



22 August 2014 – Prime Minister Samdech Techo Hun Sen received Japanese House of Councilors led by its Deputy Head H.E. Azuma Koshiishi (Kampuchea Thmei).

Food Security and Nutrition Workshop

(18 August 2014 — Unofficial Selection and Translation)

In addition to prepared speech in the dissemination workshop on National Strategy for Food Security and Nutrition (NSFSN) Samdech Techo made comments on a number of issues:

Percentage of People Living Below Poverty Line

In addition to the prepared text, I wish to say a few things in relation to issue of nutrition and the overall development of our country. It is true that we have bright down the poverty rate of Cambodia at 100% in 1979 to a little below 19% now. We can quantify how many of the 15 million people still live under the poverty line. There is this issue of how many people who live barely above the poverty line while there is a high risk that those who already came out of poverty would fall below the poverty line again for fact of natural calamity or other factors. In 2008, the year when financial crisis and economic downturn

started, we had concern that those who already came above of poverty line would fall back in. In that same time, we also had one heavy seasonal Mekong flood after the other. These difficulties have put us in a challenging position to guarantee that our people would deprive of everything. We gave it serious efforts.

Climate Change, US and China Involved in Nutrition

There are many objective factors including also issue of climate change, for which we have to adapt to a new state of the weather condition. I would like to take this opportune moment to express my sincere thanks and appreciations to various partners. We also have the presence of Ambassador William Todd of the United States of America. We have noted with thanks the USAID involvement in various levels on nutrition and active participation and action with other

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Norton Graduates' Diploma Presenting

(11 August 2014 — Unofficial Selection and Translation)

With Peace We Make Education

I am so happy to return for the graduation ceremony for 2,501 students of the Norton University. The University's rector Chan Sokheang has made a report already relating to the progress made by the University. All I could recall is that the University was the one that actively takes part in the implementation of the Royal Government's policy on issue of private investment in the field of education. I remember that in 1997, I came for the inauguration of the university itself. I am quite encouraged by the fact that in time that the coun-

try was still in war, the rector, who was then a single man, dared to invest in establishing this university.

It is not a simple matter. As we are at this point of time, looking back, we see the difference between the size of investment then and now. We have no intention to disvalue those who follow later but it is worth remembering that anything we achieved in a difficult situation has a high value to cherish. No less, peace that we have obtained with numerous difficulties leads us to recognizing its value. It is not simple that we

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BELTEI International Uni.'s Graduation

(21 August 2014 — Unofficial Selection and Translation)

Cambodian Human Resource – Ready for AEC

I am glad to preside over the graduation and diploma presentation ceremony of our students at the BELTEI International University (BIU) and the inauguration of the new 15 storey BIU building. HE Ly Chheng, rector of the BIU has made a report on the development of this foundation – I mean you have BELTEI International Institute and BELTEI International University. I highly appreciate your active involvement in human resource development. According to the report, today we have 735 graduates for diploma presentation. As indicated in his progress report, up to 96.50% of graduates who learnt and used English as

means have found employment.

This is very good point as we are promoting our labor force in face of ASEAN integration. Having said that does not mean every university abandons Khmer language in their curriculum. In Cambodia now, students learn a foreign language along with the Khmer language since before they enter the university. However, from experience I have with my kids, I urge that students must have a good working level of Khmer as well as for-

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partners. Her Excellency Ambassador of the People's Republic of China is also here with us. The PRC also involves in various actions in augmenting food security in Cambodia by means of providing capital in the construction of infrastructure, which definitely has positive impacts on farming too.

Cambodia's Remaining Potential

There was a time I took a flight on a helicopter with former President of the Asian Development Bank, now the President of the Central Bank of Japan, on our way from Phnom Penh to Poi Pet town at the Cambodian Thai border to oversee the rail section. I told him area underneath our flight is the remaining Cambodian potential. He was stunned as beneath us is land in dry season and there does not seem to have even grass. I told him all we needed is water. For area where we cultivate only once a year, and in short of irrigation too, if we were to resolve the water need for irrigation, we would be able to double or triple our cultivation. That is our potential.

I enlightened that we are working on 2.4 million hectares of rainy season rice. We can provide somewhat irrigation to about half of this area only. As of the recent lack of rain, it has been hard for us to find water sources in the provinces of Kompong Speu, Takeo and Kompot to save some rice cultivation. As you can see, we have been dealing with drought on one side and flood on the other.

From Extensive to Intensive Development

The objective of moving from extensive to intensive development is still the goal of the Royal Government. What do I mean by extensive and intensive development method? In

the past, it was our pattern of thought that in a family of five, they needed to have one hectare of land to cultivate. When the family members increased to ten, they would need two or three hectares of land. We cannot go on with this trend anymore otherwise we would have our forest anarchically transformed into rice field. This pattern of cultivation would require more labor and output have always been incommensurate. Normally, one notes that their labor and capital investment into cultivation of that sort always meet with losses.

