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Nation Religion King

Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation

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ADDRESS: N° 161, Preah Sisowath Quay, Phnom Penh - Kingdom of Cambodia

Phone: (855.23) 214.441 - 216.122 - 216.146 & Fax: (855.23) 216.144 - 216.939

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Senior Minister HOR Namhong Meets UNHCR's Regional Representative **Royal Government's Decision in Regard to the Vietnamese Illegal Border Crossers**

Following is the statement on the Royal Government's Decision in Regard to the Vietnamese Illegal Border Crossers made by Samdech Prime Minister HUN Sen during the Cornerstone Laying Ceremony in Wat Tronum Chroeung, Angsnuol District, Kandal Province on 31 March 2002:

...It is an issue relating to the ethnic people in the mountainous area of Vietnam who have legally crossed the border to Cambodia's Ratanakiri and Mondulakiri provinces in March 2001. The situation has brought us headaches and I do not speak of the cause why such an incident took place. However the event has prompted Cambodia to face with various difficulties, let alone the setup of camps for them to stay in the past year. The efforts collaboratively made by Cambodia, Vietnam and the UNHCR to repatriate those people have failed. War of words between Vietnam and the United States have put Cambodia in a very difficult position. Cambodia is compared to a football field in which Vietnam and the United States compete. In this regard, my colleagues and I, especially HE Deputy Prime Minister Sar Kheng, have pooled out our efforts to try and seek a solution to end the issue.

Previously, Cambodians escaped to Thailand and other countries, but as of now, some of them returned, even they have already settled in the United States, France, Australia, etc. This indicates clearly that Cambodia is at peace. But it is unpredictable at all that Cambodia encounters with this incident of illegal border crossing (into Cambodia.) Before we have arrested them and sent them back to the original countries. For example we have collaborated with Australia to arrest and send back illegal immigrants from Pakistan and Indonesia, etc. We have done the same with Chinese immigrants. The crisis has lasted for a year and I have decided today to make a decision that bears a sovereign nature in resolving the issue by taking into consideration positions expressed by related parties, the United States of America, Vietnam, UNHCR and others. The deadlock has prolonged and if we let it stay unresolved those ethnic minority Vietnamese would suffer greater difficulties in their provisional camps in the provinces of Mondulakiri and Ratanakiri. This would create difficulties for all concerned parties, Cambodia as host also included.

As repatriation effort initiated by Cambodia, Vietnam and the UNHCR failed, and as the United States has proposed to the Royal Government of Cambodia to take these ethnic people for resettlement in the US, Cambodia could make a political decision. As part of this development, Vietnam has made clear a position that Vietnam would welcome voluntary returnees back to Vietnam and guarantees their safety and dignity. Therefore the Royal Government of Cambodia decides to offer opportunity for those hill tribe people to resettle in the United States of America on

the voluntary basis and offered by the United States. This should also offer the return to Vietnam for those who do not choose to go to the United States. It is a political decision with options.

Firstly, those who would voluntarily like to go to the United States should travel from Mondulkiri and Ratanakiri to Phnom Penh or places identified as closest to the Pochentong International Airport in preparation for departure to the United States. Within three or four weeks, secondly, if any people wish to go back to Vietnam, the repatriation would also take place. Cambodia would then definitely close the camps and prevent newcomers from coming in. After the previous return to Vietnam by about 200 people, there left 901 people in the camp. We have only two doors to the problems. There is no a third door. No one could choose to stay in Cambodia indefinitely at all. As Cambodia is making this decision, Cambodia is also seeking understanding from concerned parties, namely the United States of America and Vietnam. It is a sovereign decision in my capacity as Prime Minister of the Royal Government of Cambodia aimed at fulfilling a humanitarian obligation and a political decision with humanist nature on an international issue... Having made this decision, I would like to take this opportunity to state that:

1. The Royal Government of Cambodia highly values and thanks the US Government for its humanitarian gesture in receiving those Vietnamese hill tribes to resettle in the United States of America, which would bring about an end to the hardship of those people and of Cambodia. I wish to thank Washington for such a brave political decision in providing resettlement opportunity to those ethnic people of Vietnam, a neighbor of Cambodia ending quickly a one-year discontent.
2. Cambodia highly values and thanks the Government of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam for its readiness to take back those people who would want to go back to Vietnam. It highly appreciates such a humanitarian and understanding gesture of Vietnam for the latter's acceptance to welcome back those who would want to return to Vietnam. This gesture enables Cambodia to generate this decision today.
3. Cambodia would like to make an appeal to the UNHCR to help Cambodia and the United States of America in organizing those people who would want to go to the United States. I also would make the same appeal to the UNHCR to help Cambodia and Vietnam in organizing those people who would want to return to Vietnam so that they could leave as soon as possible. The provisional camps in Mondulkiri and Ratanakiri would no longer exist.

