

29 March 2006 (Unofficial Translation of Selected Comments)
Stock-taking Agricultural, Forest & Fisheries Conference



20-23 March 06—Samdech Hun Sen and Madame during the Official Visit to the Republic of Korea (Yonhap)

It is the first time since the fall of the Pol Pot's regime that we have harvested high yield of rice up to 6 million tons. We have a surplus of about two million tons of paddy rice - roughly about 1.3 million tons of milled rice. If we were to sustain such an increase, we would quell away problem of food insecurity. It is still not clear if our people increase their dry-season rice production to just fill in their loss in producing rainy season rice or they do both. It is worth noting now that no matter how high the yield of rice they could get from rainy season rice, they are active in increasing their dry-season rice activities. Compared to last year, the area of cultivation has increased by a size of 23410 hectares. I am glad to see this positive trend and wish to urge our people to continue their dry-season rice production and to provide further assistance in irrigation networks so that more land can be cultivated.

Today I have some more remarks and recommendations to make on issue of forest affairs. According to the report of HE Minister for Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, we have had an alarming figure on land grabbing. In 2004, the Committee in Prevention of Land Grabbing discovered a size of 148302 hectares that were illegally seized. In the same years a size of 340 hectares had been disclaimed. In 2005, a size of 112612 hectares of land was discovered to be illegally seized and 8743 hectares were claimed back. In 2006, in the first three months of the year 3888 hectares have been discovered to be illegally possessed and 7319 have been claimed back. In sum, among the total land illegally occupied - 264802 hectares, only 19100 hectares have been taken back.

We have seen here that cases
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13 March 2006 (Unofficial Translation of Selected Comments)
Inaugurating the Pursat's Kravanh Bailey Bridge

... It is indeed my pleasure to be able to join all of you here today - not only those from the area of Kravanh but also people from the western part of Banteay Meanchey, Battambang and Pailin with deputy Governor of each province, including those of the provinces of Kompong Chhnang and Prey Veng. I have so much pleasure to put the 138-meter Bailey bridge into use over the Rive of Pursat and to inaugurate the new director's office in the Hun Sen College

of Kravanh. It is indeed an historic achievement that is worth remembering as it never exists before. My wife who is here present with me has also been in this place many times to distribute Red Cross relief. By the end of 2004 I came to Satre with HE Minister for Water Resources Lim Kean Hor for a relief effort in distributing water pump machines to save the drought affected rice fields.

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09 March 2006 (Unofficial Translation of Selected Comments)
Inaugurating Banteay Meanchey's Irrigation Network

... I have a great pleasure to join with HE Ambassador of Japan who funded the project and our national guests for today's inauguration of the irrigation network in this area. I would like to seek your understanding that my wife, who happened to have come here once for the Red Cross distribution of relief kits, could not come today because of her unfavorable health condition. I am also feeling sick and wrapped myself around in protection of coldness while in helicopter.

of those who were killed here under the Khmer Rouge regime. Some of our senior officials, HE Deputy Prime Minister Sok An, HE Cham Prasidh, HESo Khun, the late former Minister for Agriculture HE Chhea Song, had spent their lives in this area.

Before reaching this time of development, we have gone through various stages of bitter history. Having achieved peace and national reconciliation, today's inauguration of such an irrigation network facility has been made possible. Talking about lives devas-
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can be classified according to the size possessed – between 500 and 1000 hectares (27 cases), between 100 and 500 hectares (134 cases), between 50 and 100 hectares (158 cases), between 20 and 50 hectares (298 cases), between 10 and twenty hectares (498 cases), between five and ten hectares (1321 cases) and below five hectares (14726 cases). The overall situation has not been smaller and we have to see about that.

I have rearranged the composition of the provincial governors and their tasks are to take this matter into serious consideration and take actions. They have the duty to stop any increase of land grabbing if they could not do anything to bring them down yet. Now that we have a one-minister system in defense and in interior, we have no one to blame on but ourselves. We could not afford to leave all this to be solved by the Ministry of Agriculture alone, take for instance, they have to wait for the Ministry to act on cases of inundated forest illegally cutting. Now that we have involved the leadership of the province, as there are many deputy governors, things must be done seriously. I have warned in 1999 at Chamkar Daung Agricultural Institute that we should be aware of possible peasant revolution.

I order that the governors have to take activities in preventing actions to clear forest for land, except areas provided in concession to private investors. Also we have to come up with a clear plan as I have recommended many times already as to where and how big is the concession area and the investment board at the provincial and city level have

the right to authorize area under 1000 hectares. All investment authorization must be taken into serious consideration of following important factors – 1) no concession land should encroach or overlap with the people's land; 2) by authorizing concession we should keep in mind of reserving some land for an increase rate of population at about 2.4%; 3) people should benefit from all infrastructure built into the area; and 4) integrating our people with the investment project in the area – take for instance allow our people to grow sugar cane for the sugar factory investment.

