



24 April 2014 – Prime Minister Samdech Techo Hun Sen and his Belarusian counterpart H.E. Mikhail Myasnikov preside over a Cambodia-Belarus Business Forum in Minsk.

Presenting Diplomas for AEU Graduates

(28 April 2014 — Unofficial Selection and Translation)

I am so happy today to be able to come preside over the graduation of 1,823 students of the Asia-Europe University in the early part of the Year of Horse of the Buddhist Year of 2558. It is a good thing to present diploma at the start of a New Year like this. I listened to the report of the Asia-Europe University (AEU) rector, Duong Lieng, concerning the progress made by the University. First started as a non-governmental organization in area of education, the University has now a 15-storey building of its own.

Cambodia – A Case Different from Others

The fact that I am so glad to observe these progresses concerning human resource training efforts in the past recent years, especially those efforts made right after the liberation on 7 January 1979. Cambodia was in a different state from other countries in the world in the 20th century. Even in the 21st century, no country in this

world has experienced unique situation like that of Cambodia. Compared to other countries experienced with genocide, like Rwanda, Sierra Leone, etc. despite all the wars and killings, Cambodia's case has been dramatic with the fact that everything was destroyed. The capital city of Phnom Penh was empty. There was a Buddhist prediction that there would be homes but no one to live in and there would be roads but no one to use.

That is a true event. When I grew up, I just learned the Buddhist prediction that was passing from one person to another. Nobody would have believed it. Then came this event of 17 April 1975, the regime of Lon Nol met its failure and the Khmer Rouge came into Phnom Penh. What they did was evacuating people from the city of Phnom Penh and other provincial towns. It ended right there what is called private ownerships in material

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Presenting Diploma for HRU Graduates

(10 April 2014—Unofficial Selection and Translation)

I am glad to join with all of our Buddhist monks, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, on this graduation and diploma presenting ceremony of the Human Resource University (HRU) for its 1794 graduates. The report of the HRU's leader, once again has taken our attention to the development of the HRU, which has in fact started as a non-governmental organization. The progress made concerning the development of human resource here witnesses the share that HRU contributed and the growing relations HRU has with other institutions as partner. It is indeed my

pleasure to see that we have assured expansion of education with the help of the private sector.

Yesterday, I watched an interview on local TV, I can't remember which one, with a rector of the University from New York. He made it clear in his speech that that he decided to invest in education in Cambodian university is because of my appeal in 1993 for the private sector to take part in human resource training. It seems that we have now reaped the good result of the policy. We now have up to over 100 terti-

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Presenting Diplomas for VIA Graduates

(07 March 2014 — Unofficial Selection and Translation)

... This is my eighth times here. I would like to take this opportunity to express my sincere appreciation for the efforts made by the Institute, as is reported by HE Heng Vanda, concerning its progress and expansion of services from Phnom Penh to the city of Siem Reap and Battambang, which is under construction. The progress made by Vanda Institute of Accounting in particular has shown a streamlining national movement in education as a whole since the day of liberation – 7 January...

Among them, 364 graduates are those learning in the Institute with the scholarship that the Institute provides on my behalf. We have 50 of the graduates here. I also thank the Vanda Institute for the under-

standing and allowing eight students to take part in the land measuring mission within the framework of new action in existing policy recently...

A Correct Political Leadership and Human Resource – Keys to Development

On various occasion, I brought up example of countries that have good potential of natural resources but could not develop themselves while some are poor in natural resources but developing remarkably. There are two important factors here – a correct political leadership and human re-

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as well as in sentiment, which, to the Khmer Rouge regime is their worst enemy. The best way for the Khmer Rouge to uproot people's private ownerships of material was to move them out of the city, which means to move them away from their property holdings. They moved people not one time but from one place to many others until people had nothing left with them.

In the course of moving, people left their becoming-obsolete objects like cars, motorbikes for no gas and hold on to only cash and gold. When it came to a time that no currency was of no value at all, Pol Pot implemented his policy of collectivization, where his regime claimed to have succeeded in eliminating the gap between the rich and the poor. They said they had demolished the rich and brought up the equality. They moved people from the city to live and exercise collectively in rural areas. That had in fact cut off people's ownership rights to materialism.

As far as ownership to sentiment, we all know that and would have narrated it somehow to the younger generation. They gathered small children away from their parents to form up what they called children group. Adults also had to be in what they called mobile youth unit. As far as marriage was concerned, you were in no rights to choose your partner. The relevant level of power of the "organization" of the Khmer Rouge would choose whom you would marry. That is what I called the effort to eliminate human ownership of sentiment or feeling. That had brought about social consequence in which killing of one another, even ones related by blood, was the case in action.

That made Cambodia's departure from after the liberation of 7 January 1979 more difficult.

What happened in other countries also inflicted changes but not the way Pol Pot did to Cambodia. Take for instance, they allowed people to go on using existing currencies and eventually replaced them later. Pol Pot did not do that. They closed down markets right after the liberation. Things had gone back to bartering where people traded rice for fish, vegetable, clothing, etc. Eventually, trading in gold started before we came to this far. Some foreigners or our people might have thought why Cambodian carry out trading in so many different currencies. It is one of the reasons for the various currencies trading in the Cambodian market, indeed.

