

Cambodia New Vision

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November 19, 2001 (Excerpts)

Address to the Ground-Breaking Ceremony of the Prek Kraom Water Treatment Center



Samdech Hun Sen takes a look at the model of the Prek Kraom Water Treatment Center to be constructed by the third-stage grant offered by the Royal Government of Japan.

“... Let me say a few things concerning the capital city of Phnom Penh... HE Chea Sophara, HE Ek Sonchan and HE the Japanese Ambassador Gatoro Ogawa have all mentioned that “drop by drop, the bucket will be full.” The city had once been dead since its inception 567 years ago... In 1979, if I am not mistaken, I had met only 70 people here in the city... I remember well that at that time the government employees would not dare occupy a whole building all to oneself... but now we have lots of cases concerning land and housing issues...”

“... Living in Phnom Penh at that time was of great difficulty... My wife and I have lost one more child, second to the first one that we lost in the Khmer Rouge time, for she had to fetch water from the river... Phnom Penh at that time lacked a functioning water

supply system ... We also consumed maize at the time that we have had to rebuild the capital from scratch... One may doubt why I recall past memory but if we forget to think about it we may not have had a good day as we do now...”

“ ... In 2001, in the course of renovation and reconstruction of the Phnom Penh capital, the Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC) has offered an amount of six million US dollars to the Municipality of Phnom Penh... In just four days, RGC is prepared to offer to HE Chea Sophara another half million dollars more ... because at its 568th anniversary, Phnom Penh will host the summits of ASEAN, ASEAN + 3, ASEAN + India, and the meeting of heads of states and Governments of the Mekong country members...”

(Continued on page 3)

November 16, 2001 (Excerpts)

Address to the Conference of the Medical Association of Southeast Asian Nations (MASEAN)

“... The Kingdom of Cambodia belongs to one of the most ancient civilization, rich in both cultural and natural heritages. While Your Excellencies are in this marvelous country, I hope that you will find time to savour some of the sights and sounds of Cambodia, especially the Angkor complex, which represents the achievements of human art and architectural resolution, where the jungle, monuments and human being live in perfect harmony.

Cambodia is proud to host many ASEAN meetings and conferences and during the last

two years the RGC has doubled efforts to meet the challenges of ASEAN membership, notably by developing the human resources necessary to fully and effectively participate in all ASEAN affairs and cooperation initiatives.

This meeting is taking place at a crucial juncture, in both national and regional context. As the topic of this conference suggests, the ASEAN health system is in transition. As you are well aware, the financial turmoil in 1997 has resulted in large-scaled tragedies that can-

(Continued on page 2)

November 08, 2001 (Quotes)

Thanking President Bush for Removal of Cambodia from the List of Illegal Drug Producing and/or Transit Countries

Upon his return from the Seventh Summit of the ASEAN Heads of States and Governments on November 5-6 in the Capital of Brunei Darussalam, Samdech Hun Sen thanked the US President George W. Bush for the removal of Cambodia from the list of drug producing or transit countries:

On the Removal of Cambodia from the Drug List...

“... This is a great pride for Cambodia and it is a justification from the US President because Cambodia is not a producer or consumer of drugs... Through our activities, in our efforts to combat and eliminate drugs, I think it is a justification both for the people and the Royal Government of

Cambodia... Though some people try hard to tie the Royal Government of Cambodia with the drug issue, the Mafia issue... finally, the President of a powerful country has removed Cambodia from the list... It is clearly the pride for the people

(Continued on page 3)

In This Issue

- 1) Prek Kraom Water Treatment Center — p.1
- 2) MASEAN Conference — p.1
- 3) Thanked President G. W. Bush — p.1
- 4) Doctorate Degree of Political Science — 4
- 5) 48th Anniversary of the RCAF — 6
- 6) Verbal Address in Battambang and List of CNV Web documents for November — 8

(Continued from page 1)

not be gauged; millions of people were pushed to the brink of poverty, thus posing serious health risks. Moreover, the current global slowdown, exacerbated by the tragic events of September 11, increased what were already serious challenges facing the health sector. Under such circumstances, the poor are the most vulnerable and the most affected by the crisis and for many of them important health services are beyond reach. Therefore, there is a dire need for improving health care and ameliorating the quality of service delivery for those in need to allow the poor to have better access to these important services at reasonably low prices.