4. I would order the institutions and authorities concerned at all levels to cooperate with Vietnam to prevent further influx of illegal immigrants under whatever forms it may be. So after the 901 people accepted by the United States, Cambodia would implement its immigration law by arresting and sending back those identified as illegal immigrants. As in the case that we have detained the Karen who illegally penetrated into Pailin area and sent them back to the Thai border.

I hope that such a sovereign and humanitarian decision would be responded with understanding from the international community.

Indian Prime Minister's Visit to Cambodia 09-11 April 2002

Joint Statement

At the invitation of H.E. Samdech Hun Sen, Prime Minister of Cambodia, the Prime Minister of India, H.E. Mr. Atal Bihari Vajpayee, paid a State visit to the Kingdom of Cambodia from 9 to 11 April 2002.

H. E. Prime Minister Vajpayee and his delegation were greeted very warmly upon arrival by H.E. Samdech Prime Minister Hun Sen and members of the Royal Government of Cambodian as well as by the members of the diplomatic corps.



*Samdech Prime Minister HUN Sen and Indian Prime Minister
Atal Bihari VAPAYEE in the official welcoming ceremony*

During his stay in Cambodia, Prime Minister Vajpayee and members of his delegation were received in a Royal Audience by His Majesty Norodom Sihanouk, the King of Cambodia. The traditional bonds of friendship that have always existed between the two countries, and especially the close friendship between the late Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru and His Majesty King Norodom Sihanouk during the early years of the founding of the Non-Aligned Movement were highlighted.

Prime Minister Vajpayee called on Samdech Chea Sim, President of the Senate. The Prime Minister reiterated the invitation earlier extended to Samdech Chea Sim by the Vice President of India to visit India. The President of the Cambodian Senate said he looked forward to visiting India at an early date.



**Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari VAPAYEE pays courtesy call on
Samdech CHEA Sim, President of the Senate (10-04-02)**

The Indian Prime Minister also called on Samdech Krom Preah Norodom Ranaridh, President of the National Assembly. During discussions, they agreed that apart from Government-to-Government contacts, the Parliamentarians of both countries should also establish contact with each other and have regular exchange of visits.



Samdech Krom Preah NORODOM Ranariddh introduces Members of Parliament to Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari VAJPAYEE at the National Assembly (10-04-02)

The two Prime Ministers expressed their satisfaction with the excellent relations existing between the two countries based on their traditional bonds of friendship and cooperation.

The two sides believed that the visit to Cambodia by Prime Minister Vajpayee would contribute to further strengthening the friendly relations between Cambodia and India. Cambodia would be most pleased when India would attend the ASEAN+India Summit to be held in Phnom Penh in November 2002. Cambodia considered it as a privilege to host such a new development of regional cooperation aimed at enhancing peace, stability and prosperity of the whole region.

The two sides expressed their appreciation for their ongoing cooperation and mutual support in many areas, in particular in areas where the Government of India shared and continued to share its scientific and technological expertise with Cambodia in human resource development and in other fields of priority and interest to Cambodia. Both sides agreed to continue and to expand their bilateral cooperation in areas including IT, agriculture, culture, human resource development, trade and tourism.



The two Prime Ministers witness the Signing Ceremony
*of the Agreements on Cooperation between the Royal Government of Cambodia
and the Government of the Republic of India (09-04-02)*

After the bilateral delegation-level talks, the two Prime Ministers witnessed the signing of three important documents, which should set the stage for closer cooperation between the two countries, namely:

- a. Agreement for Conservation and Restoration Work at Ta Prom,
- b. The Air Services Agreement,
- c. The Agreement on Visa Exemption for holders of diplomatic and official passports.

The Prime Minister of India offered to help Cambodia with the services of Indian judges if the UN decides to withdraw from the Khmer Rouge trial.