Foreign currencies circulation in the Cambodian market legally or illegally would go on. Some asked why not de-dollarization or the same should be doing to Euro or other currencies. The financial crisis of 1997 is a good example of the fact that if Cambodia is not strong on its feet, jumping would not be high and falling would not be hurtful. There have been some studies too and their findings suggest that because of the fact that Cambodian market traded in many different currencies, the impacts were also manageable.

More than that, reopening the school day of 1979/1980 was hard, really. We had to gather teachers survived the killing to get back to teaching and to train new ones. Now, it is 39 years from that horrible time. It is so sad to think about that. By this time in that year, people in Phnom Penh and/or provincial towns had been evacuated. They walked in despair. Some died on the roads. Now, in 39 years after that experience, we are celebrating here today the graduation and diploma presenting ceremony. That is the difference.

Let me recall the Khmer New Year of 1979, people living

across the Mekong from Phnom Penh – Lovea Em district, Arei Khsat and Sarikakeo – crossed the river at night to collect various things like bicycles, shoes, etc. The area of Independence Monument was covered with high grass. Where there is park now, there used to be coconut trees. My wife, my son and I were sitting in the house looking out to the quiet neighbourhood. There were not many monks then. Now, though I do not go out during the national holiday, still I can stay watching TV at home.

Endorsing Three Draft Laws, Embracing Quality Education

We had to convene the Cabinet meeting to study and approve three important draft laws – Organization of the Courts, Organization and Functioning of the Supreme Council of Magistracy and the Statue of Judges and Prosecutors (before I was on a mission abroad). In fact, the law on Organization and Functioning of the Supreme Council of Magistracy could have been an amendment to the existing one. However, because we need to make many corrections, it is better that we write it a new one. Following that important Cabinet meeting, I conducted a visit to Azerbaijan and Belarus.

Thanks to national efforts, we have ensured development in education in a rather quick manner. I agree with the Rector Mr Duong Lieng that quality in education continues to be a priority. He mentioned about the need to strengthen capacity of professor and students' learning efforts. It is to everyone's knowledge that quality in education is the major course to raise high the country's prestige in the international arena. This is the case for all educational institutions – state and private, from primary to tertiary levels. Our country would not be able to compete

with our partners – in ASEAN, ACMECS, GMS, etc., if we were to lack quality in education. Let us continue to make efforts altogether.

I take this opportune moment to give my sincere appreciation to the former Asia-Europe organization for continuing to provide certificate-level professional training for our students. I think it is good to continue to provide this opportunity. Professional (short or medium term) training would do a lot in our efforts to address immediate lacking of human resource. It is a normal process. Even if in the case of our people living abroad, it is not that they all finish tertiary education. On the face of this earth, there is no such country that everyone of its citizen gains university education. Seeing the need for human resource achievement, I would urge continuing efforts to provide professional training to create more chances for our students to get job and to create jobs according to their specialties.

Cambodia to Focus on New Objectives

As I arrived in the country from the mission abroad, I had taken the chance to meet and work with some of our ministers. I told them that the current Cambodia needed to change its objectives. What change would it be? The point is that over the past almost two decades, we have made great efforts to promote labour-intensive industry. While we continue to carry on with this, we need also to promote new and value-added industries. For example, we have garment and shoes factories in Cambodia but we still have other value-added industry with great potential as well, especially those industries that are using local material resources. For instance, we still lack the sort of industry to process our rice. When we sell it as paddy,

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we lose the value from rice bran, the broken parts, husk and jobs for our people.

We export dozens million of tons of cassava without processing it and natural rubber in dry form. We should give more focus on prioritizing processing industry using material resource available in Cambodia. We also have to look at the possibility of opening up for industry that other countries can bring into Cambodia. Take for example the Japanese investment in a motor factory, which produces and supplies not only to the Japanese but also to the world markets as well. This evening I will meet with President of the Minebea Company, which, as far as I know, is in consideration of putting into operation new factories and new technology. It is aiming the new products to supply production lines in various countries with its latest technology.

It is in this note that I encourage the Asia-Europe organization in collaboration with the Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training to continue to provide vocational training for our students on this front. It is now clear that we have come to a time when we need to demand high processing quality. We cannot afford to produce anyone product in a large scale only to miss the standard required out there in the market.

Trade Diplomacy

I was in Azerbaijan and Belarus recently. The main purpose of the trip was to sell the Cambodian products and at the same time to buy those countries' products at a lower prices. That the trip also covered political matters is true, but, for Cambodia these days, we give importance on economic, trade, investment, tourism, etc. in our diplomacy. Unlike in the previous years, when we gave importance on

politics in diplomacy, in the current Cambodia, we are giving importance on economics in diplomacy to serve as a solid base for political engagements.

