at Iraq or other countries to find examples how war tore the countries apart. In the past, because of war, Cambodia couldn’t develop a thing. However, when we have secured peace, our country has been making progresses. Look, we have big bridges crossing the Rover of Mekong, Tone Sap, and Bassac. We have ones to cross over the sea bay. We have seen overpasses and underpasses. We are building more of them.

There would be no success without contributions. I believed in the people of Cambodia who had gone through the

past war and genocide. They would not let bad people to rule this country as in the past. Peace must prevail and continue to exist on our pitiful land. It is now a gold and diamond opportunity for us to develop our country. Only free of hunger and social injustice that we can keep peace ... We therefore need to expedite programs for development and reforms.

### Task 1: Keep Peace, Political Stability, Security, Social Order for Works Safety and Stability

We have two works to continue to do aside from the two important elements – peace and development. I am going to list here five policies that we are focusing on for development, and most of them are relating to workers. I would like to stress that without peace and political stability, or social order, we would have difficulty to guarantee safe and stable works. I am so happy that the PPSEZ is providing residential area for workers and there seems to be under a very good management. I would rather you keep up your good works. There would be no work safety and/or stability from instability like the one caused in 2013, for which politicians urged workers to join protest. Was it a work safety or stability? It was not.

Only we all – authority, workers, employees and employers – are working together to guarantee security, social order, drug free, gangsters free, etc. that we can provide safety for our workers [...]

### Task 2: Together Keep and Create Jobs

This is an even more important point. I have asked folks on my way in whether we should keep jobs or leave them. In order to keep our jobs, we must make concerted efforts. We must not cause disturbances that factories’ owners move to other countries ... because should the rice pot break down, the one to go hungry would be our workers. Owners may have serious debts to pay to banks but they

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may not be starving. On the contrary, our workers would have to go back to agricultural labor with your parents. It is in this development that we all must keep our jobs and create more together [...]

As for the Royal Government, I think it has two essential jobs to do. Firstly, the RGC must continue to attract more investments and ensure trade facilitations. In order to achieve this, there works to carry through. For example, in the frameworks of ACMECS, GMS, and ASEAN, we have to work out agreement for customs at every entrance and exits. For example, while goods monitored on one side of the border, the other side of the border should not bother to do it again. That would be beneficial for investors and part of it would go to our workers' salary [...]

The second task that the Royal Government must be carrying out is to expand markets abroad. I hope that we can find more markets for our garments and apparels. Japan has now imported apparels from Cambodia. We could look at Russia and Belarus. Therefore, it is important that we must keep and create jobs. To achieve this aim, we must attract more investors and expand the markets. Once the markets expand, there will be more demands, so we will have more factories and more jobs.

### **Task 3: Together Work for Income and Knowledge**

This is one critical issue that the Royal Government and the private sector are working out together to make sure that workers will not suffer from income reduction. This year we are setting a minimum salary level at 153 USD, and next year at no less than 160 USD. We must guarantee that our workers will continue to benefit from their wages. That would include, as in yesterday's trilateral seminar that HE Ith Sam Heng discussed, imposing no tax on salary of one million Riel and less.

I must share with you that in

every country, income tax applies. In Cambodia, our ceiling for income tax has been uplifted from 500,000 Riel to 800,000 Riel. Last year, we move the income tax ceiling to one million and less [...]

### **Free of Charge Bus Service for Two Years for Workers**

(Aside the Royal Government's efforts to resolve issues relating to prices of electricity and/or running water, and lodgments) let me stress here that our workers, here or anywhere, will benefit from riding city bus free of charge for the next two years. [...] I reaffirm – it is the city bus services. [...] Workers must present ID to benefit from this policy. I think the Phnom Penh Municipality Transports Office and Phnom Penh Mayor Khuong Sreng already made this policy public.

