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CAMBODIA-JAPAN BILATERAL RELATIONS

Cambodian Premier's congratulatory message addressed to Japanese Premier.

Samdech Techo Hun Sen, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Cambodia has sent a message to congratulate H.E. Mr. Yukio HATOYAMA on the assumption of office as the Prime Minister of Japan, on September 16.

The quoted message is as follow:

Excellency,

It is my profound pleasure to convey, on behalf of the Royal Government and people of Cambodia, our heartfelt felicitations to Your Excellency on the auspicious occasion of your assumption of office as the Prime Minister of Japan.

I am very pleased to note that our two peoples have cherished and enjoyed very close friendship, while very productive cooperation between our countries in many fields, is progressing well from day to day.

I have full confidence that under your wise leadership, the excellent relations between our countries will further flourish, bringing greater benefits for both our nations and peoples.

I am looking forward to meeting Your Excellency during the First Mekong-Japan Summit to be held in Tokyo, on 6-7 November this year.

*Please accept, **Excellency**, the assurances of my highest consideration and my best wishes for a greater success in all your endeavors.*

HUN SEN

Congratulatory message of Cambodian Foreign Minister

Deputy Prime Minister HOR Namhong, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of the Kingdom of Cambodia, has sent a congratulatory message to H.E. Mr. Katsuya OKADA, on the occasion of his appointment as Japanese Foreign Minister, on September 16.

The contents of message are as follows:

Excellency,

I have the great pleasure to extend to Your Excellency my warmest congratulations on the happy occasion of your appointment as the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Japan.

I am pleased to note that Cambodia and Japan have enjoyed very close friendship and active cooperation in all areas. The people of Cambodia happily cherish these excellent ties and deeply appreciate the assistance extended by the Government and people of Japan in support of the socio-economic progress in Cambodia, as seen today.

As the largest donor country in Cambodia, Japan has significantly contributed to Cambodia's efforts to narrow its development gap with other countries in the region, through bilateral mechanisms, as well as sub-regional frameworks, such as ASEAN-Japan mechanism, the Cambodia-Laos-Vietnam (CLV) Cooperation, Cambodia-Laos-Myanmar-Vietnam (CLMV) Cooperation and most recently the Japan-Mekong cooperation's structure.

*Taking this opportunity I would like to cordially invite Your Excellency to the **2nd Mekong-Japan Foreign Ministers Meeting**, in Siem Reap, Cambodia, on 3-4 October, which I believe will certainly help broaden*



the scope and boost the intensity of cooperation between Mekong countries and Japan.

I look forward to welcoming Your Excellency in Cambodia and to working closely with you in order to further enhance the bonds of close friendship and productive cooperation between Cambodia and Japan for the mutual benefits of our two nations.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration and my best wishes for your greater success in the fulfillment of your noble duties.

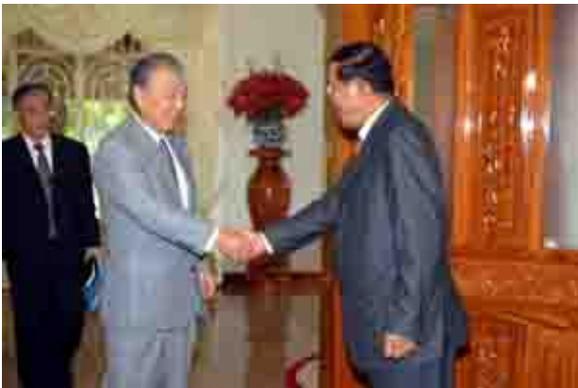
Hor Namhong

Deputy Prime Minister

Minister of Foreign Affairs

And International Cooperation

Prime Minister received Sasakawa Foundation's President



During the meeting on September 2 with Samdech Techo Hun Sen, Prime Minister of Cambodia, Mr. Yohai Sasakawa, president of Sasakawa Foundation, said that he planned to hand over the project for producing the artificial physicals, which is being currently run by the Sasakawa Foundation, to the government of Cambodia in 2012. He added that his foundation is going to launch another two projects such as providing technical assistance on pottery to

the people in Kampong Chhnang province and the promotion of the Khmer traditional herbal medicine throughout the school education.