Cambodia and India agreed to explore areas for new initiatives to further deepen the traditional relations, which have been existing between the two countries for centuries. Some of these areas of cooperation are:

- a. The 'Initiative for ASEAN Integration' launched by the ASEAN last year aims to reduce the development gap between the four later entrants of the ASEAN (Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar and Vietnam) and the older ASEAN members. India expressed its commitment to support this initiative by taking part in projects beneficial to the CLMV countries.

- b. During the visit of Prime Minister Hun Sen to India in February 2000, India had offered a Line of Credit of a sum of US\$ 10 million to Cambodia. Both sides agreed to hold discussions to conclude an agreement on the loan, which India indicated that it was willing to extend as per the requirements of the World Bank/IMF.
- c. Subsequent to a recent request from Cambodia, India has agreed to also work on the conservation and restoration of Ta Prom, another temple complex in the Angkor Park area. This will cost approximately US\$ 5 million over a period of ten to twelve years.
- d. Under the Mekong-Ganga Cooperation, it was decided to set up a Museum of Traditional Asian Textiles in Siem Reap, the province in which the Angkor Temples are situated. India offered a sum of US\$ 1 million to set up the Museum.
- e. India offered five computer Internet kiosks in Cambodia to help support the country's efforts in promoting computer literacy. These will be set up, as decided by Cambodia, in Phnom Penh, Siem Reap, Kandal, Takeo, and the Angkor Park area. If so desired, more such kiosks could be set up later. These kiosks would, in the next phase, provide distance-learning facilities, including English and software development.
- f. India will offer 10,000 tons of rice for distribution among the people of Cambodia, especially those who suffered owing to unprecedented floods in the River Mekong.
- g. Ten Indian experts are to be deputed to Cambodia for three years each under India's ITEC programme. These experts attached to various Ministries in Cambodia will work on special projects in Information Technology, Agriculture, Irrigation, Water Resources, Crop Improvement, Vocational Training, Human Resource Development, etc.

Both sides welcomed the Joint Commission for Trade, Economic, Scientific and Technological Cooperation established in February 2000, between the two countries to oversee the

implementation of development projects that would directly benefit people of both the countries. The first meeting of the Joint Commission is likely to be held very soon.

The two countries discussed the threat posed by international terrorism and agreed that concerted action by the international community would be required to curb this menace.

India and Cambodia also discussed the need to cooperate on a bilateral and regional basis in order to tackle problems of poverty, and to manage globalization so as to address the concerns of developing countries.

Prime Minister Hun Sen highly appreciated the visit of Prime Minister Vajpayee to Cambodia at this juncture as having brought the two nations together.



Samdech Prime Minister HUN Sen and Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari VAJPAYEE in the official farewell ceremony (10-04-02)

On 11th April 2002, the Indian Prime Minister visited the world famous temple of Angkor Wat in Siem Reap province rightly valued as the jewels of the Khmer civilization and cultural heritage of humanity.

Prime Minister Vajpayee expressed his sincere and deep appreciation to His Majesty King Norodom Sihanouk, to H.E. Samdech Hun Sen, Prime Minister and to the Royal Government and the people of Cambodia for their very warm welcome and hospitality extended to him and to his delegation during their stay in Cambodia.

Prime Minister Vajpayee extended an invitation to His Majesty King Norodom Sihanouk and Queen Monineath Sihanouk to visit India at their convenience. His Majesty the King thanked the Prime Minister of India for the invitation.

Prime Minister Samdech Hun Sen accepted the invitation extended to him by the Prime Minister of India to visit at an early date.

Phnom Penh

11 April 2002

Toast by Samdech Prime Minister Hun Sen

Following is the integral text of a toast of Samdech Prime Minister HUN Sen, delivered on 9 April 2002, at a banquet in honour of the visit of His Excellency Mr. Atal Bihari VAJPAYEE, Prime Minister of India:

His Excellency Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee,

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I wish to say once again how much delighted I am to welcome Your Excellency Prime Minister and members of your delegation on this official visit to the Kingdom of Cambodia, which

is the second visit to the Kingdom by Indian Prime Minister within a period of almost half a century after the visit of H.E. Jawaharlal Nehru to Cambodia in 1954. We strongly believe that Your Excellency's visit today will greatly contribute to consolidate the bonds of traditional friendship and cooperation in all fields existing between the Kingdom of Cambodia and the Republic of India.

This afternoon, we held our talks in an atmosphere of heartfelt friendship and mutual understanding on all matters, including the issues of consolidation and expansion of bilateral cooperation, the ASEAN-India cooperation as well as regional and international issues of mutual interest.