### **Task 4: Together for Social Protection, Work Condition, and Work Safety**

The fourth task is to focus on social protection, work condition, and work safety. Previously our workers shared 50% in the social security bill on health. Now, starting from January 2018, workers will no longer share the bill. Instead, factories owners will pay those bills on their workers' behalf to let the latter benefit from health benefits. Our workers will save between 8,000 Riel and 13,000 Riel per month [...]

On another front, I am declaring it to the whole country that from January 2018, workers in every sector will receive free-of-charge health treatment in state hospitals. The state will take care of the bills in accordance with equity fund through which we have been providing for over three million workers already. According to our estimate, we would be able to add over two millions more [...] I have discussed this policy with concerned ministers – HE Mam Bun Heng, HE Ith Sam Heng, HE Aun Pommoniroth [...]

According to my thinking, concerned ministries of health, labor, economy and finance, tourism, agriculture, land man-

agement, urban planning and construction, public works, civil aviation, mines and energy, industry, public functions, must work it out on this interrelated issue together [...] We will not neglect any one sector with regard to the implementation of this policy. We will consider at a later stage a more universal effect policy that will to provide free medical treatment free of charge for our people in general ... We are considering an open free-of-charge medical treatment policy for all [...] and I am talking about services provided by state hospitals only.

### **More Referral Hospitals In and Nearby Factories Areas**

As far as state hospitals are concerned, as I have said it the other day, I would urge the Ministry of Health to expand health clinics as soon as it can into referral hospitals that are closer to factories. Where there are such facilities already, we must provide them with necessary equipments and tools, while enlarge their service abilities. Where there is none, we must seek to provide them with ones. I also call on factories owners to set up own health centre to provide first-aid medical assistance their workers. They also need to see about setting up crèches as well for young mothers to feed their kids. With these assistances in place, I think we will be able to accomplish our tasks of mutual help [...]

### **Factories Owners to Allow Three-Month Leave with Pay for Delivery**

There is one other thing that I have the need to share with our workers especially those female ones. They are entitled to a three-month post delivery with pay of 120% of their salary. I am seeking factories owners to reserve understanding for female workers and who have to go through deliveries. I am also asking their permissions to allow mothers to go and check their pregnancies regularly [...]

### **2019 – Pensions for Private Sector Workers**

There is this issue of social security concerning retirement

pension. Let me affirm that in 2019 we will put into operation this social security policy regarding retirement pension for workers in private sectors. There will be no differences in pensions any more between people working in private sector and in public sector.

Once they retire from their works, private sector workers are also entitled to retirement pensions. This is what we are working on to achieve as a state like in other states. You have earned 100% salary while you are young. When you retire, you will also take a pension of 80% of what you earn when you were young as those working in the public sector [...]

### **Issues of Ceasing Trade Union Leaders Contracts, Workers to Respect Labor Law**

Work safety is essentially important and I am urging a continuation of what you have been doing well as long as there is this issue of work-related accidents. I have talked with owners of factories and their different level managements about work conflicts. I will keep up talking about this. Sometimes it is a small issue but failing to listen and consider the appeal, it has become a big problem.

Making hasty decision to cease work contract of trade union leaders would also cause unrest and protest. Sometimes it leads to intervention from the Ministry of Labor and Vocational Training and other times to Prime Minister to ask the factory owners to allow them back for work. I am asking out workers also to respect labor law. When everyone abides by the law, we could prevent conflicts from happening.

### **Task 5: More Job Markets Abroad for Legal Migrant Workers**

The last work to do is that I wish to send a message to workers employed abroad. According to the figure provided here, we have over one million of them [...] they may have to understand that the fact that they

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will be available in nine days. Kim Hong's father who works at ACLEDA Bank has already transferred his work to Phnom Penh. His mother, who is working as a teacher in the School of Pedagogy in Takeo province will also come to Phnom Penh and BELTEI could perhaps offer her a teaching job.