Take for instance in Belarus, aside from the joint communiqué we have nine other agreements that indicate joint efforts in economics, trade and investment. I visited a truck production company. They laid out a row of trucks, including the one used to mount rocket launchers. However, you should not confuse that I went there to buy any BM 21s. In Cambodia, there are two kinds of well-known trucks – KAMAZ and FUSO. I went there to visit the KAMAZ truck factory. They have made it more advanced. In the time of the former Soviet Union, they supplied us with tractors and KAMAZ trucks made in Belarus. I visited known places. They may come to visit and build assembly line for trucks in Cambodia for local as well as for regional markets.

Helps of Information Technology, Learning – a Continuing Process

As I am glad to greet our students for their graduation and present them diplomas, I would urge you that even if you have your Ph. D. degree, you may not consider it your end of education. Even if you are becoming Minister or Prime Minister, you must keep in mind that you need to keep learning. Anyone falls in pattern conservative thought would meet danger. Situation is evolving and we need to keep abreast of it. We have modern tools these days but what we can do when human beings do not modernize themselves. In the National Assembly and in the Cabinet, we have provided with computer. However, it would depend on if each member of the Royal Government would know how to operate them.

In the Cabinet, all computers

are online and have pre-logged on to various websites – all Cambodian ministries and press - the Google GPS also included. The tools are advanced and human beings need to be too. This is a good example that learning is indeed a continuing process. I told my counterpart in our dinner, as an SMS came to me there, that I had to attend to numerous messages both in work and in family. As for family, because I have 5 children and 16 grandchildren, it is normal that I have so many messages to attend. My counterpart was surprised to hear that since he only had two children. He said he did not use it. Well it could add on to your busy schedule too.

Successful and Safe Khmer New Year, a Short Dry Season in July

Meanwhile, please allow me to take this opportunity to express my sincere appreciation to all national and sub-national authorities in the whole country, the Royal Cambodian Armed Forces, Buddhist monks and people for the fact that you have collaborated in making the traditional Khmer New Year a successful and safe one. It is normal that competent authority has to be alert in time of festivity. The region is still in sadness for the fact that (1) the (believed-to-have-crashed) Malaysian MH 370 flight is nowhere to be found yet and (2) hundreds of people died and/or unaccounted for in the ferry incident in South Korea. Cambodia also had a bad disaster in 2010 just after ending its water festival.

As you can see that in every festivity, competent authority of all levels – Prime Minister, Deputy Prime Ministers, Ministers, commanders of the armed forces, provincial authority – are keeping check on security until the end of the festivity. As for this year, our people had concentrated for

New Year events in numerous places. Let alone the Angkor Sangkranta event in Siem Reap had witnessed so many people presence because of its new records. We had launch a first ever biggest pork and bean sticky rice cake wrapped in banana leaves at a weight never recorded before of two tons. The youth members have cooperated with the Association of Chefs to make and display. They also had an eating contest. Union of Youth Federations of Cambodia has presented its first ever record of 2 ton bean-pork sticky rice wrapped in banana leaves. Let us see next year, will there be anyone or province to break this Siem Reap record.

As far as chess championship is concerned, I was amazed by the dressing code competitors were in. It reminds us of the chess competition in the fairy tale between King Proma Toat and the Garuda King in (one of the Cambodian court literature) the Ka Key story. The champion is indeed a student who finished his study in architecture and used to stay in the Buddhist pagoda for his study too. It would be a great thing to see if in other year any province would think of making a new record on chess championship. It is my note that for those who stay in the pagoda, about 50 in 100 know how to play chess. The show of force between two groups on either side of a big stranded wire was also an amazing event that each side had up to a thousand pullers. There were also artistic performances and volleyball on sand in the beach area.

Celebrating the Khmer New Year, we now have come to the end of the dry season and the rainy season is coming too. According to the Ministry of Water Resource and Meteorology, the dry season will end in the second week of May. The rainy season will start in the third week of May but there

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will be a short dry period in July. I therefore urge our people to get ready for new cultivation season.

Everything Proceed Normally, Payday at End of the Month

As you can see, everything proceeds in its normal state. People enjoy the Khmer New Year when it came. There was nothing different. To come to the country or go out of the country is up to one's mind. People may go to Siem Reap province or Sihanoukville province or Ratanakiri province etc. It was all up to them. What was not normal and gave us headaches was the jacking up of hotel and transport prices. Otherwise, everything was perfectly normal. After the Khmer New Year, the Cabinet met and endorsed the draft laws.

However, when I was abroad, according to the news sent to me, there have been comments by civil society that (the RGC has not brought) the three draft laws - (1) Organization of the Courts, (2) Organization and Functioning of the Supreme Council of Magistracy and (3) the Statue of Judges and Prosecutors – for consultation with them. I just needed to clarify that we have listened a lot on the issue already and according to the Constitution, we cannot present the draft laws to anyone. The process is after writing, the law is passed to the Cabinet (and after endorsing it) the Cabinet will pass it on to the National Assembly.

