



**KINGDOM OF CAMBODIA**

**Nation Religion King**

Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation

# **INFORMATION BULLETIN**

ISSUED BY INFORMATION DEPARTMENT  
October 31 , 2000 VOLUME 28

**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**

## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

- Address by Senior Minister on Cambodia- ASEAN Partnership
- Senior Minister Meets with Malaysian FM
- Senior Minister Launches Bid to Join ASEM
- Senior Minister Receives German Delegation
- Senior Minister Receives Czech Deputy FM
- Senior Minister Meets with WFP Representatives
- Senior Minister Receives New Iranian Ambassador

**Address by Senior Minister on Cambodia-ASEAN Partnership:  
The Way Ahead**

Following is the text of the keynote address by His Excellency Mr. HOR Namhong, Senior Minister, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, on Cambodia-ASEAN Partnership: The Way Ahead, delivered on 2 October 2000 at the Conference on Cambodia's Membership in ASEAN: One and a Half Year Later, organized by the Cambodian Institute for Cooperation and Peace, sponsored by the Friedrich Ebert Foundation:

**Your Royal Highness,  
Dr. Erfried Adam,  
Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

It gives me great pleasure to address the **Conference on Cambodia's Membership in ASEAN: One and A Half Year Later**. I would like to take this occasion to express my sincere thanks to the Cambodian Institute of Cooperation and Peace (CICP), in particular to H.R.H. Norodom Sirivudh, Chairman of the Board of Directors of CICP, for organizing this important Conference. My thanks also go to the Friedrich Ebert Foundation for sponsoring this important meeting.

On this occasion, I am pleased to share my views with all of you on **Cambodia-ASEAN Partnership: the Way Ahead**.

As you may know the cold war era in the region divided Southeast Asia into two blocs after World War II and lasted until the signing of the Paris Peace Agreements on Cambodia in 1991. With the end of the cold war, peace and political stability have returned to this part of the world followed by the successive admission of new members into ASEAN. Furthermore, the admission of Cambodia into ASEAN on 30 April 1999 has fulfilled the vision of the Founding Fathers of the Association to unite all Southeast Asian Nations under one single roof on par with the economic integration moves in other regions.

With a combined population of nearly 500 million people and rich natural resources, ASEAN's economy represents a large and attractive market full of business opportunities for foreign investors. Despite the financial crisis in 1997 and 1998, ASEAN's economy on the process of recovery remains strong. The potentials of development in ASEAN are vigorous and promising.

Cambodia's membership in ASEAN has offered substantial chances for the country to develop itself in active and multiform cooperation with other ASEAN member States, with ASEAN Dialogue Partners and other regional groupings such as the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO), the Rio Group, the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), all of which are also partners of ASEAN.

ASEAN has also provided the opportunity for Cambodia's participation in the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), allowing Cambodia to contribute to ensure durable peace and security through dialogue and cooperation with thirteen other non ASEAN countries in the vast Asia-Pacific area, particularly with world major political and economic powers,

namely the People's Republic of China, the European Union, Japan, the Russian Federation and the United States of America as well as with other important countries such as Australia, Canada, India and the Republic of Korea (ROK).

Apart from bilateral cooperation with ASEAN member countries, Cambodia has also benefited cooperation links with ASEAN's Dialogue Partners in the framework of the Post Ministerial Conference (PMC). These countries and organization are Australia, Canada, China, the EU, India, Japan, the Republic of Korea, New Zealand, Russia and the United States of America.

Moreover, within the cooperation scheme of ASEAN with Canada and the European Union, Cambodia has signed a MOU with Canada on the Extension of Economic Cooperation Agreement to Cambodia and with the EU a Protocol on the Extension of the ASEAN-EC Cooperation Agreement to Cambodia. The signing of these two documents allows Cambodia to take part in the development programmes with Canada and the EU.

Furthermore, Cambodia also benefits from its ASEAN's membership, when in Manila in November last year, the Association institutionalized relations of close cooperation with the three neighbors in the Northeast, China, Japan and the Republic of Korea. It is apparent that the ASEAN + 3 covers an immense territory and population resulting in a vast reservoir of trade, financial, economic, scientific and technological potentials animated by a vast mass of human resources.

Since the ASEAN+3 has been set up, there are a lot of cooperation with fruitful result between ASEAN and its three partners in Northeast Asia such as in the fields of trade, economy and finance. Progress has been made since then. The first meeting of the ASEAN+3 Economic Ministers held in May 2000 in Yangon and the ASEAN+3 Finance Ministers Meeting in May in Chiang Mai (Thailand) have shown the importance of close cooperation in the pursuit of financial stability and economic strength among ASEAN, China, Japan and the Republic of Korea.