It is in this greater spirit of mutual understanding, friendship and closer cooperation between Cambodia and India that we have, this afternoon, signed three agreements, namely the agreement on conservation and restoration of Ta Prom Temple , the Air Service agreement and the visa exemption agreement, a clear indication of the expansion of bilateral relations between our two countries .

*His Excellency Prime Minister,
Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,*

Tracing back to the aged-old culture and civilization of our two countries have revealed that the peoples of Cambodia and India enjoyed close interactions of many centuries, mainly in their culture and civilization.

Numerous ancient monuments of the world renown and considered as one of the wonders of the world scattered all over present day Cambodia are testimony to the close relationship of culture and civilization existing between Cambodia and India for a long, long time.

Further more, our two nations belong to the Non-Aligned Movement for which His Majesty NORODOM SIHANOUK , King of Cambodia, and H.E. JAWAHARLAL NEHRU, former Prime Minister of India, together with few other world leaders, were the architects and the founding father of this important movement. Since its foundation, this Movement had fulfilled its important role and contributed to the safeguard of world peace and security in the Cold War period to the present day.

My visits to India and the recent one in February 2000 made me more aware of India's important role and great potentials in every aspect in Asia as well as in the world.

For this reason, Cambodia is very pleased that India will join the historic first ASEAN + INDIA SUMMIT to be held in November 2002, in Phnom Penh, Cambodia. I am convinced that this summit will add greater dynamism to the overall cooperation between ASEAN and India, to contribute in real terms to the economic progress, the safeguard of security and peace of the whole of Asia.

This summit will also be a good opportunity for India to take part in ASEAN's priority schemes, such as the Mekong Basin Development, the Singapore-Kunming Rail Link as well as ASEAN Integration schemes, which will certainly benefit also India.

Cambodia is also very pleased with the "Mekong-Ganga Cooperation" initiative between Cambodia -Laos -Myanmar-Thailand-Vietnam and India, which focuses on the development of key areas such as tourism, culture, education, transport etc.

Cambodia hopes that this new cooperation will further reinforce ASEAN -India relations as it is a part of ASEAN-India cooperation. We should endeavor to give real life to the "Mekong - Ganga Cooperation" projects according to the program of Action approved last July 2001 in Hanoi.

*Your Excellency Prime Minister,
Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,*

The Royal Government and people of Cambodia are very pleased to note that the Indian people, under your personal clear-sighted leadership, have achieved great success in every fields, in building India into a modern and developed nation. As a sincere friend of India, the Royal Government and people of Cambodia are most happy with your great achievements as well as with your other success in other areas of safeguarding India's territorial integrity. I wish to take this occasion to say that the Royal Government and people of Cambodia always stand firm with the Indian people in the fight against terrorism.

On this auspicious occasion, I wish to thank once more the government and people of India for your constant support extended to the Cambodian people, especially for political and diplomatic

support and other assistance provided to the Cambodian people during the times of hardship and the most difficult period of their history following the collapse of the genocidal regime in 1979 . The Cambodian people always grateful will never forget these noble gestures.

I may assure Your Excellency that the Royal Government and the Cambodian people as a whole will always cherish the traditional bonds of friendship between our two countries and peoples. I am also extremely pleased to note that relations and cooperation between our two countries keep growing every day.

For the great success of the official visit of H.E. Prime Minister to the Kingdom of Cambodia and in the spirit of friendship and cooperation between Cambodia and India, may I propose a toast:

- to the good health and longevity of His Majesty Preah Bat Samdach Preah NORODOM SIHANOUK , King of Cambodia and Her Majesty the Queen,
- to the good health of H.E. Mr. Kocheril Raman NARAYANAN, President of India and Madame,
- to the good health of H.E. Mr. Atal Bihari VAJPAYEE, Prime Minister of India,
- to the good health of all of you present here.

Speech by Indian Prime Minister

Following is the integral text of a speech of His Excellency Mr. Atal Bihari Vajpayee, Prime Minister of India, delivered on 9 April 2002, at a banquet hosted by Prime Minister Hun Sen:

*Your Excellency Prime Minister Samdech Hun Sen,
Distinguished Guests,*

I thank you for your warm words about India, about the strength of India-Cambodia relations, and about me personally.

My delegation and I are overwhelmed by the warm and gracious welcome that we have received in Cambodia.

