



03 December 08 — Samdech Akka Moha Sena Padei Techo Hun Sen welcomes HE Jia Qinglin (R), Chairman of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference in Phnom Penh (Xinhua)

22 December 2008 (Unofficial Translation)
Comments at the Graduation in Vanda Institute

Today is my last work day in a year's time and I would have no further schedule of works after today. I would seek your excuse that my wife, because she is busy in many of her obligations, the preparation for our daughter's wedding party included, cannot come here today. It is indeed proud to see the progress made by the Vanda Institute, which after some years have transformed from a center to tertiary institution with the present infrastructure, technical equipments for teaching and learning purposes. The progress has been made step by step, slowly but surely.

Will and Ability

Some politicians have promised our people that they could find them jobs producing nuts and bolts for airplanes. I don't know for whom the Cambodian will produce those kinds of stuff. Some even preached about giving out cows and

according to them the promised figures would make this country full of cows. I mention this to have your attention of what we mean by the toad-pace development or what we used to say the will cannot be seen through without ability.

Vanda Institute Progress

I would take this moment to express my sincere appreciation to the Vanda Institute for making efforts to expand its ability providing education in the area of financial management and auditing to our students. The number of classrooms, which used to be not many, has now increased to 77 and I would also like to assert my praise to the fact that the Institute has proven to be successful in consolidating the internal unity and leadership. I also would act on behalf of the Royal Government of Cambodia to give my sincere congratulations to the

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04 December 2008 [Unofficial Translation of Selected Comments]
Second Cambodia Development Cooperation Forum (CDCF)

In addition to the prepared text, Samdech Akka Moha Sena Padei Techo Hun Sen made some of the comments that are selected and translated as follows:

Anti-Corruption Law

... You may ask when the law (on corruption) would be in force. I would say it will depend on when the Criminal Code is going to be in place. The law should be proclaimed after the Criminal Code as we have to guarantee conformity between the two laws. As we already have the Civil Procedural Code and the Criminal Code we have only in waiting the Criminal Law. Once the Law is out then the Anti Corruption Law would then make

its appearance.

On Judicial Matter

... The Supreme Council of Magistracy under the leadership of HM the King, in HM role as the chairman of the meeting, has convened regular meetings which would look into issue of removing, reprimanding or encouraging judges ...

Good Rice Harvest

... This year according to initial estimate we might have rice in extra of about 2.8 million tons after the sum for local consumption and animal feeding are being subtracted. I would base on this figure to say that it would not be long

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03 December 2008 [Unofficial Translation of Selected Comments]
Public Financial Management Reform Program — Stage II

... In the last four years I may say that I am being relieved from debts. About twenty years ago or 24 years as the Prime Minister of this country, I have come across so many difficulties as at one stage we had adopted the practice of printing money. We have borrowed from private sector for building infrastructure and even for the preparation of the election in 1998. The State owed its employees their salaries some times more than one month. Our people used to complain that there are 100 to 120 days a month in Cambodia. It was a difficult time for us because we do not have money.

that IMF left Cambodia once in 1996 when the country was in turmoil because it did not follow the set norms, especially in 1993, 1994 and 1995 and returned only in 1999. I then assured IMF that from that time first, I would not overspend the budget, second, no more money printing, and third, no more financing from banks, at the same time we introduced value added tax or VAT.

What happened in 2003 could
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... Everyone could remember

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graduates for making such wonderful efforts till they reach this stage of education.

Private Education — A Correct Decision

I am so proud of the decision that I have made to allow for private institutions to provide tertiary education because of which policy students who could not win scholarship could continue to study and this has been clearly envisaged in my thesis "Ten Years of Cambodia's March" published in 1989, in commemoration of the tenth anniversary of the January 7. If it was not well understood and the fact that there needs for private education facilities was denied I am sure Cambodia would by this time have less number of educated human resources. When people are improving their living condition they would opt to send their children for higher education ... and I have here some 34 scholarships for poor students as well. In all every year I have about a thousand scholarships.

However, there is one factor that is decisive and that is the self decision and effort. Henceforth, I am sure your parents and families would want first of all your good actions in response to their commitments while you were in schools. I seek your showing gratitude to your parents, sisters and brothers whose efforts have been put together for you to come this far.