Samdech Techo Hun Sen welcomed the hand-over of the project and expressed thanks to the Sasakawa Foundation for its assistance to the development of Cambodia.

Cambodia to host the Second Mekong-Japan Foreign Ministers' Meeting

The Kingdom of Cambodia will host the Second Mekong-Japan Foreign Ministers' Meeting, which will be attended by Foreign Ministers of Japan, Laos, Myanmar, Thailand and Vietnam, followed by the Second Foreign Ministers' Meeting of the Emerald Triangle Cooperation between Cambodia, Laos, and Thailand from October 2 to 3, 2009, in Siem Reap.

The Second Mekong-Japan Foreign Ministers' Meeting, chaired by Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Hor Namhong, will review the progress of Japan-Mekong cooperation since "Japan-Mekong Region Partnership Programme" launched in 2007 and the First Mekong-Japan Foreign Ministers' Meeting held in Tokyo in January 2008 and to set out the future direction of the cooperation in this mechanism.

The Second Foreign Ministers' Meeting of the Emerald Triangle Cooperation will identify the new areas of cooperation aimed at achieving poverty alleviation and sustainable economic growth in this border area of the three countries since the First Foreign Ministers' Meeting held in 2003 in Pakse (Laos), including the implementation of the Action Plan on Tourism Cooperation in the Emerald Triangle.



INTERNATIONAL RELATION & COOPERATION

Prime Minister seeks more Chinese aid

During a linking celebration at the Cambodia-China Prek Kdam Friendship Bridge, on September 14, Cambodian Premier Samdech Techo Hun Sen said “China is the biggest development partner of Cambodia and China will be the country responsible for building the longest roads in Cambodia.”

The bridge, which spans the Tonle Sap River in Kandal province, is replacing a ferry service and should save travellers both time and money, the premier said. It is due to be completed before the Khmer New Year in April 2010.

In 2007, China pledged around \$600 million to Cambodia for the construction of two bridges – Prek Kdam and Prek Tamak – as well as National Road 8 and the road that connects Kratie with Monduliri provinces.

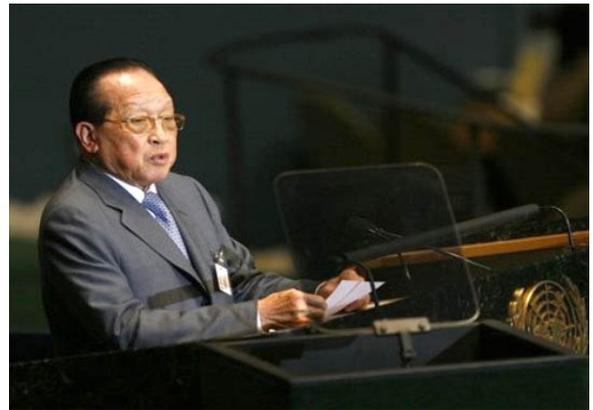
China’s assistance to Cambodia has reached nearly US\$7 billion, including \$1.4 billion on infrastructure, \$4 billion on tourism and about \$300 million on agriculture.

Samdech Hun Sen added that the government is negotiating with China to secure funding for infrastructure projects in Cambodia worth \$600 million, including \$400 million for the road-expansion projects and a further \$200 million for hydropower projects.

If the agreement comes to fruition, the prime minister will travel to China to take part in an official signing ceremony in October.

Cambodian foreign minister to participate in the UN General Assembly

Deputy Prime Minister Hor Namhong, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation left on September 22 for New York to participate in the 64th Session of the United Nations General Assembly.



A bilateral meeting was scheduled on September 28 with Hillary Clinton, Secretary of State of the United States.

Cambodian defense minister visited the United States

During the visit the United States on September 18-22, Deputy Prime Minister Tea Banh, Minister of National Defense of Cambodia met with U.S. Secretary of Defense Robert Gates in order to strengthen cooperation and to reinforce the U.S. commitment to substantive, reform-linked security cooperation.

Two nations’ defence chiefs signed a bilateral agreement, under which the US Agency for International Development (USAID) will provide Cambodia with US\$7.79 million to finance the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises and Business Enabling Environment programme, aimed at alleviating rural poverty by making family-owned businesses more productive.