Excellency, I have returned to Cambodia today after many decades. In the intervening period, your beautiful country has been through torture and pain, war and devastation.

It is truly inspiring to see that the killing fields of just a few years ago have been transformed into an independent, stable and peaceful country, confidently playing an active role in the region and in the world. I salute the wise and mature leadership of Cambodia, which has brought about this remarkable transformation.

While we note this dramatic change in the political, economic and social environment, we have been equally struck by one aspect which remains unaltered in all these decades.

It is the friendship and affection for India and Indians among the Cambodian people. Our two countries have civilizational links which go back a millennium. Their influence can be seen in Cambodian art and architecture, language and custom.

In the post-independence era, our leaders worked closely for the founding of the Non Aligned Movement. The close relations between our peoples remained steadfast through your tragic experiences, when your country became the unfortunate playground of competing spheres of influence in the Cold War.

India retains its strong commitment to the peaceful socioeconomic development of Cambodia. We would like to enhance the pace of our economic cooperation and to extend all possible development and technical assistance.

Excellency, we have discussed today a wide range of bilateral matters, as, well as issues of regional and global concern. We have confirmed our similarity or identity of views on all major issues.

I am happy that we have concluded some important agreements. We hope the line of credit will encourage greater economic interaction through project exports.

The training of Cambodian students in India and the deputation of Indian experts to Cambodia promote cultural interaction as well as human resource development. India is proud to be involved in the restoration and renovation of the magnificent heritage site of Ta Prom .

India also looks forward to increasing the scope and content of cooperation with Cambodia within the regional and sub-regional framework. Under the Mekong-Ganga Co-operation Program, we are committed to increasing our engagement in. education, culture, tourism, human resource development and the infrastructure sector.

We have also pledged support for the Museum of Traditional Textiles to be set up at Siem Reap under this program.

India also strongly supports the Initiative for ASEAN Integration, and will' participate in projects of benefit to Cambodia and to the three other new ASEAN members.

We felicitate Cambodia on its assumption shortly of the Chair of ASEAN.

We also deeply appreciate the energy with which Cambodia has steadfastly championed the cause of the India-ASEAN dialogue. It is therefore entirely appropriate that the first ASEAN-India Summit should be held in Cambodia.

It would be an honour for me to again visit this country for the Summit later this year.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I request you to join me in a toast:

- To the long life, good health and happiness of His Majesty the King of Cambodia and Her Majesty the Queen;
- To the long life, well-being, and happiness of H.E. Prime Minister Samdech Hun Sen and Madame Hun Sen;

And

- To eternal friendship between the peoples of India and Cambodia;

**Handover Ceremony
of Rice and Vegetable Oil Donated by USA**

On 01 April 2002 from 10:00 am to 11:30 am at the WFP KM6 Warehouse, a hand over ceremony of the USA rice contribution to WFP Cambodia was held between His Excellency Senior Minister HOR Namhong, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, His Excellency Mr. Kent WIEDEMANN, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Kingdom of Cambodia, and Ms. Rebecca HANSEN, Representative / Country Director of the United Nations WFP Cambodia.

This generous donation of 24,397mt of rice and 2,286mt of vegetable oil would support WFP assisted activities in Cambodia.

**Remarks by Senior Minister HOR Namhong
at the Handover Ceremony
of Rice and Vegetable Oil Donated by USA**

Following is the integral text of remarks by Senior Minister HOR Namhong, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, delivered on 1 April 2002, at the handover ceremony of rice and vegetable oil donated by USA in support of WFP-assisted activities in Cambodia :

*Ms. Rebecca Hansen, WFP Country Director,
Excellency Mr. Ambassador of the United States of America,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,*

I wish to take this opportunity to express my sincere appreciation to the World Food Programme (WFP), in particular its Country Director, Ms. Rebecca Hansen, for inviting me to attend this handover ceremony of rice and vegetable oil provided by the United States in support of the WFP- assisted activities for relief to the Cambodian people.



*Senior Minister HOR Namhong receives a sample of rice package from
Ambassador Kent Wiedemann of US Embassy in Phnom Penh*

I am very much delighted to attend this momentous ceremony, on behalf of the Royal Government of Cambodia, to witness this precious contribution of the U.S. Government, through the World Food Programme, of 24,397 metric tons of rice and 2300 metric tons of vegetable oil, which will be distributed to our most impoverished people.

