



KINGDOM OF CAMBODIA
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ព្រឹត្តិប័ត្រព័ត៌មាន

Information Bulletin

Issued by Royal Embassy of Cambodia in Washington D.C.

March 22, 2006 Volume 2

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Foreign Aid to Cambodia for 2006

The Consultative Group (CG) meeting on Foreign Aid to Cambodia was held on 2-3 March 2006 at the Cambodian Development Council (CDC) in Phnom Penh. Representatives of the Royal Government of Cambodia, 12 Donor Countries, 6 Observing Countries, 5 International Development Agencies and Private Sectors attended this 8th CG meeting.

The 8th Consultative Group meeting was very successful for Cambodian people. The donor countries have pledged to provide 601 million USD for the fiscal year 2006 to Cambodia to implement the Public Investment Program. Mr. Keat Chhon, Senior Minister, Minister of Economy and Finance stated that the government's proposal to the CG was 513 million USD. However, due to the facts that Donors gave the government some credit for gains against poverty in the past year, stronger economy on the back of agriculture, garment export and tourism, the international donors agreed on 03 March to give Cambodia 601 million USD, larger than requested. This figure therefore indicated the success of CG meeting for Cambodia.

Speaking at the opening of the CG meeting, Prime Minister Hun Sen said the attention would be focused on an urgent development of a multifaceted strategy for the entire domain of agriculture. These include the improvement of irrigation system, water supply resources, the intensive farming methods for increasing products and income in the rural areas, and the improved management of fisheries. The Prime Minister also highlighted the importance of the implementation of land reform which guarantees the land ownership of the poor people, and sustainable management of forest through a comprehensive reform in environment preservation.

The increased pledge for 2006 comes both from multilateral institutions such as World Bank and the United Nations and from individual countries. Among those who pledged, the Asian Development Bank pledged \$88 million, up from \$46 million; the UN, \$58 million, up from \$37 million; the World Bank, \$53 million, up from \$45 million; the US, \$61 million, up from \$44 million; and France, \$39 million, up from \$25 million. Japan's pledge is around \$115 million as it was last time and the European Union pledge is \$164 million (euro 140 million).

The United States pledged US\$61 million for education, health and good governance projects to be carried out by Non-Governmental Organization and civil society groups working in Cambodia.

EU is one of the larger development partners to assist Cambodia by supporting the development process that includes rural development, education, health, economic development, good governance and human rights as well as de-mining.

CAMBODIAN PRIME MINISTER VISIT TO REPUBLIC OF KOREA.

At the invitation of His Excellency **Mr. Roh Moo-hyun**, President of the Republic of Korea, Samdech **Hun Sen**, Prime Minister of the Royal Government of Cambodia, led a high delegation to pay an official visit to the Republic of Korea from **20 to 23 March 2006**.

During his visit, **Samdech Prime Minister** had official talks with His Excellency **Mr. Roh Moo-hyun**, President of the Republic of Korea and received a Honorary Doctor Degree conferred by the Soonchunhyang University.

Both sides signed four documents as follows:

- Arrangement between the Royal Government of Cambodia and the Government of the Republic of Korea concerning a loan from the Economic Development Cooperation Fund.
- Loan Agreement for Krang Ponley Water Resources Development Project between the Royal Government of Cambodia and the EXPORT-IMPORT BANK OF KOREA.
- Memorandum of Understanding on Tourism Cooperation between the Ministry of Tourism of the Kingdom of Cambodia and the Ministry of Culture and Tourism of the Republic of Korea.
- Arrangement between the Ministry of Labor and Vocational Training of the Royal Government of Cambodia and the Ministry of Labor of the Republic of Korea to conclude a Memorandum of Understanding on the sending of Workers to the Republic of Korea under the Employment Permit System.

Vietnamese Prime Minister visit to Cambodia.

A delegation of Vietnamese Government led by Prime Minister **Phan Van khai** arrived at Phnom Penh International Airport on 6 March 2006 for a two-day official visit to Cambodia at the invitation of Prime Minister **Hun Sen**.

Prime Minister Pham Van Khai was accompanied by Minister and Chairman of the Government Office, Minister of health; Minister of culture and information; Minister of transport and communication; and a number of businessmen. The visit is aimed at strengthening friendship with Cambodia, consolidating comprehensive cooperation and enhancing implementation of high-level co-operation agreements between the two countries.

During the meeting on March 6, 2006 Prime Minister Hun Sen and Vietnamese Prime Minister pledged to turn the common border of the two countries into the engine of Cambodia's economy by eliminating tariffs and establishing special economic zones. To increase Cambodian exports, the two leaders said they had agreed to remove all Vietnamese tariffs and quotas on 40 agricultural products. These include Cambodian crops such as pepper, cashew, banana, rubber and sugar cane. There was US\$700 million in trade between the two countries last year and the two leaders expressed their hope that it will increase to \$1 billion in 2006.

Prime Minister Hun Sen urged Vietnamese investors to build two toll bridges in Phnom Penh and announced that Vietnam has agreed to fund a \$40 million business center; to construct "Charey" hospital in the Cambodian capital.

During this visit the Representatives of both countries signed five Agreements that relate to press cooperation; transportation; health care; Vietnamese aid for planting border poles; and trade cooperation.