The Forthcoming January 7

As we are approaching the 30th anniversary of the liberation of Cambodia from the Pol Pot's genocide on January 7, 1979, and as I see that most of you are 30 years old and under, I would recall it as the second birthdays of your parents and families... It is so

absurd that there is one Cambodian who used to be a soldier in Vietnam claimed himself on the Sambok Khmum Radio that he is the father of the liberation movement, while Samdech Chea Sim, Heng Samrin and I never claim so. How could he lie? One right thing he mentioned was I came to arrest him at home. HE Say Phu Thang and I, at that time was the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs, because we could not reconcile anymore, and decided to arrest him. After his arrest, I did not become Prime Minister, but HE Chan Si, and this is a true thing to say as we are nearing January 7.

We have raised him in high rank, but as Minister for Defense he ordered for conducting searches at the houses of Samdech Heng Samrin, who was then Head of State, Prime Minister, and President of the Kampuchean People's Revolutionary Council, Samdech Chea Sim, who was then Minister for Interior, and they were also on their way to my house, but I would not let him time to do that. I have four regiments in Phnom Penh ... How dare he claim to be the father of December 2 and January 7. He was the Minister of Defense but he had no soldiers because they were my soldiers ... I just wanted to let part of the cat out of the bag after 30 years time...

In my last letter to my wife, which was kindly delivered by my messenger, I wrote "... as this letter finds you I have left you very far already, a distance that I would not know myself how far it is ..." How could I guess how far it is as I do not know where I am going, I was not sure if I had to fight with Polpotists or the Vietnamese soldiers or if I would have any other

choices... You may make sense that it was far different from your condition right now where you have the possibility, ability to get what you wish to be accomplished. In between 1970 and 1975, not many students could study because of the war. In between 1975 and 1979, the whole country closed down all the schools and after 1979, all schools started step by step, some had their classes conducted under the trees.

UNTAC, Khmer Rouge and Win-Win Policy

After the Paris Peace Accord in 1993, UNTAC spent over two billion US dollars and after they left Cambodia was a two-part country - one under the Royal Government and the other under the Khmer Rouge. This has yet to count in HIV/AIDS that their soldiers had brought into Cambodia. UNTAC should not think of itself as the story of success in Cambodia. After the mess they left, there was this meeting in the People's Republic of Korea under the chairmanship of Samdech Preah Norodom Sihanouk, then HM the King, in which Khieu Samphan and Nuon Chea, representing the Democratic Kampuchea, requested for what they called "the Minimum Political Program" or in short a new political agreement between the Royal Government in Phnom Penh and the Democratic Kampuchea ... I could go on for three days on this. Cambodia was in limbo with no ceasefire and there were soldiers of the Khmer Rouge and the Government, whereas a huge part of Cambodian border with Thailand was under the Khmer Rouge's control. Is that what they call the UNTAC story of success? This is not to deny some of the positive things UNTAC had achieved.

The win-win policy has brought Cambodia to a complete end of war and it is now ten years already if I were to count in the time when Khieu Sam Phan and Nuon Chea came to my house and make known their breakaway. In the world history, it is the only example of a former Head of State, former Prime Minister, President of the National Assembly came reporting their defeat to the Prime Minister in power. But because it happened in Cambodia, it is not a big story.

Khieu Samphan, who is now in custody, every time we met for political negotiation, always criticized us and sometimes I wondered if he had been instructed to do so. He even insulted us as members of the Supreme National Council (SNC) by saying that "we (the Democratic Kampuchea) showed our understanding to let the puppet to join in the SNC..." at that time the SNC was formulated to be 6 + 6 or six from the State of Cambodia and another six was made of two from the Khmer Rouge, two from Funcinpec and two from KPRLF (former Premier Son San's faction). I have responded fair and square that I am so "thankful" for the understanding from the "killers" ...

Acceptance of the Truth ...

However, I never want to win at the cost of anyone's life but for those who insulted me fiercely and came to me. It is the real victory. Some people asked me that some politicians have insulted me severely, would I accept them if they come to me. I said I would, because to me they have been defeated already and they have chosen to return to the fold or in other words they have come to ac-

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cept the reality.

Some people criticized me for inviting Khieu Samphan to my house. I rebuked in return why before this stage any countries, France, the United States, and the United Nations also included, are giving Khieu Samphan diplomatic visas, giving red carpet treatment to him, and why can't Hun Sen this time do that?

I have at the time the need to deliver three messages - which 1) *inform the remaining Khmer Rouge forces to cease activities* because their leaders were with me at my house, 2) *inform the Cambodian people that the war in Cambodia came to the end*, and 3) *inform the international community of the latest peace development* and consider investment and tourist activities in Cambodia...

Make Better Use of the Time ...