Consideration should be placed mainly though on the first and second factors. Attention should also be given to problem of backdating land titles. The local authorities – at the village, the commune and district levels – have the authority to certify the land area or ownership, and antedating in this respect must be reprimanded. In relation to this I also have to say something about land conflict charges in the court. Cases filed and sent to the court from the Forest Administration have not gone into hearing and when these cases are given hearings they do it in a flash manner that the Forest Administration loses the case for protecting the state's property. I would warn that they should not rush the case to the court as we have to use our state power to see to it. I would urge the Ministry of Justice to organize a court to look into this issue to get back all the forest land while waiting for the court trial. I urge therefore the Ministry of Agriculture and the Forest Administration to act in their power on all matters related before sending them to the court.

I wish that we all understand

28 March 2006 (Unofficial Translation of Selected Comments)

Inaugurating Healthcare Technical School

I am grateful that the Director of the School has displayed pictures of how the school has been developed since 1960s and later on at one point it has been transformed into a warehouse for UNICEF and finally back into a school. When HE

that efforts must be made on issue of land and forestry. The real mechanism and power rest with the provincial governors and measures taken to combat against forest crimes and land grabbing should be implemented as a confidential matter. Otherwise, offenders would escape before we reach them. No one would be forgiven in the course of implementing this order. I wish to have a regular report on the situation of forest crimes and land grabbing issues – I need to monitor this plan. If we were to score success in this term, those in the following terms would have less serious problems to deal with. I do not understand why the UN representative on human rights to Cambodia Yash Ghai said I use my iron fist in violation of the court matter. I think he does not have a good knowledge of Cambodia and therefore he could not help us. We have it written about human rights rapporteur in the Paris Peace Agreement and I wish they should have a look at it. I used to tell HE Kofi Annan that I could not expect the rapporteur writes positively about Cambodia's human rights records. The representative was talking about concentrating power around "one individual" which implicitly refers to me. As a Prime Minister it is not wrong to have power. I would seek HE Kofi Annan's reconsideration of his position in Cambodia...■

Chhea Thang was Minister and HE Dinarong Rith was the Secretary of State for Health, in 1996 I came here to preside over the graduation ceremony. It was at that time that we had a discussion on how to go about mending the buildings' leakages from rain. It is good to have said here that personal health, family health, community health are national wealth. Indeed all of you who have been trained in various specialties never have thought of a person of what they may be, what complexion they may have, what rank or wealth they may have to provide treatment.

It is no different from me. I have built schools, hospitals and made canals in the aim that everything I did is for the people of Cambodia irrespective of wealth and political affiliation. People's wellbeing is indeed the country's invaluable wealth and it is also my happiness. With regards to some of the recommendations I have listed out, I wish to elaborate a little further on the point of students' enrolment. I wish that priority is given to those from rural areas so that there is a confirmation that once they finished their studies they will return to their native places. In this regard I wish to recall the State of Cambodia's experience in recruiting students: all students enrolled must sign a contract with the State that once graduated would be serving in the State's health sector. Such a contract student had come to an end in 1997.

We had in those days provided a priority to students from remote provinces – such as Ratanakiri, Mondulakiri, Stoeungtreng, Preah Vihear or

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I came here once again on March 8, 2005 to review the project of digging water canals and establishing a stand for the Hun Sen water pump station number 48. I told the new Governor to choose between two projects – water canal and the bridge. The answer was for both. Having learned of the number of children died from crossing the river in flood time, I have ordered the installation of a Bailey bridge over the river. Not only students, but also those people old and young, the most suffered of all are sick people and women in labor, who have to endure all the pains of waiting for the ferry to cross from one side of the river to another for medical assistance and attendance. I could imagine how worried their parents could be over the fact that their children have to cross the river to school.

What do we achieve from the bridge? As is said by HE Gen. Kvan Siem, if we were to develop this area into a tourist site, we are to illustrate the site as a rich historical area. HRH Srey Raja, one of our former Kings was here building a bridge as well. Historical figures involved would be Khleang Moeung and his lady. In our history, Cambodia's western zone was under Preah Chan Raja, while its eastern one was under Preah Srey Jeddha or Sdech Kan. It is indeed a good thing to protect and restore those historical sites. Only to your understanding, Cambodia is no longer a divided nation. We have already linked our road 56 of 197 kilometers to Thailand in 2000-2002 and this road has yet to cover similar extension to Thailand as we had this bridge to be built first. Now that we have the bridge, we can focus attention on other things as to build the road.