I am sure that this conference will provide you with much needed opportunities to discuss ways to improve the health of the people in our region and suggest means to ensure effective and sustainable health care delivery to the people. New challenges also need to be confronted, such as HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis. At the recent ASEAN Summit held in Brunei Darussalam, ASEAN leaders met in a special session on combating HIV/AIDS and proposed ways to reverse the spread of AIDS through concerted regional efforts. Indeed, along with these challenges there are exciting potentials and opportunities afforded by advances in technology and accumulating knowledge about managing, organizing, and financing health services.

In this sense, it is my confidence that the 10th MASEAN Conference will make further contribution to help achieve the objectives of regional cooperation in the region, especially health service liberalization. As you are aware, the objective of such liberalization

is to achieve an ASEAN's vision of "free flow of services by 2020". However, we should also recognize that the liberalization of health services should be gradually implemented, taking into account the various levels of development in each country as well as the need for effective supervision, capacity building and adequate human resource development to guide its full implementation.

At the national level, Cambodia has embarked on a far-reaching health sector reform, including the introduction of the fiscal decentralization to improve health delivery at the grassroots level. In this regard, I would like to take this rare opportunity to brief Your Excellencies of the government policies on health and human resource development for this sector.

Even though more than three decades of wars had been devastating, leaving behind innumerable legacy, the health sector has received adequate attention from the RGC, thus achieving remarkable progress, especially over the 1990s. The infant mortality rate declined by 16 percent between 1990 and 1998. Immunization coverage has expanded significantly over this period. As a result, the Cambodian people are free from a number of dangerous diseases, such as polio. Nevertheless, Cambodia is still ranked the lowest in the Western Pacific Region. The leading causes of infant and child mortality and morbidity are diarrhoeal diseases, acute respiratory infection, dengue hemorrhagic fever and vaccine preventable diseases. Protein-energy malnutrition and micronutrient deficiencies - notably iron, iodine and Vitamine A deficiency - are also prevalent. Malnutrition affected 56 percent of under-five year old children, of whom 49 percent

are chronic malnutrition.

Therefore, an important agenda of RGC during the second term of office is to strengthen the capability and the health of the people is the most important issue in response to the government agenda in poverty reduction and the implementation of reform programs in all fields. The promotion of the people's health is crucial in improving labor productivity and promoting sustainable economic growth over the long run. In this sense, Cambodia is ready to cooperate with other MASEAN members to raise the health status of the people in the region in general, and to provide training, improve healthcare in Cambodia to meet the regional standards in particular.

During the last five years, attention has been given by the RGC to the construction and improvement of health centers and referral hospitals. However, qualified staff still concentrates in urban area, though in recent years there has been an overall increase in health personnel employed at district level as compared with that at the provincial level. In this context, the RGC intends to introduce incentives to encourage qualified staff to work in the villages and communes through the implementation of an incentive scheme.

Since 1996, the Ministry of Health (MOH) has introduced organizational and financial reforms with the view to strengthening the health system. This is to improve access by the poor living in rural areas to quality services through the implementation of the decentralized "Operational District", which provides a comprehensive primary health care (PHC). The objectives of this reform strategy are to:

- *provide basic health services to all people, especially those who are involved in the community lives;*
- *improve equity and accessibility to basic health services with good quality, efficiency and low costs;*
- *specifically target women, children, elderly and disabled people;*
- *introduce decentralization of financial and administrative functions;*
- *encourage competition between the public and private sector services; and*
- *promote awareness of healthy lifestyle.*

The government recognizes that Health spending is still not sufficient to respond effectively to the above policy. Considerable efforts have been deployed by the RGC to increase investment in this sector by increasing budget allocations for health, mobilizing foreign aid and encouraging contribution from the society. During the last four years budget disbursement for health increased more than threefold from 43 billion CR in 1998 to 142 billion CR in the year 2001 Budget Law. At the same time, the ongoing Accelerated District Development (ADD) program, which is designed to increase budgetary disbursement to the districts and communes, appears to be achieving positive results. In 2000 the Ministry of Health has been included into the priority ministries in conjunction with the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries and the Ministry of Rural Development. In this context, the RGC has introduced the Priority Action Program

(Continued on page 3)

(Continued from page 2)

(PAP) in order to speed up budget disbursement for health, especially by encouraging the health unit to improve health service delivery at the grass-roots level by allowing provincial/district hospitals to manage their own budget.