Moreover, the ASEAN+3 cooperation framework is an added mechanism aiming at realizing ASEAN's first six years plan set forth in the Hanoi Plan of Action adopted in 1998 in Hanoi, the implementation of which would significantly bring forward regional economic integration and promote the competitiveness of East Asia as a whole in the world economy.

China, Japan and the ROK are also interested in the development of the Mekong River Basin, which is identified as one of the growth areas for economic cooperation in the ASEAN+3 framework of East Asia Cooperation. As stated at the 3rd ASEAN-Japan Consultative Group Meeting held in Tokyo last April, Japan pledged to continue to cooperate with the concerned countries and other donors in developing the Mekong Basin.

In this regard, Cambodia has interest to actively participate in the consolidation of ASEAN + 3 cooperation in every field. These relations will benefit not only ASEAN member states and the concerned countries, but also Asia as a whole.

ASEAN+3 cooperation not only muster economic cooperation but also create deeper understanding in political and security issues in East Asia as well as in the entire Asia.

With the admission of Cambodia, ASEAN is more united and will further evolve into a more resilient and more influential regional body able to respond to the challenges posed by the speed of globalization phenomenon in the world today.

However, in order to become a powerful economic entity in the face of the challenges of the world today, ASEAN should make every effort to eliminate or reduce the development gap among its members to a minimum. It is a fact that disparity between old and new members of ASEAN has so far existed. This difference of development level resulted from many decades of war and turmoil that affected the new members whereby the old members enjoyed peace and stability, offering favorable conditions for the economic development of their countries.

In order to achieve the ASEAN Vision 2020 and the Hanoi Plan of Action, there must be a balance of development within ASEAN.

The ASEAN Vision 2020 was adopted by the ASEAN Leaders at the Second Informal Summit in Kuala Lumpur in 1997. They envisioned "ASEAN as a concert of Southeast Asian Nations, outward looking, living in peace, stability and prosperity, bonded together in partnership in dynamic development and in a community of caring societies".

The Hanoi Plan of Action (HPA), which was adopted by the ASEAN Leaders at the Sixth ASEAN Summit in Hanoi in December 1998, is the first six years plan of action leading to the realization of the goals of the ASEAN Vision 2020. It started in December 1998 and covered in particular the following:

- strengthening macroeconomic and financial cooperation;
- enhancing greater economic integration; promoting science and technology development and development of information technology infrastructure;
- promoting social development and address the social impact of the financial and economic crisis;
- promoting human resources development;
- protecting the environment and promoting sustainable development; finally
- strengthening regional peace and security, etc.

All ASEAN's members have attached great importance to the necessity to make every possible effort to ensure that ASEAN as a whole is moving forward at the same pace. **In my view, this is a key issue that requires joint efforts of all ASEAN's members to quickly narrow the gap within ASEAN. This is a challenge for ASEAN in the future.**

I personally believe that the development of the Mekong Basin and human resources development (HRD) are the two fundamental tasks that ASEAN must tackle at all cost and as soon as possible. It would permit not only Cambodia and the new members, but also the whole organization to speed up regional economic integration and reap common benefits, reduce disparity, as foreseen by the Hanoi Plan of Action and ASEAN Vision 2020. The development of the Greater Mekong Sub-region (GMS) is not only beneficial to riparian countries but to ASEAN as a whole.

This has also been acknowledged by the ASEAN Foreign Ministers at their 33rd AMM held in Bangkok last July. They have strongly supported the proclamation by ESCAP in June this year of the "Decade of the Greater Mekong Sub-region (GMS) Development 2000 to 2009", which has been endorsed by ECOSOC. Japan has promised to render its support. China and the Republic of Korea have also made similar declarations of intent. Within the framework of ASEAN Dialogue relations Cambodia is committed to strive to make the Decade of the Greater Mekong Sub-region Development come true.

Furthermore, the financial and economic crisis of 1997-1998 made ASEAN realize of the importance of social safety nets to help those vast majorities of people mostly affected by the crisis, resulting in unemployment and poverty. As the consequences of the crisis have hit more or less all ASEAN's members, we, Cambodians, must find a way together with ASEAN and its Dialogue Partners, to secure funds for the effective establishment of social safety nets, which have been addressed by ASEAN at its various meetings, in order to reduce poverty in Cambodia in accordance with the Political Programme of the Royal Government of Cambodia.