BELTEI will put Kim Hong with the 8<sup>th</sup> graders and will have the whole class controlled by camera. If Kim Hong is doing better in Khmer literature and English too, he will go to a higher grade. As far as mathematics is concerned, Kim Hong would not have a problem judging from his ability to tackle mathematics problem of the 12<sup>th</sup> graders [...] He is an extraordinary kid. We must continue to assist him. We have done everything to help him now. We are waiting only for the flat to be vacant so the family can move in [...] it would be better for Kim Hong to start schooling as soon as possible. I never have encountered this in reality though I learnt the other day about a four-year old Russian girl who could speak up to six languages. Kim Hong could speak and write Khmer and English since when he was two years old [...]

### **The Trip to Japan – Political, Diplomatic and Cooperation Successes**

Well, I have some more stories from the last week to share with you. They are good ones and difficult ones too. I did two trips last week. My first trip was to go to Japan. It was my official visit. It was my 21<sup>st</sup> trip to Japan. The visit conducted to commemorate the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of our two countries' exchange of high delegations. Japan and Cambodia established diplomatic relation in 1953. However, the first visit by Japanese Prime Minister to Cambodia was in 1957. This year is 2017. It has made a jubilee of 60 years anniversary. It is also falling on the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary that Japan sent its peacekeeping force to Cambodia, the first time that Japan ever did that. It was in 1992.

Sending troops abroad was a prohibition by the post-World War II Constitution. The two countries also elevated their relations to one that is of strategic level.

I would conclude that my visit to Japan has been a political, diplomatic, and cooperation success. Japan will continue to provide development assistance, long-term concessional and low-interest loans for the development of infrastructure. The Japanese Prime Minister has specially guaranteed Japan's position to work with Prime Minister Hun Sen to achieve Cambodia's goal to become higher-middle income country in 2030. That is what we wanted. Japanese confidence in Cambodia's economy is a source of encouragement. There are many Japanese companies looking at Cambodian market. We need more partners – Japan, and other development partners such as China, EU, etc.

### **Sky-train Project to Resolve Traffic Congestion in Phnom Penh**

The Japanese assistance in area of water treatment has been important but we also look at how to relieve traffic congestion in Phnom Penh. We need a solution. Some countries have imposed certain rules when someone has had to purchase a car to avoid having too many cars. In Japan, people have to pay certain tax to be able to earn rights to purchase a car, etc. We cannot impose those conditions. We will offer chances for our people to have their own vehicles [...]

In order to help us solve traffic problem, JICA has conducted a sky-train project for Phnom Penh. I did try in other countries. According to the study, for a span of 18 Kilometers, it would cost us 800 million USD. It would be expensive but it will help the flow of our people's travel and relieve traffic congestion in Phnom Penh. We may have it running between the Central Market and the airport [...]

### **Insulting National Army – Unacceptable**

... I should take this time to inform commentators (on national defense matter) that their insulting words on the army is unacceptable. It is good that the person will be in jail. If the person were to be at large, he would have to face with the army. Well, it is up to the law. What to do with a man who denounced the country's army commanders as thieves. Such denunciation is a flagrante delicto, in which case, whether a person would be president of a political party, a privilege of National Assembly, or the Senate, etc., s/he would have to face an arrest. It is a national security matter. They must not insult. He used words that were no different to those they once did on stage with the yellow-shirt group in Thailand.

I was the one who coordinate the person's pardon. However, I would not imagine that he still carries his gross ... I think by now the person has been brought to the primary court ... He also insulted HM the King, and the person confessed it though. (The person wrote a) message insulting that (he) would kick to break the Royal Palace. (The person) sent the message to France to find out whether HM the King has a French nationality. It was at the time that we work a law of one nationality for anyone to lead a political party. This time he insulted the army. We cannot ignore that [...]