One of the challenges of the RGC is to bring the spread of communicable diseases under control. Malaria and tuberculosis are the major causes of morbidity and mortality for adult population. Cambodia is facing a very severe HIV/AIDS epidemic and is considered to have the highest adult prevalence rate in Asia. HIV/AIDS has will become a constraint

for economic development of the country, if due attention is not given to curb this disease.

I am proud to bring to your attention that following the health sector reform and with the support of the international community, Cambodia has made significant success in addressing the challenges of the health sector. At the international congress on HIV/AIDS held recently in Melbourne, Australia, Cambodia has been cited as a success in fighting HIV/AIDS. At present the estimated prevalence among adults has shown a steady decline from 3.9 percent in 1997 to 2.8 percent in 2001.

Since 2000 Cambodia is free

from the polio virus and is also cited as a success story in combating malaria. Indeed, we should not be complacent about this success. Therefore, we should double our efforts to improve healthcare in Cambodia to meet the regional standards.

To this end, it is important to promote close ties with the regional medical associations, foster the transfer of medical knowledge and improve health policies. Cambodia should seize the opportunities provided by the liberalization of health services within ASEAN to meet our national objectives.

In this regard, I am pleased to note that the conference has

focused on important issues, such as integration and harmonization of the medical organizations, continuing medical education, medical ethics and professionalism, telehealth and others...

(Continued from page 1)

“ ... As far as water supply is taken into consideration, it is both social and economic issues ... The Phnom Penh Water Supply Headquarters has to think about using water as a means to sustain the water supply ... Japan could not build us a water treatment center while provide us with fuel and payroll ... Therefore, we have to sell water in order to finance the cost of pumping water ... But we have to fix a reasonable price ... if the offered price is high, clients will certainly resort to drilling water from underground ... And we have to be aware of the consequences of depletion of water deposits ... HE Chea Sophara should, in collaboration with the Ministry of Land Management, Urban Planning and Construction as well as the Ministry of Environment, look into this matter seriously ... ”

“ ... As far as road is concerned, I think we should also think of making use of roads to finance the maintenance of

roads ... Taking this opportunity, may I appeal to our people to pay road tax for the payment will help contribute to the maintenance of roads ... We are also thinking of levying on fuel ... We have to do that in order to finance the road maintenance ... Those who smoke cigarettes and enjoy beer and alcohol will be facing the increase of tax in the near future ... We could not afford to seek only for the foreign assistance as they also need to exercise their obligations to their own peoples and not only for Cambodia ... So Cambodians have to help themselves through contributions from all sources ... ”

“ ... In a few days to come I will preside over the inauguration of a bridge built with the Japanese assistance at Tonle Bet of Kampong Cham ... The construction costs more than US\$ 50 millions ... During the meeting with HE Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi of Japan at the ASEAN Summit in Brunei, I had his support on the ASEAN Highway Project ... Taking that moment of

opportunity I also requested an inclusion in the project of a bridge across the Mekong river that will link Cambodia and Laos ... As the Japanese helps us with big projects, we better have the rest handled by ourselves ... ”

“ ... We used to say -- 1) water, 2) roads, 3) electricity and 4) human resources -- are the four key priorities for development ... Now he have two more priorities 5) industrialization, light industry and processing for exports and 6) tourism ... The development of human resource is taking a great deal of time as we have done so in the past fifteen years and we still have to do more ... The same is true with regard to water as HE Chea Sophara confirmed to me just now that the water need will be sufficiently addressed by 2005 ... Drop by drop, the bucket will be full -- we have no other choices ... ”

(Continued from page 1)
Thanking President Bush ...

of Cambodia, a justification from the powerful country... and I am proud and thank President George W. Bush for giving this justice to the Cambodian people...”

On Possible US Assistance...

“... Though we have not yet received the US assistance directly, Cambodia has enjoyed certain help from the US through non-government organizations and other humanitarian channels... take for instance, the recent construction of a bridge in Pursath province... It is a respectable gesture... Of course we would like to have more, but we also have to know the limit resource of the friendly country... As for me, I do not care about from and through what channel the assistance is being given to Cambodia, as long as they arrive in and get to the people of Cambodia, it is already our pride and joy...”