I am so shocked to have noticed that some of our youths have not made full and positive use of their times as they have resorted to drugs, gambles, school evasion, etc. It is true that this must be some sort of incidents but we should try to scale them down ... I wish you all to continue to study because no matter what you are, even the Prime Minister could not do the job if he does not learn more. As for me, no information for one day is like being incomplete. That is why sometimes I hold a huge phone so that news can be faxed to me anywhere and anytime.

Good Rice Crop ...

This year we have a good yield of rice but we have a bad impact of financial crisis. Last year when the price of rice went up, those residing in the city complained whereas

those farmers were so happy and this year, the prices of corn, cashew, soybean have gone down, there is complain from a reversing trend.

I would seek our farmers' understanding that if the price is low you may have to keep them for later stage as the price would go up again. You have rice to keep in store is better than nothing in hand. Some countries in the current situation have been hit with more problems than we do. In India - the terrorist attack in Mumbai, in Afghanistan and Iraq - violence is prevalent, those are challenges and some impacts on us too...

Price of Oil and Related ...

I would make it clear to the oil companies today that if we were to have no oil we will not die but if we were to have no rice, we surely will. When I stop asking them to go down, they do not do either. Today I would ask those companies to make me a present to bring the price of oil down further. Maybe Sokimex and Tela could take the lead in this matter. I would ask the Government mechanism to monitor the price in the international market and compare them with the local prices ...

... I have also instructed that private electric companies have to adjust the prices because the price of oil has gone down. As for the traffic rule, I would urge our commuters to put on helmets and those who sell helmets should not take this opportunity to sell at high price at all. I have noticed in other countries they put on helmets 100% but I request people in political positions and administrations to show others they were the first to respect the regulation.

Closing Down Gambles ...

Now is the issue of gambling.

The Royal Government of Cambodia allows for slot machines to operate in hotels aimed at attracting foreign guests and tourists but with the permission granted there is this tendency of not respecting the law and regulation. They have opened shops of gambles with slot machine license from those in the hotels where there allowed Cambodian nationals to play. Leaders of Khans in Phnom Penh must be making efforts, especially the Khan Phnom Duan Penh and Mean Chey. I may have your attention that crimes and thefts have rooted in those places.

Former Senior Citizens ...

I have the news of the death of Mr Keng Vansak, the well known scholar on Khmer Studies, though his theory is in contrast with that of Samdech Tjuan Nat in terms of Khmer grammar and Khmerization. He was to visit Cambodia on my invitation, which I would be responsible for his tickets and residence so as for him to come visit the country.

I wish to share my condolence with the family of Mr Keng Vansak. I had done the same for Mr Sostene Fernandes, former military commander under the Republic of Khmer, who died after his visit to the country. I would be glad I was able to do that for them.

I have been Prime Minister for 24 years now and I would go on for another five years, which will make it 29 years as Prime Minister, the record breaking in Asia as well as in the world. I have come from the youngest Prime Minister at the age of 32 to the long-serving Prime Minister and in 2013, there is no doubt, Hun Sen is going to run for the post again...■

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important and indispensable to ensure the effectiveness and success of important reforms within the framework of "Rectangular Strategy", especially the Public Administration Reform and the Decentralization and Decentralization Program...

Fourth, in this regard, the Council for Administrative Reform must closely cooperate with the EFPC and PFMSC to improve civil servants' encouragement in order to enhance quality, efficiency, and loyalty of the whole public administration. Therefore, it is very important that the Royal Government and all relevant Development Partners must learn from the experiences of the 1st stage implementation of the Merit Based Pay Initiative (MBPI), which has been so far carried out and now continues to expand its extensive encouragement to other relevant ministries/institutions.

Fifth, all ministries/institutions must be aware that if any of the 39 ministries/institutions cannot assume their ownership roles in implementing this PFMRP-Stage 2, meaning that if anyone of them cannot prepare their action plans or set their indicators for monitoring failed performance or know how to prepare action plans or set indicators, but could not put into successful implementation, this will lead to the failure of the whole reform program. In the same token, this PFMRP cannot successfully implemented if other related reforms or development pillars cannot succeed as expected. Therefore, I would order the head of each ministries/institutions, head of each reform council, head of each reform committee, and head

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before Cambodia increases its export of milled rice to five million tons per annum. My judgment strongly bases on the fact that the rice cultivation has been done on a relatively small size of land and only once per annum. We would be able to increase the current figure of export - 2 million tons of milled rice - to the new figure if we were to expand our irrigation system, which would allow cultivation to take place twice a year. Achieving only 70% of output from Vietnam and Thailand, Cambodia would already be able to export five million tons already. Cambodia would then be the rice barn for other countries that are impossible to produce rice. I agree with the suggestion that it would be a huge mistake if a country with immense agricultural potential would look over its capability.