We now mobilize our military engineering forces to the district of Stomg in the province of Kompong Thom as they are the only force with capability to work in areas affected by mines and malaria. They are the leading forces in construction in places where it would not be appropriate for civilian engineering teams of the Ministries of Transport and Public Works and of Rural Development to perform. I am grateful indeed to the Ministries of Finance, Rural Development and Transport and Public Works for their flexible implementation of the project in making this bridge possible. I am grateful also to many Government senior officials and the CPP work team who have come to this place to both observe the construction and to listen to our people's needs.

I wish to reaffirm that we have to continue our priority in building more roads and bridges. In my rough estimation we would need about 40,000 meters or 40 kilometers more of Bailey. We have already put in place a length of 12 kilometers, but more need to be done. Take for instance in the area of the Pursat river, we would need one bridge from ten to fifteen kilometers to the next. The same is also true for the people in Kompong Thom's Stoeng Sen (small river Sen) where more bridges over the river must be installed. I have talked to HE Minister of Transports and Public Works that wherever the state could not cover the construction costs of small bridges, perhaps we should try BOT type of construction with private companies whereas the state would look into investing in bigger bridges over the Tonle Mekong, Tonle Bassac and Tonle Sap in form of loan, grant or BOT. We should look

into this BOT possibility as our people would save time for same expense if they were to travel by ferry. I talked to our officials that to integrate Cambodia into ASEAN, Cambodia should first integrate within itself – take for instance ASEAN Highway, ASEAN Railway, etc. How could one talk about integrations when we have to cross the river Mekong at the point of Neak Loeng by ferry. The western side of the river and that of the eastern side has not been linked yet, how could integration be possible? That is why I said it is far from complete to integrate politically and administratively, but we have to see the need for all-out integration. It was in this respect that we have speeded the construction of the national road 56 via Pailin to the border with Thailand. We also have a road link from Banteay Srey to the border with Thailand via Anlong Veng, Tropeang Prasat, etc.

Cambodia is stepping into the start of the rainy season rice and our people irrespective of their political beliefs and affiliations should try to boost up production. From now on I think we should not mention anymore about "quota" and let the word be said only in the parliament, the Government, and the Senate. Officials in political functions would be proposed by party's quota but those from Governor, Director General, General Commander, and General Commissioner would not be bound to appointment according to quota. If we were to speed up the reform process we should put an end to the quota system in the police, military and civil administration. We must expedite neutralization of the armed forces and civil administration. All proposed appointments should be based on

qualification of the proposed candidates. From the mountain of Kravanh, I wish to declare once and for all that everything is to proceed normally whereas law would be the basic tool for measuring actions.

The Senate and the National Assembly will be born out of elections, from which parties' quotas will be brought into the Royal Government. The winner will form the Government, and it should depend upon that winning party whether it wishes to have a one-party or coalition Government. I am making this point clear so that one should not be misled by false comments in the newspapers. How could the country advance when we all talk about party quota in the court system – the CPP court, the Funcinpec court, etc. One has the right to affiliate oneself with so and so political party, but one must be neutral in one's performance of functional duty. I think we have allowed more than needed time for such an adjustment and it has now got out of control. I hope all ministers – both CPP and Funcinpec – would not act in negligence because the Prime Minister would nullify their decisions.

Samdech Hun Sen on that occasion offered ten million Riels each for the Buddhist pagodas of Ratana Ram in the commune of Samraong, and Kompeng, a school building of six classrooms each to the Primary School of Hun Sen-Bak Chenh Chean, and Prey Kanlang. Whereas in principle Samdech agrees to the request for an installation of the Bailey over the Pursat River in adjacent to the current concrete bridge, while ordering the Ministry of Transports and Public Works to conduct a study■

27 March 2006 (Unofficial Translation of Selected Comments)

Inaugurating Clean Water Supply System in Siemreap

On behalf of the Royal Government and people of Cambodia, especially the Cambodian people in the province of Siemreap, I have a great pleasure to express my sincere thanks for this very useful assistance of the Government and people of Japan. This province has indeed been a region lacking clean water supply. The water system here will put out about 8000 cubic meters of clean water per day and in addition to providing clean water to the city of Siemreap our people in the communes of Dangkum, Kamroek, Korkchalk and Sala would benefit from the water system as well. Japan has given a great deal of assistance in providing clean water in the capital city of Phnom Penh. The water supply capacity in the city of Phnom Penh, which I have inaugurated in three different times, has been improved to a great extent, where Kandal's Takhmao city is also benefiting from the system as well...

HE Sim Son, Governor of the province of Siemreap will leave to take up his new post as a Secretary of State for Rural Development. I demand a resolute reform. We need a unified administration and not a party quota one. The Governor represents the Royal Government in the province and all heads of offices from various line ministries have to also report to the Governor in the first place and all appointments of officials at the provincial level will have to also take the Governor's recommendations into consideration.