Some commentators also said something about gamering support for the elections [...] Whoever made such comments must be held responsible before the law [...] Facing with aggression, and they said that (we were seeking) means for the Cambodian People's Party to gain votes. We find that unacceptable. I am warning them and if they are in Cambodia, they will face arrests for flagrante delicto of insulting their nation. We are an independent and sovereign country. This is the national security issue. I would not see that as a matter of dictatorship. I would see it as something that a sovereign and rule of law state has to do.

### **What Caused Invasion in Streng Treng**

Why did we come to such issue with Laos? Cambodia and Laos have been working together to mount about 86% border poles with one another using the 1/100,000 scale map. We continue to conduct negotiation to achieve the plan. However, let me point out where the problem had come from. Primarily, I am thanking HE Thongloun Sisoulith, Prime Minister of LPDR for making decision and withdrawing its troops before the ultimatum date of 17 August. Some people commented that why would we Cambodian have to bow to Laos when they (are thought to have) invaded Cambodia.

Let me clarify on this. My visit to Laos to negotiate for the latter troop withdrawal would not mean that we would stay idle if the Laos side does not withdraw. It was our goodwill to resolve the matter through negotiation. It was not a bow but a polite and goodwill diplomacy. The arrested party leader, after insulting our army, said I bow my head to the enemy. Laos is not yet our enemy. Now that my visit to Laos, my reasoning with them has brought about the Lao troops withdrawal, what would you say now? It would not be priceless to help or to speak. We have made our decision already. If they do not withdraw, we would have to fight. We would not allow foreign troops stationing in our territory.

The matter that we are so sorry about is not the (Lao) Prime Minister's mistake. It was the mistake of the (Lao) Foreign affairs minister. My letter dated and sent on 2 August did not reach the Prime Minister. In a tete-a-tete discussion, the Lao Prime Minister told me he only learnt about and read the letter the night before. I can say it was a mistake of the Lao Foreign Affairs Minister. I said that if it were for my foreign minister I would have sacked him. What could be a more severe mistake than not submitting in a timely manner a letter from a head of  
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government to the Prime Minister? Which led to failure to reply.

On another point, HE Thongloun Sisoulith could have lost track of what happened at a junior level in accordance with our agreement on 10 May in Phnom Penh. Frankly, Cambodia has the legitimate right to build roads along its border. However, to avoid conflict, I decided to issue an order for our military engineering to pause their works [...] and I asked HE Thongloun Sisoulith to withdraw Lao troops [...] I have brought with me and shown to the Prime Minister photos that we captured of his troops. He was sorry for it. I gave him a set of our file recording the Lao troop presence since April.

Laos and Cambodia have been using the 1/100,000 scale map to decide the countries' border and we have defined about 86% of the border already. On that matter, Laos has used the 1/1,000,000 scale map to locate the border. It has encroached, according to that map's expansion, some 491.10 square Kilometers of Cambodian territory. Their troops also crossed the Sekong River and landed on our side between 200, 700, and even 1,000 meters. Should we leave the situation as it was?

I said to him whatever border calculation must depend on the 1/100,000 scale map and Laos has deposited it under République Démocratique Populaire Lao at the State Geography Group on 2 June 1992, which recognized that O Alai and O Ta Ngav are in Cambodian side [...]

It was because of this understanding that we were able to come to agreement. The problem had come from misunderstanding, slowness in working process of the junior level, and losing track of troops. Once we have common understanding, we went to a meeting room and declared what we had agreed. I demanded that we had to have a common press conference. I also issued order for our troops to return to their barracks be-

cause the Lao side agreed to withdraw their troops [...]

### **Cambodia and Laos Are Friends**

I wish we all understand that Cambodia and Laos are friends and should never go to war with one another. If I failed to go to meet my counterparts in Laos, a war could be real. In fact, it was about to become one a few times already. One time in May, in Beijing, prior to my meeting with President Xi Jinping, I had to call up my Lao counterpart. I said to him that we at the top could understand each other but for those at the local level, with arms in hand, could have misunderstanding [...]