November 15, 2001 (Excerpts)

Address on the Occasion of the Acceptance of the Honorary Doctorate Degree of Political Science from the University of Ramkhamhaeng, Kingdom of Thailand

“ ... I am honored to receive the Honorary Doctorate Degree of Political Science (Honoris Causa) in the field of Foreign Relations from the University of Ramkhamhaeng. It is always difficult to find the right words on occasions of this nature and I am very grateful indeed for this honor. It means a great deal to me and to my family.

In such occasion, I wish to sincerely share this honor and pleasure with Lok Chumteav BUN RANY HUN SEN, my wife and faithful companion of my life, who has been the sources of happiness for me and our children. She has created favorable conditions for me to discharge my duties and fulfill my obligation towards my beloved country.

It is also an opportunity to express my profound gratitude to my parents for giving birth to me on Earth, showing supreme morale, educating and bringing me up so that I can have the physical and intellectual strength to fulfil my obligations for our nation and people. I wish also to share this honor with all my relatives, friends and colleagues.

As I accept this Honorary Degree, I realize that this is an opportunity to look in two directions, the past and the future.

Primarily, as we look to the past, we can savor the many achievements we have made as a nation. Cambodia has pursued a course of reconciliation and compromise in order to ensure a stable and peaceful political future for the country. With its win-win policy, the Royal Government managed to dismantle the political and military or-

ganization of the Khmer Rouge. The remaining remnants of the Khmer Rouge defected to the government, others were arrested pending the trial for the genocidal crimes that they had committed in the past.

So, Cambodia in one integrated, self-contained territory under one government, without separatists and rebels, for the first time in over three decades.

Now in Cambodia there are no more Khmer Rouge rebels, leaders or troops. All have come into one fold. What was intended in the Paris Peace Accords of 1991 but could not be ensured by UNTAC, is now a reality because Cambodians have come together among themselves, not at the behest or prodding of external forces.

As the one who has initiated and carried out the «win-win» policy, I wish to elaborate on its contents as follows:

First, providing guarantee for security, life and physical safety to all those who had volunteered to defect from the Pol Pot's political and military organization in order to join the government and the mainstream of the society.

Second, their career and profession were protected through the process of integration, except for those who had political function.

Third, their mobile and immobile private property is being recognized by the government.

Providing the three guarantees responded to the interests of those who served in the rank of the Khmer Rouge and lived

in the zone controlled by the Khmer Rouge. It became an effective means to crack down on Pol Pot's militarist policy and the «iron-corroded-by-rust» strategy.

Ultimately, the Khmer Rouge's political and military organization was dismantled. Peace and national reconciliation were fully restored. National and territorial unity, the lack of secessionist zones and the reconciliation within the framework of one Constitution, one monarch and one government emerged in this unfortunate country.

Now this is the diamond opportunity for socio-economic rehabilitation and reconstruction through the government's triangle strategy.

In this sense, I am proud to say that the «win-win» policy is the core and the most important instrument of our peace philosophy.

This is also the most important lesson that we have learnt, after many decades of critical tests and struggles, in order to accomplish a full peace and tranquility at present.

The key point of our «win-win» policy is to recognize that there is no winner in waging an antagonist war and revenge will never bring peace to the country and its people.

Now, Cambodia and the Cambodians are currently at peace, for the first time in more than three hundred years after the assassination of PREAH SREY SOKUNBOT by SDECH KON. This is indeed a uniquely historic, highly laudable and noteworthy accomplishment. This peace has been brought about

by relentless efforts, mutual accommodation and the fine-art of compromise.

Of course, this genuine peace was restored with the benevolent leadership of our beloved monarch, His Majesty King NORODOM SIHANOUK, who is the «Supreme Heroic King-Preah Maha Vorak Ksatra» and father of our nation, and the result of a strong coalition between the Cambodian People's Party (CPP) and the FUNCINPEC.

I am very proud, since our Cambodian people are fortunate to have our reverent Their Majesties Samdech Preah NORODOM SIHANOUK and Samdech Preah Reach Akkak Mohesei the Queen as a protecting shade and playing a key role in national reconciliation.