HE Su Phirin's mandate in Siemreap is to tackle forest crimes. Whether we would gain a success or not rests in the fact how resolute the Gov-

ernment and the Prime Minister are on reform. I know that land conflict in Siemreap has not been simple and it is very embarrassed for you (HE Sim Son). I have to bring in a person with no involvement to take over this work. In Siemreap he has to work hard and attention should be paid not only at developing the city, while neglecting the environment of Tonle Sap Lake and the forest. From now on all Governors have to work hard to put an end to illegal land grabbing. If the problem cannot be solved, it should not be allowed to grow bigger. I am sure the local authority is fully aware of that but do not act on it.

It would be a mistake if there is a thought that I would remove only officials originally from Funcinpec. They are no longer officials that are affiliated to so and so party. They are officials of the Government. Though they are CPP affiliated officials, they would be removed if they could not fulfill their obligated managerial works. Taking this opportunity I wish to place an appeal to those hiding under other people's identity must come out confess. There are also cases in which people hides under someone's identity and becomes governor, police or military police head. Those whose identities have been stolen should file a complaint directly to me. I have ordered that if those persons exist in reality, the Ministry of Interior should invite them back to work, but those who stole other people's identities must be removed and deleted from the payroll, while filing a complaint to the court. They would not be reprimanded if they come out confess...■

02 March 2006 (Unofficial Translation of Selected Comments)

Press Briefing: Opening the Consultative Group Meeting

... Why do we have to amend the Constitution? Our main aim is to guarantee that there would not be anymore political deadlock in the future, or after the elections in 2008. This also applies in the case that the Prime Minister's post is definitely unoccupied – from whatever reason – the establishment of a new Government should for this reason be decided by the formula of 50 + 1 rather than the two third majority system. There have been comments that the Cambodian People's Party would form a new Royal Government without Funcinpec. I wish to reiterate here that this – amending the Constitution while abandoning its current partner Funcinpec to form a new coalition -has not been the intention of the Cambodian People's Party at all.

I am taking this opportunity to affirm herewith that the cooperation between the Cambodian People's Party and Funcinpec will continue. Leaving Funcinpec after the amendment of the Constitutional decision to 50 + 1 would not be virtuous. It is in this remark that I wish to reaffirm that CPP will keep the current coalition Government only to change leadership structures of two ministries – the Ministry of Interior and the Ministry of National Defense – from the state of being co-ministers. We will retain the positions of deputy prime ministers for Samdech Krom Khun Sereivudh and HE Nhek Bun Chhay. The rest of Funcinpec state secretaries and understate secretaries should stay where they are.

I wish to also make clear that the incidents of appointing officials in a non-virtuous

manner, or through lobby of wives or concubines have not been the problem of Funcinpec alone, but a matter that has been found also in CPP. Take for instance when I was commenting about "oldsters" I did not refer to Funcinpec in particular but to all in general – CPP and Parties outside parliament are also included. We have to also change some of the officials who are not competent, unqualified but no changes are planned for senior officials from Funcinpec as has been commented in the press. I also take this opportunity to declare that from now on officials ranking from general director level downwards will no longer officials from parties' quotas but all are of the Government.

Those with competence will continue to serve the posts while those without will have to be trained and retrained in various courses as I have told the Ministry of Interior to get ready for some short term training cycles. I just read out a speech to the CG that is reviving in full for a profound reform on that matter. We have to apply strictly the Law on Public Officials Statutes, which is similar to that of the army and police. From today onward we will apply the regime of decision made by chief of institution. Rumors of removal or swapping officials occurred not only within the rank of Funcinpec but also in CPP – take for instance those on HE So Khun and Chan Sarun. My wish is to remove no officials only if they make mistakes, I would propose for a motion of no confidence from the parliament. This is the best formula for the incumbent Royal Government's

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tated under the regime is one thing, but pondering about freedom is another as Cambodians were then slaves of Pol Pot's regime. In between 1979 and 1998, the last stage of integration, the area was indeed a toughest fighting area.

Thanks to the win-win policy, people throughout the country have once again united on a unified territory under one command. Looking back into the Cambodian history, Cambodia was divided into many factions with separate controls. It was indeed a good lesson that we have been able to put an end to division and to prevent the return of war and destruction thanks to peace-making through win-win policy.

As of now we should think that peace without development would be inapplicable for sustaining peace. For instance if the country was to be sickened with poverty with an accelerating rate, social injustice would definitely be prevailing and making negative impacts on the livelihood of the people – and that is what we do not want. We try our best to make peace in order for development to take place, and to achieve development in order to maintain peace, while securing stability, freedom, human rights, etc.