Our solution here is to change from extensive farming to intensive one. It means we must increase feeding capacity of available land. If we feed five people with one hectare of land cultivation, we should do so for ten or 15 people. This would require use of latest agricultural and agronomic technology. It is still important to take irrigation as a priority. If we were to compare with neighboring countries, Thailand on one side and Vietnam on the other, their soil has been working without a break. They plow land preparing for another crop behind their harvest. In Cambodia, our soil works only four or five months in a year. For the rest of the year, it is just pasture for animals.

Title of Economic Land Concession, Tiger Skin-Like Land Situation

As far as land settlement is concerned, providing land title or more land from the economic land concession must be promoted seriously and conscientiously. I still demand relevant institutions and sub-national level authority to work hard on this. Often, I learnt of some of the problems from the press. People came to my house holding my picture and that of my wife. Whether the local authority resolve this matter is the question. One

time in Kratie, the press wrote about the case and I knew about it from passing by, I called immediately to find out what happened. Finally, they have resolved it.

In the most recent Cabinet meeting, I already said there is no need to wait for recommendations from Prime Minister. Each ministry has its own organic law and sub-decree on the organization and functioning. They should not wait for Prime Minister to recommend what to do. I hear that people are on their way from Kratie to protest on land issue. It seemed that their lands have been measured by the volunteer youth already but for any reason they have not got their land titles yet. Where is the Kratie provincial authority on this matter? Why do they allow protesters to come all the way to Phnom Penh?

When the news came to me, I first called HE Bin Chhin and then I called my own son, Hun Manith, who is a member of the Land Dispute Resolution Committee (LDRC). My question was if the matter had not been solved, why they did not move quickly to resolve the case. They then resolved one case. Now, another group of protestors comes. These problems arisen from what I used to mention about the zebra or tiger skin situation. They could have found what I was talking about both in the meeting and public statement concerning dispute in the case of economic land concession.

It has always been my position that investors can choose between making and leaving their investment concerning the provided land size of concession. If they stick to, says, 5,000 hectares in one piece, they may reconsider their investment as they wish. Let me remind you on the tiger skin-like situation that we have made it clear in the letter of notification that every invest-

ment should halt their action when it comes to dispute with people. In area where there is land dispute, should the land not cultivate yet, it is then people's land. I have said it on many occasions already that so far we have managed land according to the map. They carry their map around looking for land in forest coverage. Finally, I handed out land titles to people in the marked "forestland" area.

Deputy Prime Minister HE Sok An and former Agricultural Minister HE Chan Sarun went with me to Takeo province. On the map, the land was marked as forestland. When we were there, there was no such thing as forest. It was all rice and cashew nut fields. That is why I said we have managed so far land on the map. It was for the same reason that I trimmed the state land where people occupied, including the ones with court order to confiscate, and give them back to the people. In the CPP's meetings, I even said "those land belong to no parents of yours." I would urge concerned officials once again that dispute happens in any one province, is provincial authority must take up responsibility.

If People Cannot, Why Can Investors

If any problem arising from land concerned with companies, we must look for objective factors. When people come to occupy certain land, it is not yet a legal occupation. They cleared forest on various spots that we marked on map as forestland. While we cannot give land marked as forestland to the people, it turns out that we can offer them in concession to investors. That is where injustice lies. While it is marked as depleted forestland area that they cannot give out to people but to investors, I would also oppose if I were in the opposition. People settled

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on those lands for four or five years already. We do not give them right to legally own the lands. Meanwhile we offer the same type of lands to investors. Please think about it. You are senior citizens and intellectuals.

Let me remind a story in 2000/1. The Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries made a recommendation to me in relation to the teak forest which was partly destroyed in between 1970 and 1975 and later depleted completely when people claimed land and got those teakwood to build their houses. They grew other long-term crops in replacement of teak wood, settled with newly built homes in the areas. The Ministry recommended that the Royal Government take back the teak wood area. I did not agree with the idea. I wrote back "please go plant teak in the reserved area for people to resettle to." It was not yet the time of HE Chan Sarun as Minister of Agriculture. The late Minister Chhea Song was then in sickbed.

Winning Will Gain Land, Losing Will Gain Cash

As it has been a repetitive case, I have had to speak about it again. If the land provided as concession to investors infringes upon land belonged to the people, any resolution to the dispute must give priority to the people. In every land dispute case, it is not always true that people concerned are right. There have been various moves in strategy of winning will gain land and losing will gain cash. In some places, applying this strategy, sometimes people built 200 cottages and protected them with photos of Prime Minister and his wife. Sometimes they even used the picture of HM the King. I would urge those belonged to this case to seek land from social land concession program.

I am calling on concerned authorities to move swiftly in their work and responsibility. They should not stay idle or use force to prevent people from coming and diverting them to a different direction. (As for the above matter) the people's petition does not reach me. I strongly urge HM Im Chhun Lim to take the lead in this matter.