No to Logging

... I would recommend to the chairperson of the forum and partners that no consideration would be made on whether to get back to logging. As you could see that we have achieved in the previous years the economic growth of 11.7% and then 12%, why now our growth has come back down under 12%. The answer is simple.

Firstly, we have slashed income from logging. We should leave forest for our many generations to come. If we were to do that transporting logs would damage our roads so the income from loggings would not even sufficient to pay for reparations. Therefore it is best to keep them where they are as reserves. **Secondly**, 56% of the fishing lot has been trimmed out and offered to use by people at large. This is also adding on to downing growth

figure. The last one is **we continue to charge no tax on farmers**. If we were to charge tax on land, plus other incomes sources we could have had an increase in the GDP. So I warn you all not to think of cutting more trees though we do have to allow for some local demand and the need in industrial and handicraft sectors.

Having said so may make the forest merchants no longer support Hun Sen and I would say it does not matter because the people are happy that Hun Sen protects the forest, which means they support Hun Sen. I would have nothing to lose and therefore I have nothing to be afraid of. We have to protect the forest and it is will not be a rotten reserve at all. If we could keep them longer - 300 to 500 years - they would be even greater. One other fact is that I have special attachment to new bridges and roads that have been constructed and are under construction. They could be facing damages for logs transportations. I would not accept any idea to suggest income making from forest sources at all. I would not object if you are talking about planting forest/trees such as Acacia for final products in paper or for export purpose.

Quota for Women?

... I would propose a thorough consideration to the forum about this idea of setting a quota for women as I used to hear a lot already about setting so and so quota for so and so positions, and I found it unacceptable as it would not be realistically applicable. I would suggest we should depend on the reality as the Royal Government has incorporated at least one female position at the rank of deputy provincial or district administrators and we leave it

up to the women to seek to build up capacity for such positions. First women have to build up their capacities and they should support each others. So I think it is best to get gender issue implemented on the realistic basis. By May 17, 2009, the country will conduct its administrative elections at the district/Khan and provincial levels, would it be that then the non governmental organizations request for quota too? One should try to keep his/her stance so as not to be either extreme rightist or leftist.

In France, Madame Segolene Royale did not defeat President Sarkozy because the French did not think it is time for France to have woman President yet. In the United States, in the elections to decide who would stand as the democratic candidate in the presidential election last year, Barack Obama has his opponent Hilary Clinton concede the race, though later on, Hilary has been picked to be Secretary of State in the Obama's administration. Here in Cambodia we also have many Ambassadors who are women - Australia, Singapore, Brunai, Cuba, the US, etc. Cambodia also sends out four women Ambassadors too ...if we put that into equation in position versus men, this is a high figure. In this sense I would suggest it is immature to work out quota as is proposed. What is so amusing is that the idea was presented by the group which does not even have female Candidate for people's deputy position.

Ten Imbalances

... I would take this chance to share with you a number of challenges which I have yet to include in the papers that I have presented so far. They all are in my pocket for many years and if I were not mis-

taken 21 years ago we have only four imbalances to address - water (irrigation), roads, electricity and human resources development. They are still valid and are inputs and I would seek the Royal Government and the development partners to ponder together as up to the present I have found that there are ten disequilibrium, and I consider them the strings to a knot. What are they?

First, it is the lack of equilibrium between demand and supply, as more demand has been noticed and supply is still in limited response. Therefore it is important to focus on solving food demand, clothing, residence, transport means, education and healthcare. **Second**, the lack of balance between income and expense which we have to make more efforts to increase income so as to increase our ability to invest in projects that are beneficial to the people, reducing dependence on foreign assistance and external loans... **Third**, it is the imbalance between import and export - which we have to concentrate efforts that Cambodia could increase export to reduce trade deficit ... **Fourth**, the lack of balance between money and goods - which I would urge for a speedy economic growth, maintain macroeconomic stability, prevent inflation, maintain purchasing power of the Riel currency ... **Fifth**, the need to balance between the living condition of the civil servants and the armed forces versus the salary challenges - where the focus is on seeking for an appropriate salary increase in tandem with the economic growth ... **Sixth**, the imbalance between labors - adult people and students who have graduated, and job creation - which we have to

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be compared to the situation that the country had 10 Riels while it had 500 Riel in debt. As of now we have 500 or 1,000 Riels as we owe only 10 Riels. In my experience, being the Prime Minister, I felt relaxed when making sufficient money... As the situation has been favorable we could increase salaries for our officials and staff - once at the rate 15% and again 20%. In the last three years no one complains about the Treasury having no money anymore. Before, people with mandate to disburse money did not have money there.