I wish to state that in fact this plan of irrigation development has begun when the Ministry of Water Resources and Meteorology was just a department of the Ministry of Agriculture. But to implement the project requires a great deal of resources. On April 5-6 in 2003, HE Senior Minister Keat Chhon and HE General Staff Ke Kim Yan were here. After that with the cooperation of the Ministry of Water Re-

sources and Meteorology, making use of water system in the reservoir Tropeang Thmor has been studied.

What remained to be done at that time was to negotiate with Japan for approval of making use of the Japanese fund for that purpose. Japan helps Cambodia in all fields – official and non-official assistance. Normally Japan offers about 20 million US dollars as non-project grant, which the Japanese embassy would discuss with the Royal Government on selecting projects under which the assistance could be used. With the Japanese offer of 1,710,000 US dollars and some 300,000 US dollars as counterpart fund from the Royal Government of Cambodia, the total sum of two million US dollars has been invested here.

A part of the project is to set up a water reservoir for irrigation for about seven thousand hectares of dry-season rice and ten thousand hectares of rainy season rice. Our people's living condition would eventually be improved thanks to this realization of irrigation system. I maintain a high hope that the water potential of the reservoir will be made use to the maximum not only for rice cultivation but also for other crops.

Before the achievement of this reservoir our people cultivated rice at only 1.2 tons of paddy rice per hectare, but now that the figure has improved to two tons. Still I think efforts must be made in improving inputs so that high yield would be achieved as a result. I wish that the Department of Agronomy of the Ministry of Agriculture would reach out to our people in extending their ser-

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05 March 2006 (Unofficial Translation of Selected Comments)

Celebrating March-8 International Women's Day

... Please allow me to make some comments in addition to my prepared text. Today we organize the celebration of March 8 – the international women's day. My question is why we take only one day in 365 days to celebrate the international women's day and not all 365. What I wanted to say is that we should try and implement what we have put out in action. Violence on and trafficking in women have become hot issues and demanded serious implementation of law. HE Ing Kuntha Phavi - Minister of Women's Affairs – has been doing a lot of works in relation to this matter. This is a point to which we have to exercise common strategy and effort. All ministries have been instructed to cooperate with the Ministry of Women's Affairs to institutionalize gender in their programs...

Trafficking is a business that needs lots of money and power. In this relation I wish to express my sincere thanks to various institutions involved especially police in taking action and collecting proofs for taking cases to courts. The police have to assist the Ministry of Women's Affairs. I think for gender equity and equality, access to education must be provided to girls at the primary, secondary and tertiary education. The Royal Government of Cambodia is carefully planning for this by decentralizing school buildings closer to people in the countryside. Only we move the school closer to home does access to education for women increase. On the basis of primary schools in local level, what remain to be done in this process is to increase the number of teachers and

equip them to be secondary schools. I wish to declare to parents and superintendents to change their perceptions of giving more consideration of education for their boys than their girls. We should change attitudes along with that of structural adjustment.

Cambodia is a society of matriarchy as is shown in all prefixes used to stress the role and function of women – take for instance Me (woman as head of) Khum (commune), etc. Women normally are the one who decide on what amount of rice should be kept as seed, as food and for selling in exchange for clothing, etc. As the largest percent of Cambodian households, women hold the family's account. As is said by HE Minister for Women's Affairs 73% of the Cambodian labor are women farmers and workers who have involved in activities for the sake of family livelihoods. Microfinance assistance should take this matter into consideration as loans to men could end up in drinks shop or concubine's affairs. We have to pay attention to incidents of rapes of under aged persons by elder people, fathers, step fathers, etc. When I was talking about "devil fox" lady, I mean to make our society a good one but some people have taken it personally. I am glad and grateful to see that HE Ing Kiet and Madame are here today in their role of good father, mother and good grand parents who have a daughter as Minister. If HE Ing Kiet were to have another wife or concubine, Minister Ing Kuntha Phavy could not be here to talk about this matter. We also should try and make our country free of tourist sex destination ■

17 March 2006 (Unofficial Translation of Selected Comments)
Comments at the Annual Health Conference
Demand for Midwife

In relation to midwife issue, I would suggest if we could use similar incentive as we did in the area of tuberculosis. I remember that before it was covered by the budget from the Ministry of Economy and Finance, I covered the supplementary income for about two years. As is said here when we have announcement for a recruitment of 100 midwives and there have been only 60 applicants it tells us that there are not many people who likes to take up this career. I think the Ministries of Health, Public Function and Economy and Finance should altogether review the salary system – whether we offer a bigger salary for them than those in other areas in general medical application. As of now about 200 health centers are without midwives. I think we should encourage people for this career for it is relating to lives of mother and child, during and post delivery. I support the idea of working out an incentive system so that we could manage our human resources in this area.