I would urge them not to ask for right beyond theirs. They should just do whatever their rights are to do. As institution elected by the people and defined by the Constitution and law on the organization and functioning of the Royal Government of Cambodia. It has not been instructed anywhere that the Cabinet has to consult with civil society organization.

They should not ask to do other people's job.

Today is April 28. It seems the payday happens in many places now. All I am asking is whether the payday of the month happens regularly or not. There is a team keeping watch on payday in the Ministry of Education. They asked many teachers in a few places to find out if they had their payday in the month. Their agents responded they did. I urge that the Ministries of Public Functions and Economy and Finance to follow this matter closely for me. I would not let this one slipped through my watch. If anything happens, the Ministers of Public Functions and of Economy and Finance must be responsible.

I would not want to go into political debate. I think I had better leave it at that. There should not be any concern there. I am here today and I will receive a guest tomorrow. Before I came here, I noticed there are a number of sub-decrees waiting for my signature. They are sub-decrees on giving land to the people. We are in the process of measuring land for the people – new action in existing policy. I am thankful that a number of students from the Asia-Europe University also participated. No matter how tired I could be, night or day, I must sign those sub-decrees. In a democratic society in this world, there is such think as being alike – some may be happy, some may cry. Our problem is to make the majority of people happy. To respond (to political remark) would create soap opera.

Let us all do our job normally. On May 18, there will be this election of the City and District Councils organized by the National Elections Committee. All five registered political parties will prepare for their participation. It is abnormal when some people behave

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any education institutions that provide further education and training for tens of thousands of our people. You can see that in HRU alone, for the school year of 2013/14, we have recorded some 6,500 students already.

It is impressive, according to the report, that 89.29% of graduates with a bachelor and 99% of graduates with a master have enjoyed the work opportunity. It is worth noting also that 12.89% of bachelor-degree holders and 39% of master-degree holders have gone on the path of self-employment. It is so encouraging to see that these graduates do not seek to be hired by state of companies but to become entrepreneurs who would provide jobs for thousands of others. As you can see, so far, there have been a practice where businessmen or well-to-do families send their kids for education abroad, and upon their returns those kids engage promptly and directly into their businesses.

Ending War with Three Messages

The rector of HRU, Dr. Ek Monosen, believed it all thanks

wrongly. When we all go to school, they decide to skip it and force other not to go to school too. How can we who are in class wait for those who skip it? Class functions normally. Some lawyers would want us to bring the law for consultation with because that would allow them to seek financial help for organizations of seminars.

The spokesperson of the Royal Government already mentioned that the law we wrote and endorsed, is in fact along the ones exist in France, Australia and some other countries in consideration to the Cambodian situation. We have to get a hat that suits our head...☐

to the ending of war. With war, there would not be development but destruction. There would not be healthy economy. It is very lucky that we have ended the war and immediately started to work for development of the country. I may bring this issue up for the sake of seeing through the past. When I welcomed Khieu Samphan and Nuon Chea (Khmer Rouge leaders) at my house at Takhmao in Kandal province, some came out and criticized me. I should note here that the whole cabinet (of the so called Democratic Kampuchea) including Head of State, Prime Minister, President of the National Assembly, Deputy Prime Ministers and Ministers came to the house of the incumbent Prime Minister, who definitely ended the war, a fruitful win-win policy originated from Oral area (of Kompong Speu).

In early 1996, we promoted the win-win policy with the lower level (power structure of the Khmer Rouge) that led to the isolation of their leaders. They had nothing to resort to but to come to Hun Sen. Could I not give them a meal? In the course of meeting them, I had intended to send three messages – firstly, to the remaining Khmer Rouge fighters under the command of the late Ta Mok to cease fighting because their leaders had come to see me at home already. Secondly, to the Cambodian people that the war that started in 1970 saw its end when these Khmer Rouge leaders came to see me at home. Thirdly, with the war ended, to international community that Cambodia is now a place suitable for investment and tourist destination.

However, some foreign specialists criticized me for receiving those criminals at home. I rebuked their remark with my argument: “Don't you forget that in 1980s and 1990s it was you guys who issued diplo-

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matic visas for Khieu Samphan and Son Sen. You laid a nice red carpet for them.”

I may have to remind you that HE Boutros Boutros-Ghali, former Secretary General of the United Nations, who later came to visit Cambodia and met with Khieu Samphan in his new capacity as Secretary General of Francophonie, many had blamed him. I could recall that in the meeting between members of the Supreme National Council and then Secretary General of the United Nations, Boutros Boutros-Ghali, Khieu Samphan said to him that international community would not recognize the elections. HE Boutros Boutros-Ghali responded: “what international community, you just said it yourself.”

Genocidal Regime Not Said

For the Paris Peace Agreement, my demand to include the word genocidal regime in the agreement dragged the negotiation for months. I then visited Japan. Japan mobilized me to withdraw the word I proposed: “to prevent the return of the genocide.” Then Japanese Deputy Foreign Minister Hisashi Owada, later President of Judges of the ICJ (International Court of Justice in The Hague from 2009 through to 2012) and I took some seven hours of negotiation till about 2 am the next day just on one phrase. He assured me: “Pol Pot is to be tried definitely but if we mention it openly in the agreement, other faction would not agree.” It was then that a substitute clause came in: “to prevent the recent past actions.”