Company and Local People Inter-Relatedness

In Tumring, Kompong Thom in 2008, I talked a lot about inter-relatedness between companies and local people. I made it clear there would be benefits for every party if people in the region have the chance to use infrastructure in and around the invested areas. I even talked about job integration. For instance, let us take the sugarcane farm for example. People who own land in the farm area would grow sugarcane and sell them to the sugar factory. That is harmonious. Those people would serve as laborers in the factory too. The company and people would well complement each other. However, that has not been the case. A controversial case brought us to problems.

If anyone is not up to the task or would not be interested in working, they may want to resign. Let me reaffirm the priority for the people who have settled in one place for a long time already. If they came in for a short time only, we have reason to control the issue otherwise we would have no public land left. I hope the US would not support those who claim public land like parks. I am resolving this for no one but for the people. Some lands given to investors have not been under any cultivation. They risk being deprived and returned to the Ministry of Land Management, Urban Planning and Construction, not to the Ministry of Agriculture.

Returned land will be for social

land concession for people who need land for cultivation. It should serve the purpose of improving food and nutrition and poverty reduction through higher productivity. I seem to have spoken a lot but I cannot hold it any further. As we have everyone here, including also provincial heads, I think it is good to talk about it. I am urging you to resolve the issue. If protestors would continue to come to Phnom Penh without relevant provincial authority awareness and/or effort to resolve the case, I think there are many more who would like to have the post of provincial governors.

Therefore, it is my recommendation that every province take the responsibility setting up their dispute resolving mechanism in such a way that no matter is left unattended. They should not be idle and standing still. Let me remind that we have between 18% and 20% below the poverty line but there is also a risk that those slightly above the line could have fallen back in again. Our issue is serious. If you do not take swift action, it will continue to be like this. Let us make combined efforts.

National Assembly Leadership Election, Educational Reforms

Some of you have talked about deadlock. I did not see any as I continued to work here. I wish to send out a message though on why it is late to go about electing the National Assembly leadership. Today, President of the National Assembly is on his official visit to foreign country. Next Tuesday, there will be an election. I would reassure that the Cambodian People's Party will implement its promise to vote to elect candidates from the CNRP. For me, I do not see any deadlock.

As far as the secondary school exam this year is concerned, we are picking up the process

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down the Mekong River line. Beside seasonal Mekong flooding, we also have a number of provinces affected by heavy rain. In all, 13 provinces affected by the Mekong and rain flooding. The first wave of flood is gradually over.

We are also expecting the second wave of flooding, especially during the Prochum Ben Day... I may call on our people to take the most benefit from the first flooding. There are roughly 25 storms a year and we just had 12 so far.

I demand that our people keep being vigilant. They should for example not leave their children home without elderly attendance and study the weather before taking long travel on water. In time of flooding, we must look out for poisonous animals that are seeking for high ground too...■

of reforms. This year, the rate of passing exam would be around 30% only compared to over 80% from the previous years. A strict measure had been in practice to combat irregularity in every exam. We have decided to allow a retest on October 13. Along with this, we also have one more thing to change in education. Every year, our school day starts on October 1. At that time, some of the schools in some places could be under flood, still. Therefore, it is important for us to change the school day of next school year to start at the later part of October or early November. We will have to maintain same learning period – nine months.

We must take a new approach to prevent our students from lethal accidental risks. The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports must come up with a new school year calendar. We will have it in the national calendar year. We have to steer the calendar away from a few national events...■

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sought for peace for a country divided and ravaged by genocide and tragedy of internal war. We have brought this country along away from being the one with many factions and areas under different control to one with no more war but lasting peace and unified territory. We made it happen. We must protect it.

Win-win policy has continued to bring people numerous chances. If we were to be in the state of war and division, it would not be possible to expand our efforts in education as we have been doing so far. At the time of the establishment of the Norton University in the 1990s, we were in the process of integrating into the fold of the nation areas like Pailin, Samlot, Malai, Phnom Proek. We did then for Oaral and Taken Koh Sla. Unfortunately, before the inauguration of the University, there was a military clash in Phnom Penh. However, the rector was not scared away. He invited me to preside over the inauguration ceremony in 1997. Now the university moves from the area of Old market in Phnom Penh downtown to across the bridge of Jroj Jangva. We will have one more bridge in place that our students can go to and from easily.

No Discrimination between State and Private University

As is known to everyone, I have no discrimination in my policy. I would let the state enterprises fall but not the private sector. If I were to have time, I could have written it. Take for instance, it took me lots of time and in various places to finish a book titled "Cambodia's Ten Years March." There is a point in it that I mentioned about a fact that happened in the industrial sector then. In one of our factories run by the state at Takhmao, Kandal province, they produce the outer cover

for bicycle. They could not sell it. In one of the Cabinet's meeting, Minister of Industry Ho Noun, proposed to me, I think HE Chhay Than, Minister of Planning could have remembered that, to close down private shops that produced the outer covers.