I would like to say that the Royal Government of Cambodia always highly appreciate the WFP for its unfailing support over the years, even during the most difficult times when the Cambodian people had been just liberated from the barbarous Khmer Rouge reign of terror. Since then, the WFP has been a true partner with the Cambodian government for assisting people who need help. During the times of critical needs, such as the most devastating floods in the years 2000 and 2001 and the drought this year, the WFP has always been there where the needy people are.

Moreover, I wish to underline the important role of the WFP not only in providing food assistance to the people victims of natural calamities, but also in supporting food-for-work program which, I believe, has been unanimously acknowledged as one of the most successful poverty reduction programs in the country, particularly by our people in the disadvantaged areas. Given the number of Cambodian people who continue to live under the poverty line, especially those who are in the remote areas of the country, I hope that the WFP will remain committed to assist them and those who are currently suffering from drought. I would also point out that by so doing, WFP has

participated in a very effective manner to the reduction- poverty which is the main priority policy of the Royal Government of Cambodia and therefore, to improve the living standard of the poor people.

I wish to assure you, Madam Country Director and you, Mr. Ambassador, that the Cambodian people will always keep in mind the very noble actions of the World Food Programme and generous assistance of friendly countries, such as the United States, in their most deprived period.

May I take this opportunity to extend the deep thanks of the Royal Government of Cambodia to the U.S. Government for its timely generous assistance to our people who, in many parts of the country, are currently suffering from the lack of foodstuff.

I hope that the United States of America will continue to provide its kind support for Cambodia's determined efforts to fight poverty, rebuild and develop the country after a so long period of wars and suffering. As Cambodia continues to make every effort to accelerate its pace of economic development and reform, the U.S. role in supporting the development process in the country is crucial.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to express my best wishes to both of you, Mr. Ambassador and Ms. Rebecca Hansen, for greater successes in your noble work to help Cambodia and the Cambodian people.

Thank you for your kind attention.

Senior Minister HOR Namhong's Address
At the Closing Session of the
Information Technology Forum

Following is the integral text of Senior Minister HOR Namhong's address at the Closing Session of the Information Technology Forum, delivered on 29 April 2002 :

Your Royal Highnesses,
Excellency, Minister of Information and Communications of the Republic of Korea,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

1. First of all, I wish to take this opportunity to express my sincere appreciation to all participants in this very important IT Forum. I also wish to sincerely thank on behalf of the Royal Government of Cambodia the Government of the Republic of Korea and Your Excellency Minister for not only just assisting in organizing this Forum but also in providing concessional loan for supporting the government administration and information system in Cambodia, as well as the IT training to Cambodian officials in Korea.

2. Needless to say, the current information and communication technology (ICT) is an important technological revolution that the world has experienced today in the whole history of mankind. However, what we have seen is an increasing gap between the developed countries where IT has been significantly advanced while in developing countries IT development is still very much lagged behind. I strongly believe that it is imperative for narrow the widening gap between the developed and developing countries through the development of IT capacity and ICT infrastructure in the developing nations. With the current speed of globalization and the growing interdependence, ICT has become in developing countries an indispensable tool for national development and for catching up with regional and global changes.

3. Recognizing the crucial importance of ICT, the Royal Government of Cambodia established the National Information and Communications Technology Development Authority or NIDA for short. Clearly, without the development of ICT, it is impossible to promote economic and social development of Cambodia in the today's world. By promoting ICT and by using this vital technological tool for poverty reduction, the RGC hopes to make real progress in its national development plan, in particular the poverty reduction program.

4. *I understand that this Forum you have exchanged views on many important issues related to ICT, such as strategy for organizing an e-government, the overall situation of IT markets in Cambodia, the present IT development in the Republic of Korea, the future directions of IT, the impacts of globalization on Cambodia's communications, and the possible strategies for building up Cambodian ICT infrastructure. I hope that the participants have learned many experiences from this IT Forum, especially the experiences of our Korean friends in the area of ICT development. I am convinced that this IT Forum has made it possible -for Cambodia to take another step forward in strengthening ICT capacity and knowledge, as well as in advancing the development of IT in Cambodia.*

5. Moreover, I would say that Cambodia would not be able to move strategically forward without a real IT development, especially the popularization of ICT in our current thinking and development. In this regard, Cambodia needs to make available for all ICT and at the same time promote the use of IT actively at all levels of its society as an important basis for national development, poverty reduction, and human resource development.