It was because of this story that I always have it compared to a Cambodian slogan: “when the buffalo eat rice, I dare not chase it out. When the buffalo walked out on its own, surely I will chase it for you.” When the Khmer Rouge was strong,

everyone just let them go. When we weakened them politically and militarily, everyone now steps out and shouts about there is a need to bring them to justice. On this fact, I said in the course of the negotiation of the Paris Peace Agreement that the most suitable place for the Khmer Rouge leaders was not in the Supreme National Council but in the International Court of Justice. No one dared agree with that. Now they talked more than Hun Sen about bringing them to justice.

In fact, if Pol Pot and his Khmer Rouge organization agreed to join the elections, the Khmer Rouge could have become a legal political party already. What else could one do then? According to the Paris Agreement, there is no mentioning about bringing the Khmer Rouge (leaders) to justice at all. It allows the Khmer Rouge to join the elections. However, because of its wrong decision, the Khmer Rouge became an outlaw. This should explain partly how hard it was to secure peace for the country. If we travel back in time, we would see the war, fighting and then the Pol Pot’s regime. On April 16, I got my eye maimed one day before the liberation of the country on April 17, 1975.

Phone Conversation on Electoral Reform

Today I think I need to bring up an issue, which the press already has your attention, for those of our people who have been waiting for information. Yesterday there was a meeting between HE Sam Rainsy and me over the phone. After numerous negotiations conducted and arranged by HE Prom Sokha of CPP and HE Son Chhay of the CNRP and a number of meetings thereafter between HE Sar Kheng (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior) and HE Sam Rainsy, an issue needs to

be sorted out relating to the election date, which is part of the electoral reform. The press reported that the conversation went on for 40 or 45 minutes. According to my record keeping, it was 44 minutes and 20 seconds.

HE Sam Rainsy’s intention to meet me was to resolve some issues. I arrange for him to have my phone number so that he could call me. We talked about various issues covered by the negotiating team so far. We also came to this issue of election date. He brought up the issue that on 16 September 2013, during the meeting and negotiation of the two political parties, I talked about adjusting the election date from the month of July to the month of January (of the same year). I let him finish what he had to say. He responded: “yes, I did say that regarding the timing of the election and electoral registration.” However, I did not mention about (suggesting the election date moved to) January, I have my recorded speech.

Still, as far as the month to hold election and registration are concerned, we can discuss since they are topics of interest. Voting day in July can be an issue to reschedule because July is the start of rainy season. People are getting busy with their cultivation. As far as voter registration is concerned, we normally do it in October and you may still remember that in 2011, I had to request to the National Election Committee to extend the registration period for flood incident in certain areas. In the summit on 16 September 2013, CNRP proposed to reform only the NEC. I then said that we should reform the elections. NEC is just one of the issues in the whole election thing.

We spent time discussing on two main issues. One relates to the organization of the electoral institution, issues of me-

dia also included. However, the main issue that consumed the most time of the conversation was a draft of the Agreement, the signing of which would have to have a national flag standing in the table in between the flags of the two Parties. I may ask HE Sam Rainsy to please understand the need for me to share yesterday’s conversation with our people. As for the voting month, I suggest that we should try neither to mess up with the Khmer New Year nor to take place in the rainy season. We could either pin the second week of May or moved it further back to January or February or March.

HE Sam Rainsy said people would not have finished their harvests yet in January. However, it was good of him to think of one thing. He suggested the New Year time because people who migrated for jobs in foreign countries could return for New Year and join the election. I asked him the Khmer New Year or International New Year. He said the Khmer New Year. That would correspond to the date proposed by the Cambodian People’s Party for the second week of May, because we need to let our people enjoy the New Year first and the electoral campaign would start thereafter. We would need to discuss further if the campaign should take a 30 days period or less. He then resorted to say the month of February that Samdech just mentioned seems to suit better.

There came another issue – the communal council election, which would happen in June. It is not distant enough from the national election. Since we are talking about reforming the elections, I said, we should set the date for two elections right away. We should set the communal election for February 2017 and the national election for February 2018. We have a space of one year in between. I

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then suggested that he wrote down what we had agreed. Point one, the communal election is to be held in February 2017, and point two, the general election is to be held in February 2018. As we have come to verbal agreement as such, I then proceed to paper work. I told him I would have HE Prom Sokha coming right way to prepare the paper work and would pass to HE Son Chhay.

He then said HE Son Chhay left for Australia already. He said that that was what we had agreed but he needed time to bring it for consultation with HE Kem Sokha, who was in America. HE Sam Rainsy said he would ask HE Kem Sokha to come (to Cambodia) in time for (the signing of the agreement on) April 11. I then said the date he suggested on April 11 fell on Friday, which is a good date. We would need to request for an audience with HM the King probably at nine o'clock in the morning. I also asked him to convince HM Kem Sokha on that matter.