Traffic Accidents

Death caused from traffic accidents is on the increase. Injured people from traffic accidents have been a costly treatment – take for instance the need for blood, which is in great demand but in short supply for those to be operated. I wish to take this opportunity to declare a reform vis á vis the right-hand drive vehicles. About 30% of the vehicles in the country are right-hand drive. They were bought at 2000 or 2500 US dollars while the cost of changing from right to left hand drive would be another 500 dollars — unviable option for them... I wish to send a message to our peo-

ple and all related institutions and authorities to provide right-hand drive vehicles already in traffic in the country legal rights to circulate in the country by allowing them to pay tax and to get a number plate. What is the most important is the fact that we must cease by all means to allow imports of new right-drive cars. The right-hand drive vehicles would not last to after 2010 or 2015 if no further imports. Having done so we would be able to avoid to an extent the traffic accident and also collect more taxes as well. As far as tax payment is concerned we should think of an acceptable rate because if the car is bought at about 500 dollars and the rate for paying tax is set at 1500 dollars, they would not bring their cars to pay tax still. What is to be done is that the custom officers and the military police at the border do their duties to put a firm stop at import of more right-hand drive vehicles. From now on all vehicles have the rights to traffic in the country that no police or military police cause them any troubles while driving.

I taking the chance to reduce death and injury that might be caused by traffic accidents. Recently the Phnom Penh Municipality have decided to accept the offer of right-hand drive vehicles for collecting wastes from Japan, and I think we must accept the offer. And when the Prime Minister approve the offer of right-hand drive vehicles means the Prime Minister legalize the traffic of the right-hand drive vehicles already. The Khmer New Year is approaching and they may need the cars for traveling in families to their native villages, or tourist areas...■

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stability. Whether HRH Samdech Krom Preah withdraws from the coalition, I would not think so. I doubt if Funcinpec officials would follow him. By leaving the Government I think he would suffer a great deal and it would not be a good choice. Some officials may follow him and some will stay with the Government.

The CPP, I declare, would accept officials who wish to join CPP. If they all choose to follow Samdech Krom Preah, then it would not be neither CPP's nor Hun Sen's mistake. There is no need for the establishment of a new Government but to vote in some officials to fill in some vacant posts. Participation of Sam Rainsy Party at this point is not a possibility because it would not be a virtue of CPP. Therefore in the event that Funcinpec chooses to leave the coalition, CPP will take up leadership role alone and any possible cooperation with Sam Rainsy Party is foreseen for the period after 2008. On this possibility of the two parties – Funcinpec and Sam Rainsy Party – join together, I think they used to be together one in 1998 and again in 2003-04.

As for CPP that has 60% already of the people's support, I do not think it would gain less in 2008 – but at least same level of support if not more. Judging all I have said, I do not propose abandoning of partners but suggest only to readjust in pursuit of work efficiency. I think Japan still retains its vital role in providing assistance to Cambodia, at the present and in the future. No country has matched with Japan in this role yet. Though Japan will have to wait for the Parliament's approval of its budget, I am sure that Japan will give Cambodia no less

than that of the previous year. It would be up to the Japanese parliament to decide on that but I claimed that the Japanese assistance would definitely be used for the alleviation of poverty. With regard to US assistance, as you have asked, I could not make any comment on their behalf and I think you may direct your question to HE Ambassador of the United States of America who is also present here. If they wish to continue to provide assistance to Cambodia, I think it is up to the US to do whatever they may wish to. Well it is in this reason that I have told our officials to try and make money for the Government rather than depending on money in others' coffers. Despite the fact that optimism prevails in this CG meeting, it is worth noting that there is this widespread terrorism issue in the world. As a result military spending by many countries has increased. Secondly there have been serious natural disasters in Asia, take for instance Tsunami, in Africa, in America, for instance Rita and Katrina, etc. This is a general situation. Therefore we are ready to accept whatever amount of assistance that our friends would decide...■

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TAC (United Nations Transitional Authority for Cambodia) law must be amended first so that the Ministry of Justice could proceed to remove the defamation suit from criminal law. We have to proceed as fast as we can. We have the commune election coming soon and the exchange of words would turn into clashes. So we have to call for an amendment of the article by the Cabinet before sending for approval by the National Assembly. The press would also be freer to write whatever they know...■

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control of the area. I ordered HE Tia Banh and Sin Song to come restore security and order here again. The failure that time was not because the Khmer Rouge was strong but because our commander here fled the battle. This is an experience, and it is true for any organization when their leader is running away, those under command would be scared and lose confidence. So it was not that 21 or 27 years that the people have waited for me, because I came only in secrecy.