The United States has promised to sponsor Cambodia's role in defence exercises scheduled for July 2010 and slated to involve more than 2,000 military personnel from countries across the Asia-Pacific region.

United States to provide US\$34.8 million to Cambodia



Cambodian Deputy Prime Minister Hor Namhong, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) Mission Director to Cambodia Mr. Flynn Fuller signed an agreement on September 8 worth US\$34.8 million to help Cambodia improve its health and educational services.

Of the total amount, US\$31, 6 million is distributed to enhance health services for patients of HIV/AIDS and other transmissible diseases as well as mother and child health and reproductive health. The rest of US\$3, 2

million to spent on increasing quality and access in education.

European Union to give US\$32 million to national agricultural projects

The European Union (EU) will give \$16 million to a project of the Ministry of Agriculture and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) aimed at strengthening local agricultural production and food security, and another \$16 million for other programs that increase access to food in Cambodia.

ADB signed agreements worth US\$37.3 million

Deputy Prime Minister Keat Chhon, Minister of Economy and Finance, and Asian Development Bank (ADB) Vice-President C. Lawrence Greenwood signed on September 17 a grant and loan agreements, totaling US\$37.3 million.

According to the agreement, a US\$21 million grant for the Second Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Project will support Cambodia's efforts to deliver improved rural water supply and sanitation to Battambang, Kampong Chhnang, Kampong Thom, Pursat, Siem Reap and Banteay Meanchey provinces. The project will work in about 400 villages.

The remaining US\$16.3 million, is a concessional loan, co-financed with a US\$25.6 million loan from the Republic of Korea, will rehabilitate the Northwest Road Improvement Project.

The National Road No. 56 is a key conduit for goods and people between northwest Cambodia and northeast Thailand, and also forms a feeder connection to the Great



Mekong Sub-region (GMS) East-West Economic Corridor.

Cambodian delegation participated in 2009 CITYNET Yokohama Congress

Phnom Penh Municipality delegation led by its Governor Kep Chutema attended the 2009 CITYNET Congress on "Harmonious Cities for Our Future", held from 07-11 September in Yokohama, Japan.

CITYNET Congress is a strategic platform for key policymakers and urban stakeholders to meet face-to-face to evaluate, define and re-affirm their connections and to forge new alliances.

Royal Australian navy ship visited in Cambodia

The Royal Australian Navy ship, HMAS DARWIN, arrived in Sihanoukville on September 22 to begin its four-day visit in the kingdom.



The Commander of HMAS DARWIN, Chris Smith, paid a courtesy calls on the Governor of Sihanoukville, Sbaong Sarath, and the Commander of Ream Naval Base, Rear Admiral Ouk Seiha.

The Royal Australian Navy officers also visited and provided specialist training on ship maintenance equipment to the Royal

Cambodian Navy Marine Base at Ream, Sihanouk province.

This visit reinforces the close links between Cambodia and Australia through the Australian Defense Cooperation Program.

NATIONAL POLICY AND SOCIETY

Cambodian former king left for China

Retired King Norodom Sihanouk and Queen Norodom Monineath Sihanouk, accompanied by their son King Norodom Sihamoni, left Cambodia on September 3 for Beijing, China for a routine medical check-up.



The monarchs were seen off at Siem Reap International Airport by Senate President Samdech Pothisal Chea Sim, Prime Minister Samdech Techo Hun Sen, and provincial officials as well as members of the royal family.

King Sihamoni returned from China

His Majesty Norodom Sihamoni, King of Cambodia, returned home on September 20 from the People's Republic of China.

The Cambodian monarch was welcomed at Phnom Penh International Airport by Samdech Pothisal Chea Sim, President of



the Senate, Samdech Techo Hun Sen, Prime Minister and other high-ranking officials, including Chinese Ambassador to Cambodia Mrs. Zhang Jinfeng.

During his stay in China, King Sihamoni met Chinese Vice President Xi Jinping, who said China and Cambodia are good neighbors with long-term traditional friendship, and the two countries have expanded their friendly exchanges and mutually beneficial cooperation in political, economic, cultural and educational areas.



He praised the contribution of the Cambodian royal family to boosting the ties with China, expressing gratitude for the support on issues concerning China's sovereignty and core interests related to Taiwan and Tibet.