Will There Be An Agreement or Not, Kem Sokha's False

Taking this chance, I would ask involved parties not to make any statement that is contrary to the points that we have agreed. Both sides must have recorded the conversation and I would urge some not to act themselves more extremist on behalf of Sam Rainsy. If ever the agreement will not happen, it is not a mistake from the part of Hun Sen or the Cambodian People's Party or Sam Rainsy or his working team, but from the sole part of Kem Sokha. I do not wish to see anyone acts or speaks wrong of this development. As of yesterday, I still did not lose hope. After a few communications with HE Sar Kheng, he told me that HE Kem Sokha did not agree with the develop-

ment. I did not accept it as formal. However, the fact that there is disagreement between President and the Vice President of the party, that is beyond my comprehension.

Things to Consider Regarding Rescheduling Election

With regard to the communal council election, in fact we also organized the first election in February 2002. Later, they rescheduled the date because of the organization of the Senate election. We also need to reschedule, in the above instance, the election of the Senate either to early or late 2016. The issue relates to the Constitution that IK urge HE Bin Chhin (Deputy Prime Minister) who leads the CPP negotiating team on electoral reform, to figure it out. If we had to move the election schedule to February, it means the election would happen five months before the set date. However, the weather is better and people are on a short break from their cultivation.

The Constitution's article 78 stipulates that the National Assembly has a mandated term of five years and cannot dissolve prior to the date, unless it dissolved the Royal Government twice within a period of twelve months. According to this article, the term of the Royal Government would be until September – as the election law requires that the elections hold every five years on a Sunday of the fourth week of July, plus a formation period of sixty days. So, to have the election held in February instead, five month early, what should we do? Shall there be dissolution of the National Assembly? May HE Bin Chhin look into the issue of possible review of the article 78 (of the Constitution).

The One They Demanded to Step Down Is the One They Needed the Most

I hope that HE Sam Rainsy

would not have any hard feeling to what I have just said. He said to me yesterday, "Samdech, we are old now, we should do good for our people." I think we agreed on the issue since the summit meeting of April 16/17. I said I liked that very much Excellency. Our problem has always been the fact that we always have nice words to say when we meet each other, but when we walk out, scolding starts and we know who always do that. He said it was like that because there was not an agreement yet. It was in a campaign stage. I said if we could avoid scolding each other, we should. We need to create confidence because we will have to sit down working with each other. Finally, the one they demanded to step down is the one they needed the most.

In reality, as far as this problem is concerned, Samdech (Chea Sim) President of the Cambodian People's Party gives me the power to see the matter through. After the meeting, we have a team consisting of HE Say Chhum, Sar Kheng, Bin Chhin, Men Sam An, etc. to conduct meeting along with the flow, and I had my instruction written on the various documents they sent to me on that matter. We have come this far, should (HE Sam Rainsy) let HE Kem Sokha veto the deal, I think it would be a disappointment. As for the Cambodian People's Party, the Central Committee carries out the CPP's work between a Party congress and another. Between the congresses of the Central Committee, the permanent committee will take the stage.

On Khmer New Year 2014

In 1975, it was during the Khmer New Year that war raged out. People could not celebrate New Year as the Khmer Rouge forces came into the city of Phnom Penh. Now we have the chance to

celebrate New Year. I hope that our people are welcoming the New Year with joy and happiness. It is a good thing weeks before the New Year, early rain fell almost everywhere in the country. It lessened the fact of blowing dust but at the same time kept the green grass growing for animals.

I would once again appeal to our people on the Khmer New Year to welcome the New Year, while observing the sacrifices of the Cambodian armed forces, who fulfill their missions either at the border or at the road junctions. Physicians also have had to be on a permanent duty to take care of the sick and accident-caused casualty. I also wish in my letter a prosperous New Year to our people, the armed forces, the peacekeeping forces on mission in South Sudan, Lebanon and Mali, and the civil servants as well as the Buddhist monks. The same wish goes to those people of ours residing in foreign countries and diplomats in the Year of Horse 2558 by the Lunar calendar...☐

at commuters caused them to fell of their means of transports and spreading powder on people's faces, etc.

Lastly, I would urge the hotels, guesthouses and all restaurants not to jack up their prices too high. Please follow the rule of selling at a low price but for a large quantity. If you jack up the price, you may lose customers because they would not come back again next time. Also, if in one place things go out of control in terms of price, there are many tourist spots in Cambodia and they may choose to go elsewhere. Because we have better road conditions and even to a farer distance, more and more people will choose to go to a new location and I am sure there will not be too many people in one place...☐

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source. Take for instance, Cambodia, everyone learns that Cambodia is one of the natural-resource abundant nations. However, the country is still a poor one. The country is poor because of war and divisions. We are now 44 years from the war that the former generation made in 1970. It was a big war. Though we ended the war in 1998, we still have insurmountable war consequences and remnants to deal with.