Past Treasury — No Money

You may still remember that in years we had this situation that the treasury did not have money for provincial authorities. When they could disburse some money for only two provinces out of ten or more at a time, they were being accused of corruption. So as I told you we already had the Prime Minister who printed money, who borrowed from banks for payrolls whereas we now have come to surplus in cash. However, this does not mean that we should speed up spending at all. We have to discipline ourselves while implementing the method of acting in accordance with one commander - the Prime Minister, and one acting agent - the Minister for Economy and Finance.

In this instance I would like to seek understanding from those who have been promoted that the State will not bear anymore cost of purchasing cars for you and I have exercised this stringent policy and saved some money in past terms for the sake of building water canals for our farmers. Saving is a must and I have set an example as we could see that I

do not spend money building new office of the Prime Minister at all. It were not because Cambodia could not find 20 to 30 million to build one but we wished to use that money in infrastructure - bridges, roads and canals. However, we thank the Government of the People's Republic of China who, having seen the state of the former office, offered to build us a new one.

No Unnecessary Expenses

All I have said is to remind you all of the difficulties that we have overcome but also to warn you against suggesting unnecessary expenses because of the cash available in the treasury. As of now the Prime Minister in our country has efficient power and debt relaxation but perhaps I will not make it to contribute assistance to foreign countries at all. Five years ahead Cambodia would not be able to give assistance to outside, only to pay back foreign debt ... We have though sent troops abroad, like to Sudan, to help with de-mining ... and if Cambodia were to have more money, I would try to meet the commitment of 0.7% of GDP contribution according to the goal set for developed world to help poorer countries.

Together Implement PFMRP

The Public Financial Management Reform Program (PFMRP) first should be seen as a victory not only for the Ministry of Economy and Finance but for all institutions and ministries related, and second, reforming financial role is not a separate task of the Ministry of Economy and Finance but there is a demand of participation by all ministries and institutions as any parts of the program are not functioning properly, it will be a failure to all. I would

continue to suggest what I have said that if we conduct reform, it would be 99% that we survive, while 1% that we die, but, we would die 99% and survive only 1% if we were to neglect reform.

No Retreat on Reform

We have come this far and I would urge to speed up in this front. Every country is doing the same thing, Japan, France, the US also included. If you notice, the IMF and the World Bank are also on this track. The latest development in the world financial sector made us all asking question as to who would tell who to do what. As of now there would not be a choice between good and bad but only less bad. We should be prepared for impacts and try to cushion and avert it to the least impact. We should try and save ourselves from being bankrupted in the whole country like some countries - Iceland for example.

We have moved this country away from crisis like in the 1970s when we had only 70 people living in the city and we should not let this country falling back to where it was. As everyone is here and our people will also listen to this speech relayed by the media, I would reiterate that no retreat happens on my watch and stringent policy should continue to be implemented no matter how much money we have in surplus at the Treasury. By saying that I would urge you to follow strictly the rule or I would not agree with any actions deemed to be detrimental to this sector reform. There would not be any consent with actions to delay sending money to the Treasury. It is a discipline and we have internal auditing mechanism to monitor that.

Running Again in 2013 Election

You may ask a question as to why this Government is garnering more and more support from one election to another. It is because the Royal Government is doing things in a correct way, and therefore we have to widen the right side and lessen the wrong side. We have come from 64 seats, and then 73 seats whereas 17 seats more have been given by the people in 2008 - a sum of seats representing two-third majority (90 over 123) that not any political party in this world could have achieved. This should be analyzed on the basis of the Royal Government's performance, as it represents also the ruling Party. I have a good understanding that our effort is not for the Party to win but for our nation to win, only that in order for the nation to win, the ruling Party has to have a leading role and a correct path of leadership.

I would urge you to remember that we will meet again in December 2013 to proclaim the third phase as I have a clear objective that I would run for the Premiership again in the next term as I will be 61 only. Why? If we were to lose ten seats by then we would have the majority of 80 seats as well. I would say some people will be Prime Minister in example for a long time to come because even if I do not talk of gaining seats but losing ten seats at a time, by 2018 CPP will still have 70 seats left, so it would be a long time for the opposition candidates to be Prime Minister ... ■

**From the Prepared Text
which is also available on
www.cnv.org.kh**

..., I would like to thank the bilateral and multilateral co-
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monks, who have been offered utensils and food more than they need, have turned them to poor people living nearby the pagodas, which is another point taken as helping the Royal Government in assuaging people's hunger ...