I am glad to have heard from the report of HE Governor Nam Tum on the restoration of 27 water reservoirs in the period of 2004-2005 to irrigate from 10 to 15 thousand hectares of dry season rice. Once in 1986, I traveled with the navy and noticed problems relating to floating rice cultivation in the area. As it was a high flood time, floating rice had been destroyed. Our problem here lies in the fact that floating rice was destroyed because it rose slower than the flood or was dried out because the water level was too low.

I declared immediately at that time to transfer floating rice cultivation to dry-season and flood recession rice cultivations. It is now about 20 years already. People in Takeo took this opportunity to request for water canal in which the speech of HE So Khun at that time stated that “Samdech told the people in 1986 to change from floating rice cultivation to dry-season rice cultivation” and they have changed the floating rice area in Takeo province to dry-season and flood recession rice cultivation area.

In the report of HE Governor Nam Tum, there is this place

called Boeung Ta Tuk where about 60 thousand hectares of land has been left uncultivated. Our cultivation activities have stretched only a few kilometers from the national road 5 to the direction of Tonle Sap. The area in between the Tonle Sap Lake and the current cultivation area is left uncultivated and under inundated forest.

I appeal to the provincial authority that we must increase rice cultivation in the remaining area but not affecting the inundated forest, i.e. to restore previously cultivated land. We have to find ways to bring water to the place for dry-season rice cultivation. I ordered an intervention of sixty tractors here last year and I covered its fuel cost as well. This year I would be ready to provide the tractors but the cost of fuel should be covered by the provincial authority.

In China, I have requested their assistance in form of agricultural machines, while in South Korea I accepted their offer in form of roadwork engineering machines. I have provided Samdech Krom Preah some machines (50 plough machines) and excavators, water pumps (100) so that they will be used for helping our people. But they seem disappear. What I am saying here is in the aim of helping as the change of their party headquarter location would not mean anything at all. We used the old Council of Ministers’s building but I stayed as Prime Minister for over 20 years. I wish that they send those machines to help people in time. I would expect they understand because in just two years’ time we will have to race again or if they do not speed up I would have to leave them behind...■

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Koh Kong. What had been the most stressing experience was that the students from Ratanakiri for instance never had a chance to come study but their names had been replaced by those in Phnom Penh. Some students came from powerful circle in Phnom Penh had taken their places. The fact is that once they finished their studies, they found ways to stay in Phnom Penh. I mentioned here to draw their attentions otherwise everyone would say they come from rural areas, and they might benefit from the favor system.

Every time there has been a health conference about number of doctors in relation to people density – take for instance we have about 70% of our physicians who attend to about between 20% and 30% of the population and on the contrary about 70% of the population is being attended by only about 30% of the health staff. This is indeed unequal distribution of the country’s wealth. We have applied a policy of incentive for those who would choose to work in the specialized area of combating tuberculosis and of being midwives. I am sure that this is a concern of the Ministry of Women’s Affairs also. Therefore I encourage HE Minister for Women’s Affairs to also engage in this matter. When we talk about reducing the rate of mortality for children, we have to start here with midwives.

I would take this forum to seek understanding from 56 students who have filed a complaint to me to intervene on their behalf for their enrollments. I have to respect the decision of the school’s management, also the respect for our donor included. Intervention is for seeking justice –

take for instance the confiscation of land, etc. I would then accept to intervene but to intervene in the School’s affairs for enrolling a number of students exceeding their capacity would not be appropriate. I therefore apologize that I could not take your request. Why the Prime Minister could not intervene on this small matter? I would respond that I have to respect the School Governing Council’s decision as it has a direct repercussion on the quality of education.

If we were to intervene here and there, how could we go about implementing the policy of decentralization? I have used the term “profound reform or absolute reform” i.e. I would not let anyone intervene inappropriately. Take for instance physicians who have been assigned to work in rural areas have to respect their duties.

Another matter of concern that is drawing our attention recently is bird flu outbreak. I wish to place an appeal to all related institutions – the Ministries of Health, Agriculture and Information, to move fast in their campaign against the possible outbreak of bird flu, which has become a prime concern in the world. There was an outbreak of this disease in a place in Cambodia and we have to strive for an immediate mechanism to combat the case. We have done it with SARS and now we are doing it with bird flu. The media – radio, TV and newspapers – have to pay attention in launching spots on this disease matter. I have one more thing to say about removing defamation lawsuit from criminal law. I have discussed this issue with HE Minister for Justice on the fact that the Article 63 of the UN-

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16 March 2006 (Unofficial Translation of Selected Comments)
Inaugurating the Kompong Russei Buddhist Temple

... My wife and I together with Excellencies and Ladies who have come from near and far to join with all of the monks and people - parishioners of the Koh Russei pagoda in the inauguration of the Koh Russei pagoda's temple. My wife and I are proud and happy that we both have been provided with an honor to preside over the ceremony today. It is indeed a good chance for my wife and I to visit our people, in Stong district, who HE provincial Governor Nam Tum said have been waiting for 27 years. In the war prior to the genocide, the genocide and the war thereafter, the whole country, the province of Kompong Thom included, suffered a great destruction, ranging from Buddhists to Muslims, from human rights to human lives. We have survived in an abnormal condition as we had nothing left in our hand because the genocide left us with complete destruction of infrastructure, human resources, and currency value.