**Your Royal Highness,  
Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Cambodia is proud of being a member of ASEAN and for having joined the mainstream of regional cooperation scheme that has been expanded to embrace the whole of East Asia. However, much remains to be done for Cambodia to harmonize the level of its socio-economic development with those of other States in this vast area. But, based on the results we have achieved on the economic field since the formation of the present Royal Government, it is hopefully that with the assistance of friendly countries and international organizations, Cambodia will be able to catch up with the level of development of other countries in the region in the future.

But in order to achieve this goal, Cambodia needs to make every effort to develop its human resources and fulfil the development of the Mekong Basin as soon as possible, in accordance with the proclamation of ESCAP. These two developmental fields are fundamental for Cambodia as well as other new members to quickly develop their national economies.

In this connection, while new members of ASEAN would make their best efforts to promote the development process, the old ASEAN members should lend them a helping hand in order to realize their development goal. This would represent, in my view, the interest of ASEAN as a whole, politically relevant in the region and the world at large, moving forward at the same pace, speaking with one voice on issues of common concern and interest to the Association.

In the framework of the ARF, Cambodia has to make active contribution to promote first confidence among its members for the sake of durable peace and stability in Asia Pacific. Though the ARF is still at the stage of confidence building, I believe that confidence building measures (CBMs) should be further strengthened in order to move step by step towards PD, which would be a mechanism for the consolidation of peace and security in the Asia Pacific.

At present, Cambodia as well as other countries is seeking solutions to transnational problems such as trafficking of drug, women and children, small arms and related crimes. These are common transborder problems in the region and beyond that no country can solve them on its own. They will need to closely coordinate their efforts and cooperate in the framework of ARF and PMC in tackling with these serious problems, which the world is facing.

At the 33rd ASEAN Ministerial Meeting in Bangkok this year, the ASEAN Foreign Ministers agreed to advance the target year for realizing a drug-free ASEAN five years ahead of schedule from 2020 to 2015.

I am optimistic that with ASEAN's strong commitment to address the issues of development as a broad agenda encompassing political, economic, cultural and social fields as defined in the HPA, the gap between the old and the new members of ASEAN would be reduced step by step and the economic integration achieved. This would make ASEAN again at the forefront of successful regional organizations.

- In conclusion, I believe that Cambodia's membership in ASEAN is a **political and economic necessity** for the Royal Government to successfully merge the country into the mainstream of regional economic integration and into the international economic community.

- It would also enable to strengthen ASEAN in all fields in close and dynamic cooperation with its Dialogue Partners and other regional groupings, consolidating the primary driving role of ASEAN in maintaining peace and security in the Asia Pacific within the structure of ARF.

- Cambodia also has a role to play to increase cooperation in East Asia within the framework of ASEAN + 3 as it would generate dynamic economic development and common prosperity in this important part of the world.

- Together with ASEAN unity, Dialogue Partners of ASEAN and ASEAN + 3, ASEAN will become an important regional organization, which plays primary role in contributing to peace, security and prosperity in the region.

**Thank you for your attention**

\* \* \* \* \*

### Senior Minister Meets with Malaysian FM

On 24 October 2000, His Excellency Mr. HOR Namhong, Senior Minister, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, held a bilateral meeting with His Excellency Mr. Datuk Seri Syed Hamid ALBAR, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Malaysia, who paid an official visit to the Kingdom of Cambodia from 24 - 26 October 2000.



*Minister Datuk Seri Syed Hamid ALBAR is welcomed by Senior Minister HOR Namhong at Pochentong International Airport*

Both sides reached an agreement on the establishment of a joint commission for bilateral cooperation between Cambodia and Malaysia and to convene its first meeting in Kuala Lumpur early next year. The two foreign ministers expressed satisfaction with the current status of bilateral cooperation and shared the same views on looking for possibility to further expand it. Minister Datuk Seri Syed Hamid ALBAR assured Senior Minister HOR Namhong that he would continue to encourage Malaysian companies to come to Cambodia and that Malaysian investors were still very keen to invest in Cambodia. The discussions also touched on formalities for bringing Cambodian workers to Malaysia as well as the coordination between the two countries in Human Resources Development and Mekong Basin Development Projects in the ASEAN framework.

The meeting was followed by a signing ceremony between His Excellency Mr. HOR Namhong and His Excellency Mr. Datuk Seri Syed Hamid ALBAR on Exchange of Letters on the Establishment of a Joint Commission for Bilateral Cooperation between Cambodia and Malaysia.