Those killed in the war could not be alive again while those maimed had to put on artificial limbs. We still have to deal with removing unexploded ordnances in all construction projects that add up to the original costs. On various cases, though we search and remove on various occasions the mines and unexploded ordnances, we still need to double check the terrain with the help of Cambodian Mines Action Centre (CMAC). We did that with the construction projects of the bridges of Neak Loeng and Tonle Bassac, and the search and remove mission carried out underwater.

Conclusively, this is the consequence of wrong political leadership. Once that is the case, thing becomes destructive on human resource factor as well. That was the case of the genocidal regime of Pol Pot, where and when they took up the preemptive measures to destroy human resource. Learning from the case of Singapore, it is required that correct political leadership must go along with well-developed human resource. Both of them go in tandem. You should understand that incorrect political leadership would definitely bring the country on the path of no economic growth or development. It will be the path treaded by Lon Nol and Pol Pot.

You may want to learn about

one old experience from March 17, 1970. In one instance, they told you to uproar 'Long live Samdech Ov.' At another, on March 18, you had to shout a different slogan 'Down with Sihanouk.' People thought that Lon Nol would be a better choice. It turned out that he brought the country to a real war. Demonstration against Lon Nol gave the Khmer Rouge a perfect opportunity. Three million people died after that. These are real experiments and if we fail to learn from them, we may have them repeated in the future.

Difficult to Close Gap of Wealth

The other day at the annual review meeting of the Ministry of Education, I made some comments on how difficult it is to close the wealth gap than to reduce the gap of knowledge among our people. A radio station from a foreign country made a story out of it that Hun Sen said it is impossible to close the gap of wealth among people. While calling themselves professional and independent analysts, they twisted the story though TVs and radio broadcast my speech in full. I just advise you on one point that the more you tell people twisted facts, you will risk losing your chance of convincing people, especially in this very case that people have a reference material to compare your argument and statement to.

Pros & Cons Demonstrations

As we are approaching the Khmer New Year, I would not want to make any political messages but I would just remind of the fact that I have said very often about sustaining state and regularizing political and socio-economic life of the people. As I told HE Nhek Bun Chhay once at the Royal School of Administration (about then political impasse) that in a military term

that if it is difficult to talk to you then stop talking to you is the best way. That was what I said. I also argued on the fact that whether the Royal Government was then a stand-by or whatever, we just kept going. In 2003, we could even establish a new government because of the political gridlock of a two third majority.

As of the present, there should not be any difficulties. In 2003, we could survive even we did not have the new government established. As for now, we already have a new Royal Government. We must be able to live on. There is nothing to worry about now. Just get yourselves prepared for the Khmer New Year. I do not understand why every time they threaten to launch a demonstration. I warn them of a situation where there could be a pros demonstration too. When things turned bad in Ukraine, they threatened us with two million protesters. I would not want to give bad wording message. However, let our people enjoy the Khmer New Year as they should be.

They always look for support from foreign embassy. I used to tell one of the foreign diplomats that if the person was wanted, we could have done it as well. When he is in your embassy, the Royal Government will not take action, I told him. He is in your diplomatic car the Royal Government will not take action. When he is in the plane, even when the plane is on its taxiing, we can call it back and get the person arrested still. The Royal Government or authority would not see that a proper way to do it. All I am saying is to advise that you should not play with the extreme. Could you not stop bragging about demonstration for a while?

Insults to the King and Constitutional Council

As for the issue regarding one opposition leaders wrote a

letter to insult HM the King, it seems that lawyers are coming out and giving their opinions on that matter. Some pinpointed that according to articles 7 and 8, (the letter was) not an insult to HM the King. I agree. However, that person should not forget that he also committed a crime against the Constitutional Council, for which the Royal Government will take into serious consideration. It is punishable to act against the Constitutional Council. Just you look at the law. The person may want to be reminded of crimes he committed before (in inciting situations at Veng Sreng road, Stoenj Meanjei area) and later together, the punishment by law would not be small.

I do not threaten him but to tell him in advance before the Khmer New Year. I wish mishaps are gone along with the old year. He always resorted to demonstration since 1990s. They go as far as telling people that the Royal Cambodian Armed Forces are not neutral. In this whole world, there has never been a case that the army, police and all types of armed forces are supporting the opposition and against the government. When the United States sent their troops into Cambodia, Vietnam and Laos, did they do that on their own? Is it not because their government ordered them? Last week we sent more remains of the fallen American soldiers and we are still accounting for more.

Be Prepared for War to Avert War

As the army and/or the civil servants, they would have to listen to the government. Should they do otherwise, like supporting the opposition and going against the government, it would be nothing else but the coup. I am speaking it out loud today and I will talk less on April 10, another event with a

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closer date to the Khmer New Year, so as not to scare the new deity. It is said to evade from making a real war one has to organize for war. So, to refrain from having problem during the Khmer New Year, to leave our people enjoy the event, it is worth speaking loudly in advance. The man with power to command the forces is here.

Some claimed themselves to be independent analysts have a wrong opinion about this. For any political party, when they come to power, the first thing to do is to get a firm hold of the armed forces and the administration. They cannot afford to have any minister respect no order from them. Look what happened in Bangkok. In the course of endless demonstration, anti-government protesters tried and occupied ministries so they could not proceed with normal functioning. Conclusively, in short, let us all enjoy the Khmer New Year.