What an awkward proposal. They based their argument on the fact that in order to keep the factory alive, as their outer covers could not sell in competition with those available at the private shops, the Ministry of Industry proposes to close down those private workshops. I responded, no, I would allow the state factory to die but I would not do a thing to cause disruption to the private workshops. It is a true story that happened in the government in that stage of our history. You can find it in my book.

Once again, in relation to education, there has never been any discrimination as to state or private schools or universities. In fact, as you may have noticed, I came to events of private education institutions more than I did to the state ones. There is one field though that we cannot allow private sector to take over. That is the national defense issue. No private institution can do that. We have state-run national defense university. We also need to have ones for the national police. We also need to strengthen education in area of medicine as it is important to national security and human life.

However, in general, there is no discrimination between learning in state or private education institutions. We also provide fee-paying chances for students who fail to get scholarships. We provide equal chance and students will pay similar amount for their studies. I would like to take this opportune moment to thank the University for providing me so far some 350 scholar-

ships, 50 of whom are here to be presented with diplomas, which I gave to those who could not make it financially to continue their studies.

Quantity Vs Quality, Retest for Grade-Twelve Students

The rector of Norton University raised this issue of measuring a balance between quantity and quality. I agree. Without achieving a sum of quantity, one would not stand a chance to screen for quality. It is also true that with quantity achieved, if no efforts are made to achieve quality, it is also to guarantee a breakthrough. Take for instance in the grade-twelve exam this year, the Ministry of Education introduces various reforms aimed at making our students to work hard with their studies. As we are in the process of correcting papers, primary estimates from HE Hang Chuon Naron, Minister of Education, Youth and Sports, the rate of passing exam will not be as high as in every other year at 80%. We will not let failed students lose their chances.

According to the preparation made by the Ministry, we will run a retest for failed students in a period between one and a half or two months. He proposes the methodology to me and I have supported it. Those who failed in the first exam will stand to take a retest or second exam allowed by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports. We are satisfied to spend a bit more money so that our students will work harder to get their true grade. There have been question that if they fail the second chance exam, what is going to happen?

There will be two options. Firstly, s/he can study in the same grade for another year and take the exam the year after. We allow them to go on with their study. What happens if s/he fails the exam after repeating his grade? The Minis-

try of Education will have to think about allowing them to continue their studies to specialized skill training institutions. I think we will need to discuss further and the Ministry of Education will have to come up with something.

Opting for lowering grade admitted to pass is concerned, we should not neglect the fact that we need to guarantee real quality in addition to concern that some may fail still to pass. We used to have this practice of lowering grade for students' performance in exam. However, I do not feel it is the right thing to do. I have discovered that the practice would neglect guaranteeing quality. Let me recall a case at the US Military Academy at West Point. I visited my son there. Out of our discussion, they let me know that they only take ten foreign students per program. If anyone applicant fails to fulfill the requirement, they would rather leave the place vacant. It is a university with strict policy.

Climate Change, Second Surge of Flood Warning

After people finish their feast for the flood spirit, the flood would recede. However, we are anticipating the second surge of flood sometime at the time we organize our traditional alms offering ceremony Prochum Ben. That is our mark. In 2012, the year of dragon, we predicted the flood to be a large one. It turned out to be small. In 2013, when normally the year of snake the flood is small, we had a big one. In 2014, the year of horse, according to our weather forecast ability, the flood is going to be big. For Phnom Penh, the second surge would reach between 10.2 and 10.3 meters, while the emergency level in Phnom Penh is 10.5 meters.

In this respect, I am calling on our authorities concerned to continue to pay attention on this matter. The flood has re-

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ceded in upper provinces of Stoeng Treng and Kratie now. Nevertheless, traditionally it will surge again. In that case, there will be a need for us to keep watching and get ready to evacuate people and their animals to safety areas or higher ground. As in many provinces of the country are affected by flood, some have experienced drought – Kompong Speu, Takeo, etc. This is a similar pattern of flooding and drought in 2001 and 2002, when water in the river surged high but there were no rain in many areas, where pumping was necessary. More efforts needed to prevent death from flood related incidents.

Regular Socio-Economic Life Strengthened

At the end of July and starting this August, regularization of the state institution and regular socio-economic life of the people have strengthened thank to the reconciliation between parties with seats in the National Assembly. I have made it clear in our strategy to guarantee regular state of being of legislative, executive and court. It has gone through smoothly. We attend the ASEAN meeting. We are presenting students with their diplomas. Even if there were no meeting at the National Assembly last week, I would still come here as scheduled to preside over the ceremony. National construction, security and social order maintaining is a normal working process but we can do them better with political settlement.