They sometimes share their offerings with the Cambodian Red Cross and through the latter those stuffs are being given to the needy people ... I am so happy to see that they have brought for soldiers who are at the frontline which definitely makes our soldiers enjoy the support from the rear.

... I agree and fully support the proposition by Samdech the Buddhist Patriarch for the establishment of hostels for poor students. With at least ten students could be accommodated in one pagoda, we could deal with a reasonably big number since we have up to 4000 pagodas... However, with so many developments as stated, Cambodia is facing with more challenges and concerns. Before going into this at a deeper depth I would like to remind you all that there has not been a single country in this world that is without prison. Why? People are making mistakes, acting against the state law and the teachings of religions. At the moment people committed offense over the state law, simultaneously and automatically they committed sin in the sphere of religion.

... At the time of struggle in between 1977 to 1978, no one was in my superior on the eastern side of the Mekong River. It was before I met with Samdech Chea Sim and Samdech Heng Samrin. I thought the country could be saved within three to five years. It was my prediction that I have to establish control on the

eastern side of the country before stepping into the western side. However, what I wish to say is that the whole country was without monks and only Samdech Bou Kry could get out of the country. If we were one year late, under Pol Pot's rule, probably all of our monks here disappeared already - if not because of killings, starving would be a cause. That is why I always respond to some ill-intent people who say that the country has gone poorer than the poorest moment of Cambodia was in 1979.

... No one could perform any rituals as we did not have monks yet. The only one monk at that time was Samdech Patriarch Tep Vong. He became monk in April at the time of the Cambodian New Year in 1979... But we have more monks now. A few days ago someone sent a live picture of Buddhist monks who dance. This is not in conformity with the Buddhist teachings. However, this is not the general situation too. Only a few have committed such sinful and disrespectful acts. It is important to get things done in order to improve image of Buddhism in the country.

I would recommend you to go back and check the terms of reference and job delegation as to how and who would do what. I have approved them for you ... and before going about instructing others you have to mend the upper level of leadership or you cannot tell people under your leadership to do otherwise.

... Because of the fact that we have more than 50,000 Buddhist monks and about 4000 pagodas, should we think of decentralization of power or not, I suggest the Ministry of Cult and Religious Affairs to cooperate with the Buddhist

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attract more investments for jobs as well as for improving rural environment ... **Seventh**, between human capacity and national development which requires more investment in education and human resources development... **Eighth**, need for infrastructural development where attention should be focused on irrigation, roads, bridges, ports, airports and electricity... **Ninth**, need for transparent and sustainable development and addressing ineffective governance ... and **Tenth**, there is a need to inte-

leadership to work out a solution... I recommend we have a structure that will take care of the Buddhist development or we might have problem of uncontrolled development and any conflict would result in disastrous actions and settlement would be difficult. I would also take this time to assure that the Ministry of Cult and Religious Affairs has the responsibility to look into matters that are relating to not only Buddhism but to all religions...

Should the Buddhist Assembly, which is tasked to observe the Buddhist teachings and disciplines, be decentralized to the provincial and district levels ... so that the Buddhist Patriarchs are assisted by mechanisms in performing monitoring work? I would apologize too as this is not to order our Patriarchs what to do but only to express concern from the legal aspect.

... The issue of denying reality and truth is the most dangerous. Denying them would also bring down Buddhism and no one could be held accountable. It is like in the case of the political party, where people would not vote for you if they know you would not

grate Cambodian economy into the regional and the world on the one hand and to fix the weak infrastructure of national economy and institutional and judicial capacity on the other...

... The ten imbalances mentioned earlier have not been mentioned in any papers or publications but they have been in my pocket as I have discussed only among locals and never shared them with our partners. I am sure these imbalances will be our visions for ten or twenty years to come...■

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of each reform and development working group to be stick to highest responsibility in implementing this PFMRP-Stage 2 and the implementation of reform program and development programs based on their respective roles by strictly adhering to the proactive management approach.

Actions and achievements we have achieved so far have clearly shown that the Royal Government does have firm will, especially this public financial reform, which is one of the key important governance reforms as stipulated in the "Rectangular Strategy".

Through active implementation of the reform in the past years both Royal Government and Development Partners have learnt and gained a great deal of valuable experiences...■

be up to their respect. Some people deny the truth about January 7, even though they were saved by January 7 itself. People say if they were saved by January 7 but deny its truth, how could they recognize anything else? No vote for them...■

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operation partners who have actively participated and supported with goodwill the greatest efforts made by the Royal Government in all reform pillars, especially the public financial reform by focusing on the Sector-Wide Approach for the sake of promoting poverty reduction of the people and the development of Cambodia.