Their Majesties have helped us resolve and avoid all crisis, thus allowing us to move forwards very rapidly on the way of national reconciliation and development.

The past decade is witness to the strong foundation for Cambodia's decisive move towards a lasting peace, sustainable development and tangible progress, as manifest in the impressive economic growth and continuous efforts to strengthen democratic institutions, promote the respect for human rights and alleviate poverty.

We recognize that promoting political stability and security in the country for our people is vital for the country's march toward prosperity and social progress.

This is the first side of our
(Continued on page 5)

(Continued from page 4)

"Triangle Strategy", which the Royal Government has taken serious strides to implement. We condemn terrorism in all forms and voice support for all actions to make our world safe and our country more secure.

In this sense, we will take all measures to root out violence, whether domestic or political, from our society and invite all political forces to play democratic game.

In this sense, internal law and order, good governance, strengthening institutions, creating a climate of cooperation and unity between partners in the government are key elements for peace in Cambodia.

The second side of our strategic triangle is Cambodia's rapid integration into the international community.

To this end, Cambodia has fully embraced the regional affairs and world politics. We have positively contributed to all aspects of cooperation and integration within the ASEAN and ASEAN + three framework, as well as within the framework of the Greater Mekong Subregion (GMS).

Membership in ASEAN, in particular, will forge a future of national unity, peace, stability, cooperation, economic development and prosperity for Cambodia.

In its own small way, Cambodia hopes to contribute towards building a better world for the Twenty-First Century.

Now our efforts are concentrated on the third side of the triangle, namely, in deepening our reform efforts aimed at promoting sustainable development and poverty reduction.

In this sense, the tempo we have achieved so far needs to be maintained and increased as much as possible to implement key reform programs - military demobilization, fiscal, public sector and judiciary reforms, strengthen good governance and protect the environment. These reforms will make the state institutions more professional, more effective and more efficient.

Cambodia has irrevocably adopted a pluralist democracy and fully embraced these democratic values. In all our efforts, we have made tremendous strides to promote social justice, combat poverty and inequality and uphold basic principles of liberty and human rights.

We have encouraged the population to get actively involved in public business and policy dialogue, debate and participation, especially in drafting important laws and regulations, such as the Land Law and Forestry Law.

This period is characterized by the increase in the role and importance of civil society. NGOs, research institutes and the media have contributed to the development of a civil society and played an active role in national reconstruction.

Freedom of the press is guaranteed by the government and more than 40 Cambodian newspapers, more than a dozen radio and television stations and international wire services operate freely.

The opposition and the opposition newspapers have been extremely critical of the government, adding more spices to our «political soup» and making it even more delicious. However, the rights and freedom should come with duties

and obligations towards the country and the people we love.

During the past years, serious strides have been made to ensure the protection of human rights in all aspects as internationally understood and practiced.

The respect of human dignity remains at the heart of our policy and practice, which encompasses both political rights, human security, as well as the rights to have enough to eat and opportunities at the workplace to earn one's living and to contribute to society.

The devolution of power and decentralization of decision making process will further widen an open environment in which there is greater freedom and democracy.

Our policy is geared to promote the participation, including that of women in development planning and other decision-making processes, development of the capacity of local authorities and support for increased allocation of public support to the sub-national and national levels.

Moreover, the Royal Government has manifested its full ownership of the commune elections and enhancing grassroots democracy by moving ahead to organize the commune elections with or without donor's assistance.

There is no doubt that the commune elections scheduled for February 2002 will strengthen democracy at the grassroots level, improve the efficiency of the public services to those in need and reduce poverty. This form of empowerment of the local people will have a far-reaching effect in the years to come.

What the government intend to do is to root out violence from domestic politics and ensure that the elections will be conducted in a free and fair manner and in a peaceful and non-violent climate.

On the economic front, the RGC has pursued "market-oriented" policies, which with generous external assistance from the international community have resulted in steady growth in the past decade.

Our economic reform program is geared to establish a viable foundation for long-term economic growth and sustainable development, strengthen private entrepreneurship, maintain macroeconomic stability, strengthen the banking and financial institutions, implement fiscal reform measures, ensure a sound management of public property and increase public investment in the area of physical and social infrastructure and human resource development.