I spoke in the National Assembly after the note by HE Sam Rainsy that if this spirit came one year ago, there would have been nothing like what had happened. That has clarified that everything we did were correct. HM the King presided over the first opening meeting of the newly elected National Assembly. It was correct. We

then created the Royal Government. That were correct. It has made things better with presence of other elected members of the National Assembly. No matter what, being late is better than never. As things go the right way, regularity of state institutions – legislative and executive, and that of the court, will continue to work harder to resolve and improve people's socio-economic living conditions, while promoting deeper reforms in all fields.

In Cambodia, there are times when we have got to be patient. Going through our history, one would note that between the elections in 1998 to 2003, there had always been a mess to take care of. It was even harder than this one in 2013. That is why we need to exercise reform so that the younger generation would have a reconciling period among Khmer and need no foreign intervention in our affairs. I would not approve that. I would go for talk between Khmer and Khmer. We need HM the King's approval and he is the number one person in Cambodia, not the Secretary General of the United Nations or President of so and so. That is my resolute position.

Take for instance, the country nearby made a power transfer through the military coup. However, in the end, to legitimize their being, they needed approval of HM the King. That is how things go. No one has the power to convene the first opening meeting of the National Assembly or to issue a Royal decree to assign Prime Minister, who then has to form the cabinet. HM the King has the sole authority to sign the Royal decree. It is in this understanding that I deem it useless to seek foreign intervention to resolve internal affairs.

Consequences of Foreign Interventions

Take the case of Middle East,

for example. What happens now to Libya? Iraq? Many countries are congratulating President Barack Obama for approving air strikes in Iraq. I do not wish to pick on Mr. President but it has clearly shown in the Indochina war in which no matter how strong support the airstrikes were, the Lon Nol regime fell. The US had to leave Cambodia, Vietnam and Laos. Militarily, whoever has the advantage of infantry they have the chance of getting the upper hand.

In a dinner with the US President HE Barack Obama, I asked about the situation in Syria. The US seemed to have known fully well that there are various resistant forces in Syria. Among them, there consists those terrorist force or extremist groups. It was no different to the time of Mujahideen, led by Osama Bin Laden, fighting against the former Soviet occupation of Afghanistan. The one whom the US helps becomes the one that fights the US. This has become a concern for many western nations in providing assistance to the resistant forces against the government of President Assad in Damascus. Now the force has grown in size and annexed a part of Syria. I am worried Libya would be similar.

Let Our Nation Stand

I have said it even before the elections (2013) that we should not let our race for the elections lead to division of our nation. I repeated it after we finished the elections. Now the time has clearly shown that politicians always have their twists and turns. Politicians are who they are. That is why I always remind everyone not to be someone more than that person is himself. Finally, they all sit in the National Assembly. Politicians can be compared as short canoes/boats. Take for instance it was the people's decision not to join the National Assembly.

As the situation turned, they all said now it is the people's will for them to join the National Assembly to wage battle in there.

People should be happy, no matter for what party they gave their votes that we have come to this time. I am sure not all of you here voted for the Cambodian People's Party. However, you should have the feeling that this person in front of you is the Prime Minister of the country. No one has the love of everyone. Not even God Buddha or Christ. If everyone loves God Buddha, there would not be Christ or Allah. That is democracy and pluralism. We had to go through insulting words like unilateral or half-full National Assembly, etc. It is now a full one. We know it is just coming late. This is a true story and it should not be suffering for anyone but a victory for our people in the whole country. Let our people rejoice as final winners.

As political confrontation dies down, I proposed to HE Sam Rainsy as well as our people to take note of the good words he mentioned. Let us wait and see if anyone calls me the Yuon (Vietnamese) puppet. I think they should stop. It is not acceptable. Otherwise, they would work with the Vietnamese puppet in the National Assembly. Let us stop the culture of coloring one another. The policy of fish eating ants when flood surges and ants eating fish when flood recedes should stop. In 1970s, when there was a coup against Samdech Preah Norodom Sihanouk and when the Khmer Rouge took power, they executed those who were close to Sangkumreastriyum or popular socialist society of Samdech Sihanouk and close to Lon Nol regime. In some countries, as we can see, there has no end yet.

Especially racism and religious

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WU Graduates' Diploma Presenting

(04 August 2014 — Unofficial Selection and Translation)

Crisis in America and Europe, BRICS

Study is a thing that needs to continue. It should not end when you achieve a certification of a study program. There is no end to it. As you can imagine, technology and world or regional situation has made innovation around the clock. Who could have imagined about the economic crisis and slowdown in America and Europe in 2008. No one had predicted that. It was easier to deal with what happened in 1997 that we called the Asian economic crisis because in those days China and India were not affected by it. On the other hand, their firm stands also helped markets in Asia.

I made a comparison that the 1997 Asian economic crisis was no different to a sheep fell dying on elephants' feet. However, for the 2008 world financial crisis and economic slowdown, it was like a falling dead elephant and on to the sheep. In 1997, while helping Asia, China also lent a hand to regional and world economy. As a developing country, we are glad to welcome the creation of a new financial institution – BRICS, where the five architecting states – Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa are pooling fund together. Their cooperation would help eventually size down the degree of dependency on some monopole financial institutions, while augmenting development pace of poor and developing countries.