King Sihamoni said Cambodia values the relationship with China and will continue to promote their cooperation. He reaffirmed Cambodia will adhere to the one-China policy.

Cambodian premier inspected flooding situation in Kampot Province

Cambodian premier went to Kampot province on September 8 to inspect the flooding, which affected 6,973 hectares of cultivated area and distributed relief aid to 51,007 people.

The prime minister urged the local authorities to help the farmers to build up

rice field dikes for preventing water from flowing out when water recedes and the local people to adhere to hygiene for preventing infectious diseases.



Cambodia declares its candidacy for the World Heritage Committee

The government declared its first candidacy earlier September for the World Heritage Committee following UNESCO's announcement that elections will take place from October 23-28 in Paris.

Deputy Prime Minister Sok An, Minister in charge of the Office of the Council of Ministers and President of Cambodian National Commission for UNESCO, said within the committee, Cambodia would support the global strategy for a balanced, representative and credible World Heritage List.

Themes of office are usually six years, but Cambodia would voluntarily serve only four years if elected in order to let other states parties be part of the committee, Sok An said on September 7 at the National Museum.

UNESCO office in Phnom Penh warmly welcomed the Kingdom of Cambodia to a candidacy on the World Heritage Committee for heritage preservation, environmental protection and accommodation of local communities.

2008 population census was released final results

The Cambodian population has increased by 1.96 million over the last ten years, from 11.4 million in 1998 to 13.4 million in 2008, according to the 2008 general population census final results.

The population density of the country increased from 64 to 75 persons per square kilometer. This density is lower than the other countries in the region.

The total fertility rate has been declined to 3.1, the estimated infant mortality rate shows moderate decrease from 66 to 60 per 1,000 live births during 2005-2008.



It is observed that the number of literate population aged 7 and more has spectacularly risen from about 5.78 million to 8.96 million during the ten years, which is increased from 62.80 percent in 1998 to 78.35 percent in 2008. The number of children aged 6 and more attending school or educational institution have increased from 36.27 percent during 1998-2008 but the proportion of females attending school continues to be less than the corresponding proportion for males both in the urban and rural areas.

The country's GDP per capita saw an increase from US\$253 in 1998 to US\$739 in 2008 and 93 percent of Cambodian people live in their own houses.

The 2008 population census was conducted by the National Institute of Statistics and supported by the Royal Government of Cambodia, UNFPA, JICA, the Government of Japan and the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany.

The Government concerned about illiteracy

In Cambodia, the illiteracy remains a concern for the Royal Government, while a lot of children and youth do not go to school because of poverty and a lack of infrastructure.

In accordance with the Education for All's goal, the literacy is a main component in poverty reduction strategy of the government of Cambodia.

On the National Literacy Day, September 8, Prime Minister Hun Sen said literacy is a key development and poverty reduction. To develop a country is to develop its human resources first.

ECONOMY, TRADE & INVESTMENT

To increase trade, EU makes Cambodia rice duty-free

As part of ongoing efforts by the European Union (EU) to increase trade links with the world's poorest countries, all rice being exported from Cambodia to EU will be duty-free starting on September 01.

Alongside Cambodia, the EU's preferential access lists includes Laos and Burma but excludes Thailand and Vietnam. "This means that no duty will have to be paid for exporting rice from Cambodia to the EU, a market of 500 million consumers,"



Rafael Dochao Moreno, Charge d’Affair of the European Commission to Cambodia said.

Chevron and MOECO seek government’s support in oil exploration bidding

During the meeting with the Cambodian prime minister Samdech Techo Hun Sen on September 15, Chevron President Mr. Joseph C. GEAGEA said his company had already submitted documents for the bidding to the National Petroleum Authority of Cambodia.

Cambodian premier welcomed Chevron’s participation in the bidding, reiterating that the royal government guarantees transparency and accountability in the bidding.



On the same day, the Cambodian premier also received Japanese MOECO Company President Mr. Yoshiyuki Kagawa who also expressed his interest and determination to join in the bidding for oil exploration in Cambodia.