Demanding Hun Sen to Step Down and to Negotiate at the Same Time

While there is ongoing threat of demonstration, undisclosed negotiation has also gone on. While declaring to no longer meet there is still an ongoing meeting. There has been a concern expressed from the other side that their opinion has not forwarded properly to me. I told them in return that they all came to me. As for the draft of agreement came to one point short, it is hard to presume when it could reach the ultimate result. Sometimes it is like a balloon that bursts in splits of a second. Self-proclaimed independent analysts said politicians from the two sides work so slow that they would not have good result as present for the people.

For the Royal Government, the most important issue is to guarantee normal functioning of the state - the senate, National

Assembly, Royal Government and at the same time, as a political party - and to seek also to achieve coordination. However, in the course of coordinating, the opposition keeps talking about demonstration but, at the same time, they send their envoys to come talk to us. In the mean time, they also express concern if everything does not convey to Prime Minister Hun Sen. They go about telling people to demand Hun Sen's step-down but they are concerned Hun Sen does not hear what they wanted.

This morning I delegated the matter to HM Sar Kheng for a consultation. As I said, it is hard but it could as well be easy. That is politics. It can be conflicting and getting cool in no time. Take the case of Samdech Krom Preah (Norodom Ranaridh) and me in 2003. We let the negotiating teams from both sides to sit and talk for a solution. They failed to do it. There came a day when Samdech Krom Preah called me and said 'Should we not have a short meeting?' I said 'A meeting would be good.' I even suggested a meeting at his residence. What that failed in two-month negotiation reached an agreement after a fifteen-minute meeting.

That is why I am saying no one could underestimate the potential of being resolved. We might as well bring the agreement to a signature ceremony before HM the King. If that does not happen, what will be of it? Then we go on this way. We may be tough on the outside at each other but continue to negotiate behind the screen. You may remember that Neo Kassy was spokesperson of FUNCINPEC and Khieu Kanharith was spokesperson of the Cambodian People's Party. When Samdech Krom Preah and I came into one term, Neo Kassy did not know. He talked of thing that is completely different from his boss.

Constitutional Amendment

I would disclose today a story to show you the collaboration between HE Sam Rainsy and I on issue of the Constitutional amendment. HE Sam Rainsy wrote a letter proposing a Constitutional amendment from two-third majority to absolute majority or 50 + 1 formula. What is contradictory is that now he proposes to organize the election committee as a constitutional body with a two-third majority formula. We remove this formula because it was a blocking to the creation of the Royal Government. Now that we resort to this pattern of two-third majority again, what would we do if we could not organize elections? HE Sam Rainsy proposes this.

Between HE Sam Rainsy and I, we used to cooperate to do major work on Constitutional amendment. He went to my house to talk to me some hours. I told him to bring the issue to the attention of Samdech Krom Preah but I thought at the time that Samdech Krom Preah would not agree to change from a two-third to 50+1 formula at all. I then called HE Sam Rainsy on the Meakbucha day and he was at Oddorus mount pagoda to tell him to write a letter to the President of the National Assembly and the Prime Minister for that matter. He agreed. The letter arrived at my house before 12 am. See, it is funny. When he said I am a foreign puppet, in this case he is whose then.

At the meeting with Samdech Krom Preah, I think they remember two questions. Firstly, after the amendment, what happens to the alliance between the Cambodian People's Party and Funcinpec? I said 'there is nothing happens to it.' Secondly, leaders of Funcinpec asked what if it does not participate in the National Assembly to change the Constitution, what would Samdech (Hun

Sen) think. I do not know from who exactly the question is but I asked whether the person knows how to add up. What would come out of 73 plus 24?

That is why it is hard to predict political development. Example, suddenly, after waking up from his sound sleeping with good dream, he wanted to meet the Prime Minister on the phone. I just suppose. Meeting on the phone is not that difficult. A channel presenting on TV tells the meeting has postponed but another channel in disguise goes on and is closer to an agreement. Well that is how much I can let go and if things do not go this way I suppose, we may have thing just the way they are now.

Appeals on the Khmer New Year

In fact, I am so happy that in the past three months our civil servants have received their salaries in a timely manner. This must go on forever. In the time of Khmer New Year, I would appeal to the armed forces, authorities of all level, cities and provincial towns to take care of security, public order and defend our people in their joy to pass the old year to a new one. I am sure our people will enjoy the holiday as in early 2014 the Riel currency is gaining its value against USD. Because of demand for more Riel currency, perhaps its value would go further up. I would urge the National Bank of Cambodia to look after this matter.

Secondly, I would urge safe commuting and travelling. All efforts must be made to go to the holiday and to come back home safely. If driving is according to the traffic regulation, we would be able to avert accidents. Thirdly, it is not our tradition to exercise splashing water and powder at each other during the time of the New Year. It has been a bad practice in the past that splashing water

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