Now there is this other initiative to create another regional bank by China, South Korea and ASEAN countries. Its negotiation is underway. Cambodia will be one of the architecting members. China will work on this with South Korea. When it comes to being, we will have more than one bank

to look for funding. That does not mean we are ignoring the role of the Asian Development Bank at all. BRICS – no matter how big it is, it will not play a replacing role to those of the World Bank and International Monetary Fund. It will only give more power to weaker countries and reduce dependency to only one option.

University Should Have Own Think Tank

These matters would require a lot of analytical and critical thinking. If Cambodia at this time possesses ample human resource and can take part in such a bank, it would be great for us to take up our presence. We had two of our nationals working at Asian Development Bank and one as the deputy General Secretary of ASEAN. Now you can see that this is calling for continuing study. Developments of the world situation require that we are approaching and evaluating issues in a comprehensive manner. It would be great if every university could create a think tank of its own, whose analysis could feed into the flow of thought in the Royal Government ...

The world situation seems to have changed a lot. We are not moving to a unipolar but a multipolar world. The former Soviet Union disappeared but Russia, China, India and Europe has become powerful nation/s in its own way. We have more and not only one powerful nation. This has brought us back almost to the time of cold war. As you can see, the game of punishing this or that country, arms race and sale has grown to a bigger size than what happened under the cold war era. It is owing to the fact that countries are making economic progress and getting richer, they have resorted to stockpiling their weapons,

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conflict have become an issue. We have seen conflict between Buddhism and Buddhist followers with Muslim. We also see that a de facto Islamic State exists between Syria and Iraq. They have been telling the Christians to leave or they will kill them. That is how far they could get. Hope when people see their political leaders reconcile they also do at their levels. I do not wish to see division between those at one end of the village in conflict with those in the central part or the other end of the village. We all cultivate rice. They all need irrigation, market, bridges, schools and hospitals.

Salary Recall Rests On Constitutional Council

Well, finally we are a bit happy. That we have a bit more money, it is not real. We have to try working for it. People must not think now that everyone goes to the National Assembly there is no need for everyone to stop working. However, I wish to raise one

destroyers and aircrafts. I think the world spends more money on arms than in the time of cold war.

Geopolitics is changing while territorial disputes, terrorism and racial and religious issues broke out almost everywhere. Days before coming here, I attended the Islamic Feast of Breaking the Fast Ramadan of our Muslim community. I was so happy and proud of harmonization of races and religions in our country. We may belong to different faiths/religions but we never cause problem because of our religious tendency. We are proud to see that in any given ceremony in the Royal Palace, we always see participation from the various sects of Buddhism or Islam. We never have problem. There have countries in the region that Buddhism has gone into conflict with Islam or

issue here today that is concerning not to political party or its members but to national budget and people. There have been question by two political parties with seats in the National Assembly, and by people in general, about salary recall for members of the National Assembly who did not join the sessions before. I must make it clear here that I do not have the rights to decide on this matter. I would refer this matter to the Constitutional Council. If ever they propose the matter, please refer it to the Constitutional Council. I will respect the decision of the Constitutional Council. I just prepare myself for something I do not have right to do. I cannot say yes or no on this issue. If they do not propose it, that will be even better. In 2003, I made a mistake once. I decided to issue salary recall for members of the National Assembly from all parties – CPP, FUNCINPEC and Sam Rainsy Party. Now that is about all we have for today. I just want to

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Islam to Christianity. I just hope that our country will continue in a harmonizing condition of politics, race and faiths.

Flood Relaxes and Recedes

Please allow me to say a few words about flood, which I already addressed once at the inauguration of the flyovers at Stoeng Meanjei. Judging from information given by HE Lim Kean Hor, Minister of Water Resources and Meteorology, the level of seasonal flood in Stoeng Treng, where it reached 11.56 meters, exceeding the emergency level at 10.70 meters, has lowered. Flood level in Kratie too has reached 22.50 meters, higher than the emergency flooding level at 22 meters. As of today, the flood will recede at Stoeng Treng province. We are expecting gradual recession in provinces lower

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foreign language skills. Among us, HE Hang Chuon Naron, Minister of Education, Youth and Sports, speaks three languages – Russian, French and English. In the framework of the Three ASEAN Pillars, the Cambodian Minister speaks more foreign language than some friends who sometime speak only one language.

As far as language is concerned, in term of political-security community, we have HE Hor Nam Hong who speaks French and English. In the economic community, before we had HE Cham Prasidh who speaks French and English, now we have HE Sun Chanthol who also speaks French and English. In the socio-cultural community, HE Hang Chuon Naron speaks three languages. That is how we have prepared our human resources. Last night I saw a book written about my wife's biography in poem, prepared by the university and a student here.

