

Address  
by

**Samdech Akka Moha Sena Padei Techo Hun Sen  
Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Cambodia**

at the  
**Opening of the 3<sup>rd</sup> National Forum on Climate Change**  
Peace Building, November 5, 2013

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***Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,***

It is my pleasure to be at the opening of the "**3<sup>rd</sup> National Forum on Climate Change**". This forum is held just one week ahead of the 19th Session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the 9th Session of the Conference of the Parties to the **Kyoto Protocol** in Warsaw, Poland. In this connection, it is without doubt that this forum will provide inputs to the above international meetings. In addition, it is necessary for us to have better understanding of the challenges created by the changing environment, such as global warming, natural catastrophes, drought, flooding, typhoon, degradation of the ecosystem, loss of biodiversity, emergence of new diseases causing loss of human and animal lives and so on that not only hinder socio-economic development, but also affect public safety and welfare.

Taking this opportunity, on behalf of the Royal Government of Cambodia, I would like to praise the management and officials of the Ministry of Environment, concerned ministries-institutions, local authorities, national and international organizations, private sector, monks and fellow citizens for joining hands to protect the environment, and I am confident that all of you will continue this work. This effort will indeed reinforce the will of all human being in preventing and countering disasters and ensuring people live in harmony with the environment.

I also extend my warmest welcome to representatives from ministries-institutions of the Royal Government, development partners, Embassies to the Kingdom of Cambodia, private sector, educational institutions, civil society, and all participants attending the "**3<sup>rd</sup> National Forum on Climate Change**".

Overall, the “3<sup>rd</sup> National Forum on Climate Change” has been organized on regular basis and become an important gathering for policy makers, scientists, development partners and other actors to circulate latest findings to help counter climate change with the view of realizing our socio-economic goals against the backdrop of climate change. This Forum will enable us to review our progress since the 2<sup>nd</sup> Forum in 2011 and contribute our views to identify priorities for fighting climate change in the next 5 to 10 years.

Climate change is no longer a remote case, but is affecting all of us in the present and become one of the grave challenges that must be addressed in the 21<sup>st</sup> century due to the increasingly severe and widespread impact of climate change. Recent findings highlight the increasingly intense and more frequent impact of climate change while the increase in GHG is causing the rise of global temperature. This year, we record 400 ppm CO<sub>2</sub> in the atmosphere, the highest level ever since the introduction of measurement tools. This highest ever global concentration of CO<sub>2</sub> is getting closer to the dangerous level. In particular, Asia Pacific region has experienced more frequent and severe flooding, drought and disasters relating to climate change, especially during the last decade. Moreover, Asia will be more vulnerable to flooding, and by 2025, more than 410 million people that account for 85% of the global economy will be vulnerable to flooding disasters along coastal area caused by cyclone and in lowland area caused by typhoon. This high frequency of disasters along with other impact of the climate change such as seawater intrusion in coastal area, widespread of pesticide and disease and so on increase the urgency to address climate change. Alongside, recent flooding in Cambodia which claimed many human lives, destroyed farmer crops and infrastructure, and hindered daily life of the people add new evidence to show the severity of climate change and it is now a matter of great urgency.

In another word, “*climate change now becomes a strategic challenge to development requiring urgent and joint attention*”. More importantly, “*this challenge requires us to urgently create an appropriate climate policy that responds to local, regional and global levels*”.

## **Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,**

We are already aware that climate change is real and can no longer be ignored. In particular, management of environment and climate change is a

new challenge to sustainable economic growth and social development, especially the skyrocketing GHG emission caused by the population growth, urbanization, agricultural extension and intensification, as well as development of transport, power and other sectors. In fact, climate change is no longer a new issue for Cambodia and a lot of work has been done. In particular, we have implemented recommendations provided during the 2<sup>nd</sup> Forum in 2011, reaffirming our firm determination to address challenges caused by climate change.

In this connection, Cambodia has formulated policies and strategic plans on climate change to strengthen institutional capacity, cross-sectoral technological capacity, and other necessary skills to put in place measures for responding to climate change. Alongside, Cambodia has been actively participated in all levels of international dialogue on climate change as well as regional and global effort to address climate change. In addition, necessary institutions have been established along with the adoption of concrete measures, such as the establishment of the National Climate Change Committee, dissemination of climate change at both sub-national and national level and so on. This work is an important step, and climate change will be included in the National Strategic Development Plan and Cambodia Millennium Development Goal beyond 2015 as well as all sectoral development plans of other ministries-institutions.

Cambodia has laid out concrete measures and action plans relating to adaptation to climate change, reduction of GHG emission and green growth reflected in the **Rectangular Strategy-Phase 3** of the Royal Government. In fact, we have been cooperating with related development actors under the framework of **National Policy on Green Growth, National Strategic Plan on Green Growth 2013-2030** through the development of regulatory framework and mechanisms for carbon trading, capacity building, design and implementation of adaptation measures, assessment of the possibility of the use of environmental financing mechanism including settlement of environmental fees and environmental fund, strengthening of the management of protected natural areas including biodiversity, rainfall areas, and wetland area as well as environment and ecosystem monitoring and control mechanism at both national and sub-national levels.