The accelerated transformation, restructuring and adjustment have paid off. Cambodia has made impressive strides in re-establishing economic stability and re-integrating itself into the international community.

The economy has expanded on average at a real annual rate of 5 percent during the 1990s.

Only in 1997-98, GDP growth slowed down, due to the Asian financial turmoil and domestic political developments. Inflation has been dramatically reduced, and during the last few years was kept at very low level. The exchange rate has been broadly stable. The balance of payments is being financed without jeopardizing future creditworthiness.

(Continued on page 6)

November 09, 2001 (Excerpts)**Address to the Ceremony to Mark the 48th Anniversary of the Formation of the Royal Cambodian Armed Forces**

... It is a great honor and pleasure for me to attend the ceremony to mark the 48th Anniversary of the Formation of the Royal Cambodian Armed Forces (RCAF), which is held when our beloved country has enjoyed full peace, as we are strongly determined to establish the rule of law, strengthen multi-party democracy, uphold the respect for human rights and especially promote economic development with a view to gradually reducing poverty of the Cambodian people.

The 9th of November is a historical day, which is associated with the formation of the RCAF 48 years ago for the noble cause of national independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity, peace and prog-

ress of our Cambodian motherland.

The 9th of November is also our Independence Day and is deemed to be the birthday for the RCAF, as we have a special aim to remind the prominent role of His Majesty Preah Bat Preah Norodom Sihanouk, our reverent King, in establishing the RCAF during his Royal Crusade for independence and the subsequent granting of independence from the French colonialism on 9 November 1953.

With this independence the RCAF was formed from the Cambodian militia movement.

Under such solemn circumstances, on behalf of the Royal Government of Cambodia

(RGC) and on my own behalf I sincerely commend and highly appreciate the Ministry of Defense, the RCAF Supreme Command and all RCAF divisions and units, as well as all military personnel for their tremendous efforts to overcome all obstacles to achieve our common objectives of building up and continuously developing the RCAF.

This allowed them to fulfill with honor their role and responsibilities bestowed to them by the Royal Government. In this sense, I would like to express my respect, sincere affection and homage to the families of felled soldiers and our compatriots from all walks of life for making sacrifice, allowing their loved children, broth-

ers and sisters and husbands to serve in the armed forces for the noble cause of our country.

I also convey my greetings to the families of handicapped and injured soldiers who are being hospitalized, and wish them sooner recovery.

As you are aware, many decades of internal strife and protracted wars have totally destroyed the RCAF.

After the 1993 general elections, the RCAF was re-established by integrating the armed forces of all factions implementing the Paris Peace Agreement under the wise guidance of our reverent King.

(Continued on page 7)

(Continued from page 5)

As we look to the future, it is with the knowledge that Cambodia has found new strength and prosperity by embracing new ideas, dynamism and the tremendous vitality to put behind us the tragedy of the past and to develop the country to catch up with the rest of the world.

We have successfully implemented the government triangle strategy, which has become the policy compass for the Royal Government during the second term of office.

As a result, South-East Asia, once regarded as one of the world's most politically tumultuous regions, is now characterized, for the most part, by longstanding stability. Cambodia's increasing contribution to our region is perhaps most clearly reflected in the growing linkages with friendly countries, which will have the most enduring effects.

This is a trend we can expect to see accelerating, for the foreseeable future.

In this context, Cambodia and Thailand are close neighbors, and we have close bilateral relations, which are complemented by the excellent ties we have within ASEAN.

We share the same Mekong Basin region, which has the potential for rapid economic growth.

For the future, we see many areas of opportunities where Cambodia and Thailand can continue and expand the great tradition of cooperation which have grown up between us in the decades.

The two countries have a political, an economic and a long-term social interest in cooperating with each other to ensure our continued collective prosperity and progress for our

people.

This Honorary Degree is a tribute, above all, to many people who have made the supreme sacrifice in the service of our Cambodian nation.

I am alone can only steer the direction and it is not one individual who is responsible for the positive developments, mentioned earlier.

At the realm of the Cambodian vessel, I would like to express profound gratitude to His Majesty Preah Bat Preah NORODOM SIHANOUK, Heroic King of Cambodia and Father of the Nation, and Preah Reach Akkak Mohesei the Queen, who have extended their protecting shade and displayed moral depth, political skill, compassion and capacity for reconciliation.