While in Cambodia, His Excellency Mr. Datuk Seri Syed Hamid ALBAR and Madame were granted a Royal Audience by Their Majesties the King and the Queen of Cambodia. His Excellency the Foreign Minister also paid courtesy calls on Samdech Krom Preah NORODOM Ranariddh,



President of the National Assembly, Samdech HUN Sen, Prime Minister, and Sdech Krom Khun SISOWATH Chivan Monirak, First Vice President of the Senate.

His Excellency the Foreign Minister presented Samdech HUN Sen with a USD 25.000 check under the name of the "Cambodian Red Cross" to assist the flood victims in Cambodia.



*Senior Minister HOR Namhong and Minister Datuk Seri Syed Hamid ALBAR after signing an Exchange of Letters*

### Senior Minister Launches Bid to Join ASEM

On 18 October 2000, His Excellency Mr. HOR Namhong, Senior Minister, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, wrote letters to His Excellency Mr. LEE Joung-Binn, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Korea, as host of the third Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM), His Excellency Mr. Hubert VEDRINE, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of France, which holds the chairmanship of the Europe Union, and the Foreign Ministers of the seven ASEAN members seeking their support to the desire of the Royal Government of Cambodia to participate as soon as possible in ASEM.

"We strongly believe that Cambodia's participation to ASEM will accelerate the needed social and economic development of Cambodia," read the letters.

"In this spirit, I have the honour to inform you of the desire of the Royal Government of Cambodia to participate as soon as possible in the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) with the subsequent request to seek your support to our above stated candidacy," continued the letters.

Senior Minister HOR Namhong told AFP on 19 October 2000 that: "I always tell foreign friends that when they think about Cambodia they should not see it just as a market of 12 million people. They should see it as a gateway to Asia. They have to look into the period of five or ten years down the track, when the ASEAN Free Trade Area is fully opened and the total market will be 600 or 700 million people."

"Cambodia is in an area that can be a connecting point between Southeast Asia and China. Cambodia is a place that they can produce and can export the product to Southeast Asia, to China and others," add Senior Minister HOR Namhong.

\* \* \* \* \*

## Senior Minister Receives German Delegation

On 7 October 2000, His Excellency Mr. HOR Namhong, Senior Minister, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, received Mrs. Heidemarie WIECZOREK-ZEUL, M.P., Minister for Economic Cooperation and development of the Federal Republic of Germany and her delegation that was paying a visit to the Kingdom of Cambodia from 7-9 October 2000.

His Excellency the Senior Minister acquainted the delegation with the reform package, among them economic reform, demobilization of the armed forces, civil administration reform, and judicial reform, and the progress achieved in their implementation by the Royal Government of Cambodia. Senior Minister HOR Namhong informed the guests of the priorities set up by the Government in its economic development programs that were agriculture, road infrastructure, energy and electricity, human resources, light industry, and tourism. The Senior Minister also briefed the delegation on the damages caused by floods and the assistance needed to help about 2.2 million Cambodian flood victims.



*Senior Minister HOR Namhong welcomes German Economic Cooperation Minister Heidemarie WIECZOREK-ZEUL*

Her Excellency Minister Heidemarie WIECZOREK-ZEUL informed Senior Minister HOR Namhong of the German Government's decision to grant 2.5 million D.M as emergency relief to help flood victims and expressed her high appreciation to the development made in the country.

Senior Minister HOR Namhong made an appeal for more cooperation from Germany, especially in investing in hydro-electricity. The Senior Minister told the delegation that the Royal Government of Cambodia strongly supported the candidate of the Federal Republic of Germany as Permanent Member of the United Nations Security Council.

While in Cambodia, Her Excellency Mrs. Heidemarie WIECZOREK-ZEUL was granted a Royal Audience by His Majesty the King at the Royal Palace. Her Excellency the Minister paid courtesy calls on Samdech HUN Sen, Prime Minister, Sdech Krom Khun SISOWATH Chivan Monirak, First Vice President of the Senate, Samdech HENG Samrin, First Vice President of the National Assembly, His Excellency Mr. SAR Kheng, Deputy Prime Minister, Co-Minister of Interior, His Excellency Mr. TOL Lah, Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Education, Youth and Sport, and His Excellency Mr. YOU Hockry, Senior Minister, Co-Minister of Interior.

Her Excellency Mrs. Heidemarie WIECZOREK-ZEUL also traveled to Kompong Thom Province to visit German Projects on Rural Development, Demobilization, and Tertiary Road Improvement and have a field visit of Humanitarian Mine Destruction conducted by CMAC.