Let me reaffirm that Laos is not our enemy. We just had not talked everything out. I was thrown to a complete surprise that Prime Minister of Laos did not receive my letter the day that I sent him. Were I not bring the matter up it could be that we might have this stalemate on for a few more months [...] Now the difficult situation passed and we have promised with one another not to have a repetition of such incident between Laos and Cambodia [...]

### **Commanding Armed Forces – Legitimate Right of Prime Minister**

On the Cambodian side, commanding such order would not be a problem. No one would have the right to send troops. Some people said Hun Sen has had too much power to command the troop. Well, being a Prime Minister, if you cannot command the troop, you should not be in position ... I have all the power in my capacity as head of the Royal Government that is to implement domestic and foreign policies.

I am holding my rank as the five star general too ... In Japan, I made it clear to three Japanese Ambassadors – two former and one incumbent, that the armed forces must be neutral before political party but not before the Royal Government. Countries in trouble of color revolution have their armed forces neutralized [...]

... I am not prohibiting them to express their views but your expression must not infringe upon other people's rights. When they comment about Prime Minister's use of power over the army, their comments are not lawful or constitutional. Are they thinking of color revolution? Are they looking for neutrality of the armed forces? There had been trail of plundering power in Georgia, where the army did not defend President Eduard Shevardnadze. He had to flee. In Cambodia, that will not happen [...]

### **Appreciation and Gratitude for Lao Prime Minister**

... Please allow me to send a message to our people that they may rest assured and trust in the Royal Government in resolving the border issue. We have pursued this policy with Vietnam, Thailand, and Laos. It was a bad dream indeed and we must not let it happen. Peace must prevail. During lunch, I stressed (to my Lao counterpart) that we should not have spent time to discuss this issue.

We should have discussed about expanding trade volume, communication, connectivity, electricity, and other sectors [...] I am sending my appreciation and gratitude from here for HE Thongloun Sisoulith, who have been working with us to resolve the matter in a short time [...]

### **Interior to Pay Attention with Party Registration**

As for the party insignia, the Ministry of Interior did not seem to have thought it carefully. The other day the Constitutional Council advised about a political party registered unconstitutionally. It was not in conformity with Constitutional monarchy.

Why did the Ministry allow the political party registration under a Republic? It is against the Constitution. In Cambodia, even the National Assembly would not have the right to amend it. In the Constitution, there are two points that are not amendable – (1) the Constitutional Monarchy and (2) regime

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are able to find jobs abroad is not a natural cause. Without efforts of the Royal Government, you may not be fortunate to find jobs in those countries, where you are. The Royal Government has been working hard to create legitimate condition for our people to benefit from work-related advantages while working in Thailand, and/or Malaysia, for instance. I never forget to bring this issue up every time I visited Korea. We already sent some five thousands to Japan. We will go on making efforts to help our workers achieve legal status and continue to work there. We are also striving to create local jobs and increase labor price locally so that our people could come back for jobs in the country.

Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Thailand, HE Prayuth Chan O-Cha, and I will jointly chair the two countries cabinets' meeting in September. We would be trying to set up industrial zone along the border so that our workers would not need to go further into Thailand for jobs [...] jobs in external markets play very important role (to the country's economy too).

The Philippines has over 12 million workers abroad. They earn billions of USD per year. In Cambodia alone, we have over ten thousands Philippines workers. Thailand may need labor but they also send their labors abroad to benefit from high pay in Japan, Taiwan, the Middle East, and replace them with labor from Cambodia, Laos and Myanmar [...]

of pluralistic and liberal democracy.

Why did the Ministry allow a party register under a Republic? There is party that used the flag of the former regime of Lon Nol together with the US flag. They also got registration. I am advising the Ministry of Interior on this party registration issue. The ministry must ask them to change and must figure out if these offenses are suitable for implementing the law of political party [...]