I also express my deep brotherly feelings and friendship to Samdech CHEA SIM, Samdech

HENG SAMRIN and other Cambodian leaders, who have worked tirelessly for the noble cause of our country. More importantly I express my strong sense of affection to our Cambodian compatriots.

Once again, I express my respect and sincere gratitude to His Majesty the King of Thailand and reiterate our assurance of gratitude and friendship to the Kingdom, the Government and the People of Thailand ...

(Continued from page 6)

The newly formed RCAF have been the only national armed forces of the Kingdom of Cambodia, whose role is to protect national independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity of the Kingdom of Cambodia, protect the Constitution, peace, political stability, allowing for the exercise of democracy, the respect for human rights, the rehabilitation and reconstruction of the country, especially the rescue of the population from the scourges of natural disasters, such as last year and this year's flooding.

In this context, the RCAF have an important role to play in strengthening and expanding the bonds of friendship, solidarity and cooperation with their foreign partners in the safeguard of security, peace and stability in the region and the world.

These are the honorable mandate, which the RCAF should implement for the sake of peace and progress of Cambodia and Cambodians. Indeed, it is hard to fulfill this mandate at all times and under any circumstances.

Especially this will require, under the present circumstances, the RCAF to reform and transform themselves to adjust to the changing needs for the country's development.

Taking into account such needs and requirements, the RGC has given priority and attention to the military reform and demobilization.

At present, as the Kingdom of Cambodia has fully enjoyed peace, the RCAF consist of three components: the Royal Army, the Royal Navy and the Royal Air Forces, including the corps of Military Police and

other specialized units.

These components have played a crucial role in maintaining peace and stability and contributed to the implementation of the government's political platform.

I recall the achievements made by the RCAF, including maintaining security and social order, cracking down on terrorist actions, armed robberies and kidnaps, playing a crucial role in conjunction with other government agencies to suppress various offenses, including illegal logging, forest crimes and smuggling, build roads and rescue the victims of the 2000 and 2001 flooding.

Moreover, the RCAF have been proactive in speeding up the implementation of the five-year plan for military reform (2000-2004) adopted by the RCAF aimed at substantially reducing the current manpower levels.

Such strength will be appropriate, allowing them fully and efficiently discharge their own duties as stipulated in the Constitution and also in line with regional and world developments in the 21st century.

Moreover, we will turn all demobilized soldiers into a powerful force to contribute to sustainable economic development and poverty reduction of the Cambodian people.

In this sense, the first phase of full demobilization for 2001 has been scrupulously implemented.

Up to the 9th November a total of 5,753 soldiers have been demobilized, accounting for more than one third of the 15,000 soldiers to be demobilized until the end of 2001.

Afterward, we will continue to

implement the full demobilization program and the RGC is hopeful that we will be able to demobilize a total of 55,000 soldiers as planned for the period of five years.

The five-year plan for military reform and the Defense White Paper have set the main tasks for the RCAF and the following guidelines:

First, demobilizing the soldiers as planned;

Second, building up and strengthening the remaining forces and transforming them into an organized armed forces with good discipline, morale, quality and adequate capacity and capable of fulfilling with efficiency their prominent role and responsibilities.

In this sense, to proceed with further military demobilization I appeal once again, on behalf of the RGC, to the donor community to provide assistance, whether spiritual, financial or material, to the Council for the Demobilization of the Armed Forces, the Ministry of Defense and the RCAF Supreme Command so that they can move ahead with the demobilization as planned.

At the same time, I wish to appeal to all Municipal/Provincial Veteran Committees, the authorities at all levels and the local people to create better conditions for the demobilized soldiers and their families.

Please help them to settle in so that they can exercise their rights and benefit from their civilian life like other Cambodian people.

For those military personnel who continue to serve in the RCAF, as I stated earlier, even though the Kingdom of Cambodia has enjoyed full peace, the RCAF still have a crucial

role to play in protecting the nation, independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Cambodia, as well as maintaining security and social order.

This is an indispensable environment conducive for multi-party democracy, the respect for human rights, the promotion of economic growth and the reduction of poverty of the population.