CULTURE, TOURISM & SPORT

Pchum Ben Festival is a religious ceremony

“Pchum Ben” Festival or the Festival for the Dead is the second biggest ceremony for the Cambodian people in the entire country after the “Chaul Chhnam Thmei” (Khmer New Year).



This religious festival, which falls on the fifteenth day of Cambodia’s tenth moon, is to celebrate this year on September 19. In fact, the whole festival lasts 15 days which is called *Kan Ben*. During the first 14 days, people or villagers take turns to offer food to monks in nearby pagodas in hope that the offerings will reach the souls of their ancestors by virtue of the Buddhist monk sermons. But the most important is the last day of the Pchum Ben on which all Cambodian Buddhist followers, the rich as well as the poor, manage to prepare food and other offerings for their visits to pagodas.

Japanese dolls exhibition opened in Phnom Penh



Some 70 Japanese traditional dolls were displayed in an exhibition sponsored by the Japan Foundation and co-organized by the Japanese Embassy to Cambodia and the Phnom Penh Municipality, at Wat

Phnom Culture and Fine Arts Museum from September 1 to 21 with free admission for audience.



According to Mr. Kazuo Chujo, Councilor of the Japanese Embassy, said that the Japanese dolls exhibition had been part of activities to mark Mekong-Japan Exchange Year 2009, the year of cultural exchange between Japan and five countries along the Mekong River, including Cambodia.

WHF, BTC signed MOU for tourism improvement

The World Heritage Foundation(WHF) of the United States and Banteay Chmar Tourism Community signed on September 6 a memorandum of understanding (MOU) to protect and improve tourism around Banteay Chmar Temple, located in Banteay Meanchey province.

According to the agreement, WHF will provide budget as grant and credit to the project for protecting, developing and improving the tourism field in Banteay Chmar Temple.

Ironworks site a 'goldmine'

Finding may shed light on Angkorian manufacturing practices

The discovery of ancient ironworks earlier September at Khav village in Siem Reap's Chi-kreng district may provide valuable insight into early iron production during the Angkorian era between the 11th and 13th centuries, said Seung Kong, vice director general of Apsara Authority .

The discovery, such as pots cooking utensils and smelting tools used to stoke the fires used to melt iron ore, represents a historic first for the Kingdom. "It is the first time we have found such a site in Cambodia,

though we have studied several in Thailand near the Cambodian border," Seung Kong said.

The site could help archaeologists better understand how raw materials were processed during the Angkorian period. It might also help them discover additional sites in the area and elsewhere.

UNESCO to help preserve Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum Archives

The UNESCO Office in Phnom Penh will assist the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum in the preservation of the historical documentary collection, which has been inscribed on UNESCO's Memory of the World Register, contains photographs, 'confessions' and biographical records of over 15, 000 prisoners, who were detained in the former high school from 1975 to 1979.

Cambodian students and artists attended the Sakai-ASEAN Week in Japan

Ten Cambodian students and artists attended the Sakai-ASEAN Week in Sakai town of Japan from September 7 to 13.

Senior Advisor of ASEAN Exchange Program, Dr. KATO Hisanori, said that the aim of the Sakai-ASEAN Week is to strengthen the relations between ASEAN countries and Japan, and to celebrate the 120th anniversary of Sakai, which is a tourism and business town of Japan.

The representatives from Cambodia, Indonesia, the Philippines, Thailand, Vietnam and Japan presented and discussed about environmental issue, and perform traditional dances of each county.



Cambodian Laboc Kator competition concluded

The national competition for martial art Laboc Kator championship 2009 was concluded on August 31 at Phnom Penh National Olympic Stadium.

According to Mr. Duong Meas Chamroeun, vice chairman of Competition Organizing Commission, some 277 fighters, including 51 female, from 15 clubs across the country joined the fourth competition.

Cambodian football team won Cup in Mekong Games 2009

Cambodian football team, Preah Khan Reach, won a Trophy in the Mekong Games 2009, which was held in China.

According to Preah Khan Reach Football Club Manager Mr. Aok Samnang, five football teams from Cambodia, Thailand, Laos and China participated in the competition.

Cambodia has defeated Thailand 3:2, Laos 2:0, Jing Xishang Banna and Chinese Youth Selection from China respectively 1:0 and 4:3.