To ensure the effective and in-depth implementation of above policy measures and actions, I call on concerned ministries-institutions and development partners to take systematic decision-making approach on climate change response when formulating development plans to ensure public investment are effective and provide adequate rate of return against

the backdrop of climate change. We need to increase attention on using renewable energy such as hydropower, industrial waste heat, agricultural waste, biomass and so on. Alongside, we need to further implement green growth initiatives to continue underpinning sustainable development. Therefore, we must focus further attention on the implementation of clean development projects, promotion of energy and fuel saving, and protection conservation of forest in protected areas, reserved forest and protected forest.

Moreover, I am of the view that raising public awareness on climate change and its impact is critical to promoting participation from the public. To realize this objective, close collaboration between higher education institutions, research centers, state ministries-institutions, and development partners is needed to embed climate change in educational curricula and research programs and design mechanisms for knowledge sharing, which is an important foundation for policy formulation. This ensures that policies and action plans relating to climate change will be appropriately formulated and regularly updated based on knowledge and reliable research findings.

In this connection, I would like to call on the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport to consider including climate change in educational curricula, both in formal and non-formal systems. In addition, the Royal Government will continue to ensure a favorable environment to attract the private sector to participate in countering climate change through investment in adaptation measures, reduction of GHG emission and so on.

Another important thing to consider is when the level of financing increases so are the numbers of strategies and methods which will require higher spending as well as creating flaws and overlaps hindering our effort tackle climate change. Therefore, in order to achieve high-impact results from climate change responses, we must gradually move from the implementation of separate projects toward program base approach, fund raising and finally budget support. In this spirit, the Ministry of Economy and Finance, Ministry of Planning, and the Supreme National Economic Council must closely cooperate with National Committee on Climate Change to lay out measures to graduate from the implementation of disconnected projects and separate formulation of plans to a more integrated model by including climate change in the budget process and planning. At the same time, the Council for Development of Cambodia also plays a key role in negotiating with donors to ensure that development partners' programs have been systematically

monitored in the framework of climate change and consideration of climate change must be included in those programs if necessary.

Meanwhile, the National Committee on Climate Change and its Secretariat must mobilize and coordinate their partnership to step up the implementation of climate change responses. Overall, the National Committee on Climate Change not only advise on cross-sectoral issues to ministries/institutions of the Royal Government but also coordinate partnership with outsiders and review, monitor and evaluate climate change issues. In the near future, the Secretariat of the National Committee on Climate Change must fulfill all the requirements to be registered and recognized as the national implementing agency in the framework of climate change adaptation fund and consequently green climate fund in order for Cambodia to have the right to receive direct financing from the world climate fund. At the same time, we must provide support to the climate change technical working group at the national level, technical experts and climate change working groups of relevant ministries/institutions so that they can fully utilize expertise on climate change at their respective ministries/institutions and to provide technical advice to members of the National Committee on Climate Change.

- Excellencies, Ladies, and Gentlemen!

In general, Cambodia fully supports the climate change resolution of the United Nations Treaty Framework based on major key principles of ***Joint Responsibility but at Different Levels*** according to their respective capacity and specific demand of developing countries and those countries that are vulnerable to climate change to promote sustainable development. Although Cambodia has limited capacity and resource, we are determined with high political will to prepare ourselves and contribute in the global effort for caring the future of mankind, addressing climate change issues based on major key principles of the United Nations Treaty Framework.

In this spirit, I am of the view that this 3<sup>rd</sup> National Forum on Climate Change will provide a rare opportunity to discuss on many issues such as climate change science, international negotiation, lessons learnt so far, our strategies for the future, knowledge management, research, and financing on climate change related issues. I hope that Excellencies, ladies, and gentlemen will benefit from the discussion with all actors during the next few days, and I also expect that this Forum will come up with realistic recommendations to

support Cambodia's response to climate change toward building a green society with low level of Carbon emission, resilience to climate change, social equity and people living in harmony with the environment.

Once again, I would like reiterate that during the current Legislature, the Royal Government of Cambodia will continue its attention to environmental protection and considers environmental sustainability as the guiding principle for the national strategy on sustainable development and poverty reduction. The Royal Government will strive to implement the National Green Growth initiatives which can strengthen economic growth, green demand, green production, and green businesses in order to balance development needs based on the four key aspects viz. ***society, culture, environment, and economy.***

Finally, along with the opening of the **"3<sup>rd</sup> National Forum on Climate Change and the Announcement on the Official Launch of Cambodia Climate Change Strategic Plan"** I wish Excellencies, ladies, and gentlemen the Four Gems of Buddhist Blessing viz. Longevity, Nobility, Healthiness and Strength.

***Thank you!***