Even if they have to face with some difficult situations, the RGC is confident that our military personnel serving in all units will follow the RCAF tradition with resilience to overcome these difficult situations and obstacles in order to discharge with honor their role and responsibilities set by the government's political platform under the motto of "Nation, Religion and King".

Once again, on behalf of the RGC I highly appreciate the efforts and achievements made by the RCAF under the guidance of the Ministry of Defense and the Supreme Command.

I urge our military personnel to continue to work in this direction and double their efforts for the noble cause of our beloved country.

Before concluding my remark, on behalf of the RGC and my own behalf, I wish to table for those who will stay on with the RCAF the following recommendations on the military reform and demobilization:

First, continue to discharge your duties of defending the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity for the supreme interests of the country.

Second, participate in the implementation of the five-year RCAF reform.

(Continued on page 8)

November 29, 2001 (Quotes)
Verbal Address at the Ground-Breaking and Inauguration Ceremony in Battambang District and Province

On Commune Elections ...

" ... Taking this solemn occasion I wish to make an appeal to the people of Cambodia to implement their individual rights by going to vote on February 3, 2002 in accordance with the time frame defined by the Law on the Election of the Commune Council ...

" ... Another success of Cambodia and its Royal Government is to conduct an election that is free and fair, free from violence, free from abuse of law and free from intimidation ... Anyone, no matter who he/she would be, who commits acts of violence will be punished according to law without special treatment ...

" ... May all of the eligible voters go to register and vote to elect any candidates you may trust ... Please do not hesitate because of threats or deception, whether in words or in physical deeds, that may occur ...

(Continued from page 7)

Third, improve quality and strengthen capacity of the military by providing psychological education and training, using all kinds of approaches, such as training in military schools and units inside and outside of the country with a view to strengthening political education and technical capacity of the RCAF.

This will allow the RCAF to discharge their roles and responsibilities with strong political undertaking, discipline, high moral and loyalty vis-à-

" ... The local authority at all levels has to act in their immediate responsibility in case such incidents take place ... Our success lies in the organization of a safe and free election, and not in which party wins the elections ..."

On Tax Collection and Forest Protection ...

" ... The authority of all levels should continue to support the Custom Authority and Forest Authority in efforts to prevent tax evasion and the illegal deforestation activities ... Provinces along the border have to assist in the collection of tax as they will help contribute to the construction and development of schools, roads, payrolls and other infrastructure ... In this moment, I would also like to express my deep thanks to the authority of all levels and our people for their wholehearted support of the three-point order to close down nightclubs, bars, discotheques and Karaoke ...

vis the country and the people of Cambodia.

Fourth, continue to participate in the rehabilitation and reconstruction of infrastructures, roads, bridges, dams, dikes, as well as in mine clearance to save peoples' lives and to contribute to the socio-economic development and poverty reduction of the people.

Fifth, continue your cooperation to maintain peace and social order, crack down on crimes and other offences and get ready to give a helping hand to the people during a

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07/11/01	Samdech Hun Sen Thanked the Bush Administration for the Removal of Cambodia from the Drug List.
09/11/01	Address to the Ceremony to Mark the 48th Anniversary of the Formation of the Royal Cambodian Armed Forces.
15/11/01	Address on the Occasion of the Acceptance of the Honorary Doctorate Degree of Political Science from the University of Ramkhamhaeng, Kingdom of Thailand.
16/11/01	Address to the Conference of the Medical Association of Southeast Asian Nations (MASEAN)
15/11/01	Excerpts of Comments at the Ground-Breaking Ceremony of the Water Treatment Center in Phnom Penh.
28/11/01	Address to the Asia-Pacific Conference in preparation for the Summit on "Sustainable Development."
29/11/01	Excerpts of Verbal Address at the Ground-Breaking (of Net Yang School) and Inauguration Ceremony in Battambang District and Province.

natural disaster.

Sixth, the recent world developments have shown that fighting international terrorism is a hot issue at both regional and international levels, requiring special attention from the government and the international community.

In this sense, the RCAF and the police should increase their vigilance in strengthening national security and safety for the people in order to maintaining political and social environment conducive to the development of the country.

On behalf of the people and government of Cambodia and on my own behalf I would like to express our profound gratitude to the governments, peoples and armed forces of friendly countries for providing assistance and close cooperation to the RCAF ...