Phnom Penh Bus Service - A Subsidy

It is still a thought for me that if the Royal Government did not allow private sector to take part in human resource development sector, how we go about tackling this problem. There will be more students looking for chance to continue their education while the state university would not be able to respond to their demand. Thanks to our policy, we now have more private tertiary education institutions than those belong to the state. I still remember when the World Trade Organization posed us question about education service whether we would allow private sector to get involved, the country that posed the question so far does not yet get to where we are now.

We have liberalized various sectors and even subsidized. It is forbidden, in fact. As far as

bus service is concerned, we have had to operate at loss. We will not leave it in failure. So far, we have allowed imports two times of a total more than 80 buses. We cannot go on with failing operation of the bus service. I have seen a good show the other day on CTN where TV moderator coordinated debate among representatives of the Municipality of Phnom Penh, police and NGOs. Operating bus service is hard to foresee profit. We should come up with a good plan to reduce losses. Any way I do not think the bus service will bankrupt the Royal Government. IMF or World Bank would say that the process is not in conformity with the WTO regulation but it will relieve our traffic congestion and contributes to travelling by disable, Buddhist monks, students, etc.

Climate Change, No Ebola in Cambodia

I may remind graduates that do not consider this graduation as an end to your study. World development and technology evolves every day. To walk no further means you are falling behind. Take for instance temperature, when it was usually 33 degree Celsius during the day and 23 at night in the dry season, now it has changed to 38 or 40 during the day but 25 degree Celsius at night. Seeds accustomed to the weather condition from before are no longer suitable anymore. There is a need for new variety of seeds. In the whole wide world, to bring down temperature, we have to shutdown factories for their emissions. We have got to get back to travelling by sailing ship instead of by planes.

On another front, the recent outbreak of Ebola has concerned us because there has not been any cure found for this disease. Scientists are busy working on it. While we have yet to cure HIV/AIDS patients,

now we have a new Ebola virus. I appreciate measures taken by the Ministry of Health at every entrance. We have always taken serious measures in preparation for SARS, bird flu and swine flu.

Double Standard Discipline

I have one or two things to share. Yesterday, there was a protest in the US. As it grew stronger, they decided to deploy the military and impose curfew. The protest seems to go on and maybe the protesters wish to show deterrence to the administration. They went at the time of curfew. Well, the protest for whatever reason is the US affairs. However, it is doubtful why they arrest protesters who only throw drinking water at authority? Nobody says anything about it. In Cambodia, protestors burned vehicles, hurled and catapulted stones and iron balls prompting measures taken by authority, some came out say it is a violation of human rights. I do not mean to infer to the US. It is a different standard.

We took measure just to close down about half a hectare of land for security and safety reason for people in general, they blamed us for violating rights and freedom for expression. While in the US, introducing curfew for the whole town, there does not seem to be a concern sounded out by anyone. I do not know what could be the interpretation. Having pursued the issue, on CNN I came across this throat-cutting story of a journalist. As far as this incident is concerned, I join President Barack Obama, the American people as well as peace loving people in the world in condemning that IS grisly act, while sharing the grief with family of James Foley.

I wonder, by pursuing manslaughtering method, even if they succeed in establishing a state as claimed, which country would work with them? Hav-

ing witnessed such atrocity we are more determined than ever to fight against terrorism as there are news that IS has some links in Southeast Asia too. I learned all this from watching news on TV. There were so many problems. There has this fighting in Ukraine and in Gaza, between Israel and Palestine. There is a sad incident that the Presidential candidate of Brazil also died in a plane crash. There are also more suicidal cases in Cambodia too, going through a few newspaper this morning.

I have not heard a word from someone who used to blame us, especially Brad Adams, to President Obama on this issue yet. I am sure he will say he is looking after human rights in Asia, not in the US. For the same story, there are different interpretations. It seems in the whole wide world we have no single, but double or triple standards. It was atrocious indeed that this beheading vengeance is real in the 21 century.

Clarification on Land Disputes and Relevant Approach

Let me clarify what I heard in VOA on August 20. There is an NGO official who said "it is a surprise that Hun Sen did not know (about the protest on land issue)." He went on to blame about the fact that there are security cameras (at Hun Sen's home) or Hun Sen does not read newspaper, etc. Now that he knows, in his words, what would he do? Let me clarify those latest protests' petitions have not reached me. I never waste time in resolving land problem.

A commentator of a French Radio did make a comment with professional ethic as he touched on this issue stressing on system to circulate the documents. Now that I knew, let me tell you, actions had been taken and everyone in-

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involved moved. The person who made the criticism is now living in peace because of this Prime Minister, who ended the war allowing everyone to go and do whatever s/he wanted, establishing non-governmental organizations also included.

The whole idea of the issue was that I wished to stress why the provincial authority, who knows the problem, did not resolve the case (of land conflict between people and company in Kratie). They came all the way to Phnom Penh and there did not seem to have anyone to deal with the issue here. They go from one place to another and they sent their petition to me. I was telling them I did not receive it. That was it.