6. Furthermore, the ICT has become even more critical at regional level today. In fact, one of the pillars of the Initiative for ASEAN Integration (IAI) is the development of ICT in order to empower ASEAN as a whole to move the region together ahead in the current global trends and international relations. The IAI in fact stressed four important elements, namely, the ICT, HRD, infrastructure and regional economic integration as the basis for deepening ASEAN integration and for narrowing the development gap between the members of this regional grouping.

7. In this context, I am confident that the IT Forum today is another key contribution to the development and progress of Cambodia's ICT. The Royal Government of Cambodia will continue to expand its activities related to ICT in order to build both the software and hardware infrastructure. NIDA will continue to be active in all aspects of IT.

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

May I now declare this IT Forum closed and wish each and every one of you very much success.

Thank you very much.

**Senior Minister HOR Namhong
Meets Japanese Government Representative**

On 5 April 2002, at 09:00, at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, His Excellency Senior Minister HOR Namhong, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, met with His Excellency Mr. Tatsuo ARIMA, representative of the Government of Japan, to exchange views on further cementing the existing Japan-ASEAN ties, especially on the " Initiative for Development in East-Asia (IDEA)", one of the initiatives mentioned in the speech made by H.E. Mr. Junichiro KOIZUMI, Prime Minister of Japan, during his last January's visit to the 5 ASEAN countries.

During the discussions, H.E. Mr. Arima said that the main goal of IDEA was to focus on developing East Asian region by basing on the experiences in the effective use of Official Development Aids and to inquire about the requests of South East Asian countries in order to put in place the future directions for regional development. He continued that to achieve this goal, Japan planned to host a Ministerial Conference in Tokyo in the framework of ASEAN+3 any time before the ASEAN+3 Summit scheduled to be held in November 2002 in Cambodia, and wished to invite ASEAN Foreign Ministers and Economic Ministers to participate.



Senior Minister HOR Namhong Meets Japanese Government Representative Tatsuo ARIMA

Senior Minister HOR Namhong informed H.E. Mr. Arima that in order to develop East Asian region, we should have three perspectives:

- First : It was necessary to have ASEAN Integration first,
- Second : Because South East Asia and East Asia (China, Japan and Republic of Korea) were not at the same development level, so primarily South East Asia should be integrated into East Asia by means of IDEA,
- Third : when the whole East Asia reached the same development level, then East Asia would become one strong economic pole.

The Senior Minister stressed that whenever there were two different steps within ASEAN, it could not step forward competitively and unless the whole ASEAN was strong, then ASEAN could become a strong partner of East Asia that would make the whole East Asia strong.

Senior Minister HOR Namhong also informed H.E. Mr. Arima of Cambodia's support to that important initiative and suggested to have a Concept Paper with clear and detail explanation on IDEA. The Concept Paper should be submitted to the Senior Officials Meeting and then to the Ministerial Meeting in Tokyo before being submitted to the ASEAN+3 Summit in November 2002 in Phnom Penh.

Senior Minister HOR Namhong Meets UNHCR's Regional Representative

On 4 April 2002, at 10:30, at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, His Excellency Senior Minister HOR Namhong, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, met with Mr. Jahanshah Assadi, UNHCR Regional Representative.



Senior Minister HOR Namhong Meets Mr. Jahanshah Assadi,
UNHCR Regional Representative

During the meeting, Mr. Assadi handed over the letter from the High Commissioner of UNHCR to Senior Minister HOR Namhong, in which the High Commissioner highly appreciated the Cambodian Government's decision to allow the Vietnamese Montagnards to resettle in the United States and stressed on the UNHCR's readiness to cooperate with Cambodia in the resettlement in the United States as well as in the voluntary return to Vietnam of those Montagnards.

Mr. Assadi proposed a meeting between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, the Ministry of Interior and UNHCR, to discuss on factual matters relating to transportation of those Montagnards to stay near Phnom Penh, in preparation for their departure to the US. He added that Cambodia should continue to discuss with UNHCR on new asylum seekers after ending with the above-mentioned case

In response, the Senior Minister said that after the case, Cambodia would take measures to close down the camps and consider the new border crossers as illegal immigrants. After taking note the UNHCR's demand requesting Cambodia to keep on receiving the asylum seekers, Senior Minister HOR Namhong drew Mr. Assadi's attention to the fact that the main purpose of these people was to go to the US through Cambodia, and that there was no war, no serious political crisis or disaster that had pushed these people to look for refuge outside Vietnam.