As illustrated in the "Rectangular Strategy-Phase II", the implementation of "Public Financial Management Reform Program-Stage I" was the most remarkable and leading achievements among nine important achievements of the 3rd Legislature of the Royal Government. The positive results of the implementation of this reform program have been particularly reflected, through improving the national revenues, which increase in average of 26% per year.

Within a short period, as demonstrated by H.E. Dr. Aun Porn Moniroth, the Royal Government has converted the situation of budget implementation from "a Chronic Cash Deficit to a Cash Surplus". This really enables the Royal Government to better rationalize its national budget expenditure through raising salary for teachers, civil servants and all kinds of armed forces annually, especially through increasing the public investment capital on socio-economic infrastructures aiming to strengthen and expand public services and poverty reduction of the people.

This success not just only reflects the distance that Cambodia has come across in a short while, but it specially reflects the better accomplishment of the Royal Government resulting from right-

charted policy and strategy vision of the firm willingness and the efforts to overcome with strong commitment and full support and the active participation as well as the ownership with high responsibility of all ministries/institutions and all levels of civil servants of the Royal Government in implementing this significant reform. However, with this proud achievement, the Royal Government recognizes that we still have a long way to move and many challenges to be curtailed and other uncountable obstacles, which require us to jointly overcome in order to reach the end objective of this reform. In actuality, the Rectangular Strategy-Phase II has highlighted 17 major challenges which need to be overcome by Cambodia in order to achieve the four strategic objectives illustrated through the motto of Growth, Employment, Equity, and Efficiency.

In this context, the Royal Government through the Rectangular Strategy-Phase II has set and committed to implementing without retreat strategic reform and systematic and integrated package policy measures to overcome obstacles and sharp challenges on the road of Cambodia development by relying on 4 parts of the long term foundation policy for tackling obstacles and challenges based on four core long-term policies:

First, is to ensure the sustainable peace, political stability, security and social order through various practical measures in order to promote the state of law, respect of human rights and dignities and multi-parties liberal democracy in order to create conducive political and security environment for long-term sustainable develop-

ment.

Second, is to ensure long-term sustainable economic growth at the high rate of 7% per year on a broader basis and more competitive capacity in the context of low one-digit inflation, stable exchange rate, and constant increase in reserves.

Third, is to ensure equitable distribution of the opportunities and fruits of economic growth.

Fourth, is to ensure environmental sustainability, especially through the sustainable management and use of natural resources.

The priority to further deepen the implementation of the "Public Financial Management Reform Program" is even more updated and additionally crucial in this coming stage while the world has been suffering from the financial crisis, which is currently having negative impact on the world economy. Cambodia as part of a globalization cannot really escape from this kind of consequence. We are truly to receive the bad impact from this crisis to some extent, just a matter of less or more. However, what we are clear in mind is that the improvement and strengthening of the public financial management will help strengthen our capacity in dealing with all these challenges and will also help reduce the negative effect from this crisis on the possibility of promoting the implementation of the development policy of the Royal Government and the ability of providing public services to the people. Therefore, in such unfavorable condition like this, the strengthening of public financial management, especially the improvement of efficiency in the management of national budget, which is

the key instrument for implementing the development policy of the Royal Government, is actually more essential than any other times.

In addition, the "Public Financial Management Reform Program" is also very important for other key reforms pillars of the Royal Government. As illustrated in the "Rectangular Strategy-Phase II" of the 4th Legislature of the National Assembly, the Royal Government will continue deepening the implementation of reforms and important sectoral development programs such as private sector development, financial sector development programs, which particularly focus on banking sector development, insurance, and security and stock markets, and prioritized sectoral governance reform including fighting corruption, public administration reform, legal and judicial reform, land reform, armed force reform as well as decentralization and de-concentration. Therefore, the success of this "Public Financial Management Reform Program", which is one of the core programs of the "Rectangular Strategy-Phase II", will significantly contribute to the success of the whole strategy implementation.

Generally, in terms of macro-policy by looking at the strategic steps of the development of Cambodia, which has been gradually crossing the long distance path in nearly three decades is also very similar to the four stages of the Public Financial Management Reform Program that we have been implementing as reported earlier by H.E. Dr. Aun Porn Moniroth. Our first stage was from 1979 to 1993, which was the period of relief and restoration of both human

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18 December 2008 (Unofficial Translation of Selected Comments)
Nationwide Congress of Buddhist Monks Representatives

In addition to the prepared text, Samdech Akka Moha Sena Padei Techo Hun Sen, Prime Minister of Cambodia, made the following selected comments in relation to the development in religious affairs in general, and in Buddhism in particular.