There is what we call the provincial cadastre commission that will have its first say on the issue. If the issue could not resolve, it would submit the issue to national cadastre commission, headed by Minister of Land Management, Urban Planning and Construction. Should the national commission fail to resolve it, the commission would bring the issue to the attention of the land dispute committee. The issue here is that we have taken measures to resolve the 1.8 million hectares in what we called “new action in existing policy” with regard to land titling issue, where we had the help of the youth volunteers. We even legalize title for those who illegally occupied state land.

Conflict in illegal occupation of state land has been made legal. We have trimmed out lands in economic land concessions for our people. Take for instance the case of land dispute in Snuol district of Kratie province, out of more than nine thousand hectares we have trimmed about eight thousands for the people. Why are there still problems? The youth volunteers also already measured

the land. They have not received their land title so far. That is why they came to Phnom Penh. While that is so, no one reports it to me. That is the question. I reprimanded this incident and issued an order for every provincial authority to take responsibility resolving land dispute within their jurisdiction. I will have a meeting tomorrow with certain leaders relating to land issue to review the matter. I doubted why he made such remark if it is not a part of campaign to take Prime Minister down.

Teachers’ Salary Ups, Removing Category D Salary

I would like to take this opportune moment to speak a few words about reform in the field of education. It is specifically about teachers’ salary in what we call mid-year budget implementation. You may have learned that I have instructed the Ministry of Economy and Finance to give priority to the Ministries of Education, Youth and Sports (MEYS) and Health. However, MEYS has finished its preparation before the Ministry of Health. I urge the Ministry of Health to continue discussing with the Ministries of Public Function and Economy and Finance. I give priority to the two ministries to review and increase salary for staff as priority.

I must beg those with higher salary ranks to understand that this effort is to increase the salary for those in lower salary ranks at this moment. We are in the process of building a real salary system. We started from a system that staff were paid in cash and in goods. You all could have remembered it. We are reforming it now. Until the recently passed term of the Royal Government, we had four categories of salary ranks – A, B, C and D. In each of the category, there were 30 steps or ranks. That would require employees to work 60 years to pass one category in a system

that we review the rank every two years.

In our reform, we have now removed the category D and merged over 10,000 staff in category D into category C. The category C, where there were 30 ranks before, will now have only ten. We have trimmed the 30 ranks in category B to only 14. We do the same for category A. The new salary system will go into implementation in 2015.

I urge that institutions under the Royal Government not to recruit new staff as we should first finish the salary integration. As the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports has taken a step ahead, I urge that the Ministry of Health will go into discussion with relevant ministries. We have 180,000 staff, 110,000 or 60% of which are staff of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports. We have only 20,000 under the Ministry of Health. Putting the two ministries together, we have a little over 130,000 staff out of 180,000. In the new system, starting from September, those who work in office and have the lowest rank of monthly salary of 424,000 Riel will receive 505,000 Riel. In January next year, they will receive 507,800 Riel and from April onward, will receive 552,800 Riel.

For those whose salary rank gives them 1,067,000 Riel will not benefit from this readjustment. Now, for teaching staff, Primary School teacher receiving monthly salary of 482,800 Riel, starting from September will in all 550,000 Riel. From January 2015, they will receive monthly salary of 566,480 Riel until April when they will receive 646,480 Riel. For teaching staff in remote area, we will provide extra 60,000 or 80,000 Riel accordingly. Talking is easy but to get it done is hard. If we were to reduce our teaching staff to only 50%, we would be able to provide each

with a monthly salary of one million Riel. However, what are we going to do with students?

For 33,803 junior secondary school teaching staff, those with lowest salary rank that receive 518,010 Riel per month will receive from next month 594,400 Riel. In January 2015, each will receive 636,000 Riel and from April onward, they will receive 666,000 Riel. Benefit for those who teach in remote area will be 80,000 Riel/month. For 8,525 senior secondary school teaching staff, those who are in current lowest salary of 669,180 Riel will receive from next month 778,800 Riel. Starting from January 2015, they will receive 784,400 Riel. For 729 tertiary teaching staff, each receives the salary of 726,930 Riel, will receive from next month 875,800 until January when they will start receiving 881,400 Riel per month.

Middle East and Africa Tension

There could be genocide in the Middle East in area between Syria on one side and Iraq on another side. We also have difficulties in Libya and Mali. It is the first time that our soldier died and injured from mining. There was another incident but no casualty. As we will soon send our troop to Central Africa, I would suggest HE Tia Banh to monitor the situation closely and carefully. There has a report that IS is now in Lebanon, where we have our troops. We also have our troops in Mali, where many from Libya fled to ...

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remind everyone that we all are happy and our nation has won. Differences in the past have ended since last Friday. We open a new page in our history and therefore make efforts to further progress within the strategic framework of the Royal Government...