\* \* \* \* \*

### **Senior Minister Receives Czech Deputy FM**

On 24 October 2000, His Excellency Mr. HOR Namhong, Senior Minister, Minister of Foreign Affairs And International Cooperation, received His Excellency Mr. Hynek KMONICEK, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic, who was visiting Cambodia from 20-24 October 2000.

Senior Minister HOR Namhong highlighted the necessity to revitalize the good relations between the two countries, especially in political, economic and cultural fields. The Senior Minister also informed the guest of the Government's wishes to nominate its Ambassador to the Czech Republic and expressed his sincere thanks for the scholarship and USD 15,000 aid-relief for flood victims offered by the Czech Government to the Cambodian Red Cross.

His Excellency Mr. Hynek KMONICEK informed Senior Minister HOR Namhong that in order to revitalize the good relations between the two countries, the Czech Republic would appoint in the near future its Ambassador to Cambodia with residence in Bangkok, encourage Czech investment in Cambodia, and explore ways to provide scholarship to the Cambodian students. His Excellency the Deputy Foreign Minister also expressed wishes for the exchange of delegation between the two Foreign Ministries as well as the two countries.



*Senior Minister HOR Namhong and Czech Deputy Foreign Minister Hynek KMONICEK*

His Excellency Mr. Hynek KMONICEK also had a meeting with His Excellency Mr. UCH Kiman, Secretary of state for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, during which the Secretary of State informed the guest of the good potential for investment in Cambodia, the government's strategy to attract foreign investors and made an appeal for cooperation, in particular, in tourism and electricity from the Czech Republic.

His Excellency Mr. Hynek KMONICEK handed over to Secretary of State UCH Kiman a draft of the investment protection agreement between the two countries and expressed hope that the signing of this agreement would pave the way for the Czech companies to study the investment opportunity in Cambodia. Secretary of State UCH Kiman and His Excellency Mr. Hynek KMONICEK also had an exchange of views on the cooperation on education and culture.

\* \* \* \* \*

### Senior Minister Meets with WFP Representatives

On 12 October 2000, His Excellency Mr. HOR Namhong, Senior Minister, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation had a meeting with Ms. Angela Van RYNBACH, Deputy Regional Director for Asia and Europe Region (OAE) of the United Nations World Food Programme who was visiting Cambodia from 8-14 October 2000. Ms. Monika MIDEL, Representative, Country Director of UN World Food Programme in Cambodia, was also present then.

Senior Minister HOR Namhong briefed the guests on the damages of infrastructure as well as the people's lives affected by the worst flooding in Cambodian history and the great efforts undertaken by the Royal Government of Cambodia in providing preliminary aid to the flood victims. His Excellency the Senior Minister handed over to Ms. Angela Van RYNBACH an appeal of Samdech Prime Minister HUN Sen to the international community for emergency relief.



*Senior Minister HOR Namhong meets with WFP Deputy Regional*

Ms. Angela Van RYNBACH informed the Senior Minister HOR Namhong that WFP had appealed for the emergency aid of 8.6 million US dollars for Cambodia and had planned to set up a six-month project to help the people until the upcoming harvest season, including the Food for

Work project. Furthermore, she expressed hope that the Executive Board of WFP would pass the operation assistance project in Cambodia for the years 2001-2003 during its meeting on 24 October 2000.

Senior Minister HOR Namhong and Ms. Angela Van RYNBACH shared the satisfaction with the good cooperation between the UN World Food Programme and the Kingdom of Cambodia.

\* \* \* \* \*



## Senior Minister Receives New Iranian Ambassador



*Senior Minister HOR Namhong receives Iranian Ambassador Hossein Ebrahim KHANI*

On 6 October 2000, His Excellency Mr. HOR Namhong, Senior Minister, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, received His Excellency Mr. Hossein Ebrahim KHANI, the newly appointed Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the Kingdom of Cambodia.

Senior Minister HOR Namhong and Ambassador Ebrahim KHANI shared the wishes to expand all kind of bilateral cooperation, especially in economic field, and agreed on the necessity of exchanging delegations, particularly at the level of Minister of Foreign Affairs, in order to pave the way for that objective.

Senior Minister HOR Namhong briefed the Ambassador on the flood damages as well as the assistance needed in Cambodia to help the flood victims. Ambassador Ebrahim KHANI pledged to report to the Government and the Red Cross of Iran to examine the possibility of sending relief to Cambodia.

\* \* \* \* \*