... It is impossible to say that when the secular world is in disastrous state, the religion is in its prosperity at all. Any progress in the Buddhist or religious affairs should be considered as the measurement of development in the secular world. You may all analyze the fact that our country has passed a period of 38 years after the coup on March 18, 1970, the time at which the secular world came to war, and then the genocide. We all remember that the whole country, religion or secular world used to be in the state of misfortunate. The Buddhist monks in that instance were not residing in a different world from the secular, whereas the Buddhist parishioners in poverty and hardships were impossible to provide shelters in the pagodas or to offer food because they also were in starvation.

... Henceforth, I have great pride to see the fruit of hard work in leading a change of mind in the society, as the society is full of ill-mind people more sins would be committed. Buddhism has proven to share with the Royal Government and the administration of all levels its greatest help in educating people - men and women, young and old alike - to observe and perform merit. We may not be able to count in other religions here, but for Buddhism, at the time of Prochum Ben Days (the period of fifteen days when people offers food and

cloths to the Buddhist monks believing this will give their ancestors the same merits, which is ritually performed once a year in Cambodia, from day one, it is remarkable to see people going to pagodas at dawn to share their offerings. So exercising merit is important, from person to family, to village and the whole country, the benefit from religion in merit making is very helpful. No religion in this world teaches human to commit sin.

... As in the case of Cambodia, Buddhism does a great job that helps the State to manage the society. It has been very beneficial especially as we are in the stage of strengthening the culture of peace. In my capacity as the one who initiated and implemented the win-win policy that led to the ending of war, what I have learned is that the achievement of its historic end cannot bypass the role of Buddhism as we could see that, among other aspirations, all Khmer factions are following Buddhism or sharing common religious values. As for some countries it may have been difficult because they were of different religious beliefs.

... It has been their sinful acts that the Khmer Rouge soldiers destroyed pagodas and broke Buddhist statues to pieces but they had acted under commanders' instruction. Some soldiers, in fulfilling such insane act against the religious statues, murmured at heart that they had done out of fear for lives to be taken for disrespecting order.

... I also have noticed another good thing from Buddhism that every year the Buddhist

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and all kinds of infrastructures including the prevention of the country from the return of genocidal regime, and the most difficult time for Cambodia. The second stage was from 1994 to 1998, which was the stage for trying to build democracy and strengthen the foundation for political, economic and social stability as well as to continue restoring the socio-economic infrastructures in the context that the country was still at either peace or war.

After 1999, Cambodia obtained historical achievement of full peace and total territory unity either in politics or physical institutions under a "Win-Win Policy" resulting from the purely Cambodian wisdom, the development process of Cambodia has now come to its third stage, which could be called as "Stage of Cambodia development through building, strengthening and expanding socio-economic bases and improving institutional capacity and human resources on the foundation of full peace and total territory unity", which also includes a measure of rapid integration of Cambodia into regional and international groupings with equity and equal rights after Cambodia has been in isolation for long. It should be demonstrated that the historical achievement is also the reflection of the success of the implementation of "Triangle Strategy" which was linked with the "Rectangular Strategy". Thus, in the new stage from 1999 Cambodia started to have full possibility in promoting the implementation of the deepen sectoral reform. It was in this third stage that in my capacity as Head of the Royal Government, I have set "Rectangular Strategy" for Growth, Employment, Eq-

uity, and Efficiency in Cambodia, in which Phase I was successfully completed during the 3rd Legislature and now move to the implementation of Phase II of in this 4th Legislature.

There is no doubt that based on international experience and especially our own positive experience during the last few years, as I mentioned earlier by clearly illustrating that "effective and efficient public financial management is the necessary foundation to promote country development and poverty reduction of the people" the Royal Government of the 4th Legislature still continues to place "Public Financial Management Reform Program" as its first priority. In this sense, in order to ensure the success of the Stage 2 of this important reform I would like to provide some recommendations and orders as follows:

First, the Ministry of Economy and Finance must continue to play core roles as leader in leading and supporting this reform process in cooperation with all ministries/institutions within the framework of the EFPC and PFMSC.

Second, all ministries/institutions must actively participate and take roles as owners in preparing their own reform action plan and lead the management of the implementation of their own reforms more effectively and efficiently with high responsibility.

Third, must continue to link this public financial management reforms pillars to the development pillars and others reforms to be more cohesive, interconnected and consistent. This linkage is very

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