Many countries in the world suffered changes in their leaderships but their socio-economic structure have been left intact. Cambodia is not like other countries in the world. Pol Pot destroyed banknotes and we had re-established the currency policy and re-issued the banknotes in 1980. Great sufferings and difficulties have been placed upon us to bear – where husbands and wives had been living in separation, untold number of orphans and widows – making Cambodia the only country with its top ranking of widow and orphan population. As for the Buddhist pagodas and Buddhism, we have a noticeable number of pagodas and meditation

centers. Today we have this Buddhist temple here in front of us built by various monk leaders and my wife and I have not yet made a contribution. In this solemn occasion and as the Head Monk has requested for contributions to help repay the remaining costs of building the temple, my wife and I are willing to contribute a sum of 40 million Riels.

My wife and I are very happy that we have scored so many achievements especially what we have done here in the district of Stong. In fact no one could ignore the contribution effectively and generously offered by HE Nguon Nhel, Deputy President of the National Assembly and Madame, HE Chea Chanto, Governor of the National Bank of Cambodia and Madame, HE Thong Khon, Secretary of State for Tourism and Madame, and others in the workteam for Kompong Thom. HE Nguon Nhel who before was responsible for Kompong Chhnang and Kompong Thom, is now entrusted to look after Kompong Thom and Preah Vihear. I am also grateful to members of other political parties that contributed for the construction of the province as well.

In fact I came to Stong in 1988 but about a few kilometers from this place when HE Do Sohaan was then the Party Secretary and HE Khiev Horl was the Governor of the Province. I brought my four kids here and my eldest son gave a bunch of flowers to the Singer Nu Sib here. You may have remembered that we once had a brief loss of Stong when one of the then Vice Ministers for Defense failed in keeping

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vice and knowledge on soil studies, seed and growing manuals aimed at maximizing the output.

This was indeed a front battle area where Sisophon is on one side, Svay Chek on another, and Thmor Puok and Phnom Srok are all in the area. I remember that in one fight about 400 soldiers were captured, and Por Sean, currently deputy secretary general of Anti-Drug Authority, was one of them.

They in fact have been lucky because if they were to continue fighting prior to or even after the Paris Peace Agreement, they might have been killed in battlefields. In the former State of Cambodia's custody they have turned themselves from illiterates to literates and from non-skill to skill men – ranging from woodwork to engineering.

This area has been heavily mined and thanks to the initiatives of the Royal Government of Cambodia and the Government of Japan, demining effort has been given to this area. I think HE Ambassador of Japan could report the extension of development-related issues from this project for the people in this area.

Aside from irrigation, from de-mining, the third perhaps not least important is that this place is a conservation area of Kreal (a kind of bird). HE Kenneth Quinn, former Ambassador of the United States of America was very impressed when he saw the Kreal and consulted with me on issuing a decree to protect this area.

According to HE Chan Sarun there are about 170 bird species in this area, 18 of which

are internationally valuable. We not only protect the environment but also preserve endangered species. While bird species in the many countries in the world have gone down in number, Cambodia nurtures many sanctuaries for bird species. The effect of destroying rifles not only save human lives but also those of birds. People of this area would eventually benefit not only from cultivation but also tourism as there would be more people in the future coming to see the birds.

Cambodia is now a unified country. The bitterness left over from previous generations is now over. Belonging to the younger generation, we have been making efforts to resolve the problem based on win-win policy. I wish to clarify today that the political situation has been calm as amendment to the Constitution was initiated in the aim of avoiding political deadlock.

Officials in senior positions should go on aimed at making their functions efficient. The change from two-third majority to 50 + 1 in the Constitution was only for the benefit of avoiding the deadlock position and not for destroying alliance between CPP and Funcinpec.

Samdech Hun Sen on that occasion offers a school building of six classrooms to the Primary School of Ta Ong, a school building of six classrooms to the College of Spean Metrei, a school building of five classrooms to the Primary School of Svay Khmao, a school building of five classrooms to the Primary School of Khcheay, a school building of five classrooms to the Primary School of Nam Tao and a school building of five classrooms to the Primary School of Rumchek■