UN optimistic about Cambodia's economic future

The United Nations was optimistic that Cambodia could leave the ranks of the poorest countries by 2020. Mr. Anwarul Chowdhury, UN Under-Secretary General and High Representative of Least Developed Countries (LDCs), made the announcement on Monday 13 March 2006 during his visit to Phnom Penh, which included a meeting with Prime Minister Hun Sen on Saturday. "There were three factors that had inspired his optimism, namely, the maintenance of peace and stability, the reduction of poverty and a reduction in the prevalence rate of AIDS, which has fallen to 1.9 percent".

Prime Minister Hun Sen announced on February 16, 2006 the goal of the Royal Government that Cambodia would leave the list of LDCs by 2020. This ambitious target followed a report by the World Bank stating that absolute poverty had declined from 47 percent to 35 percent between 1993 and 2004.

The UN official mentioned that the careful management of oil and gas reserves in the Gulf of Thailand was a vital step towards achieving the milestone. Mr. Anwarul Chowdhury praised the Prime Minister's efforts and assured the Cambodian people that the UN would closely cooperate with the country. He also stressed the importance of improving the country's irrigation system to increase agricultural production.

During the meeting with Mr. Chowdhury on March 13, 2006, H.E. Hor Namhong, the Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation warmly welcomed the visit of the UN Representative to Cambodia and expressed high appreciation to the United Nations for pledging assistance to Cambodia in the amount of US\$58 million during the last Consultative Group Meeting held on 2-3 March 2006 in Phnom Penh. He further highlighted that since becoming member of the United Nations Cambodia has maintained good cooperation with the UN and other UN Agencies as well. The Deputy Prime Minister also requested the UN to take all efforts in order to find a solution towards the elimination of all debt of the LDCs.

Mr. Chowdhury emphasized that Cambodia is a good partner of the United Nations and the UN will continue to assist Cambodia, especially the need of Cambodia in the area of water management which is very important for agricultural development. He also supported the request relating to debt issue and promised to deal carefully with this matter for the benefit of Cambodia and the LDCs as well.

Placement among the LDCs is based on three criteria, according to Anwarul Chowdhury. These are an annual per capita GDP of less than 750 U.S. dollars; low levels of health, education and literacy in the country; and economic indicators based on agricultural production and exports. Cambodia's per capita GDP was 320 dollars in 2004.

Japanese Aid for Human Security Projects in Cambodia

The signing ceremony between the Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation and the Ambassador of Japan to Cambodia was held on 17 March 2006 to receive Japanese additional assistance in the amount of US\$3.8 million for de-mining action in Cambodia. Since 1992 Japanese grant aid for de-mining action in Cambodia has reached US\$46 million.

Japanese government has decided also to provide US\$894,512 in grant aid to Cambodia for 5 projects relating to human security. The agreements on this grant aid were signed by the Ambassador of Japan to Cambodia and the Governor of Phnom Penh Municipality; and other 4 Representatives of project-implementing institutions on March 7, 2006 at the Embassy of Japan in Phnom Penh. These 5 projects are as follows:

- 1- Provide 10 secondhand waste collection vehicles for using in Phnom Penh Municipality, in the amount of US\$59,124.
- 2- Provide US\$619,933 for supporting humanitarian de-mining action in Cambodia.
- 3- Provide US\$39,600 for constructing one primary school in Pusat province.
- 4- Children education program of Angkor Hospital in Siemreap Province
- 5- Health education program and capacity-building for staff of community health center in Siemreap province.

Japanese Ambassador stated that since 1992 Japan has provided assistance for 363 projects relating to human security that have been carried out in Cambodia for assisting the poor people.

KOICA Development Assistance to Kampong Cham Province

On 09 March 2006, a Korean delegation led by Mr. Lee Hyun Ju, Executive Director of Korean International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) paid a courtesy visit to H.E. Hor Namhong, Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation.

During this meeting, the Deputy Prime Minister welcomed the visit of Korean delegation to Cambodia and expressed his deep appreciation to the Government of Korea as well as Korean International Cooperation Agency for the aid provided to Cambodia.

Mr. Ju said that the purpose of this visit is looking for development projects which are beneficial to both countries. Mr. Ju also expresses his gratitude to the Deputy Prime Minister for his support and encouragement given to KOICA staff working in Cambodia.

The Deputy Prime Minister emphasized that KOICA has successfully assisted the development in two communes of Bathey District in Kampong Cham province and suggested KOICA to continue its development assistance to the whole district of Batheay, especially the assistance for flood-monitoring project and master plan for irrigation system. He informed the Delegation that the 10th anniversary of diplomatic relation between Cambodia and Republic of Korea will be held in July 2006.

Mr. Ju reaffirmed that Cambodia is a good development partner. Republic of Korea will continue to provide more assistance to Cambodia and Kampong Cham province will deserve further more assistance for its continued development.

Cambodia destroys more surplus weapons

The 46th Flame of Peace Weapons destruction ceremony was held Thursday in Kratie province, North of Cambodia with more than 3,000 surplus weapons being destroyed.

Cambodia has regularly been destroying surplus weapons that have either been confiscated as illegal weapons from the civilian population or declared surplus weapons by the Ministry of National Defense.

So far, the total number of weapons destroyed in Cambodia since May 1999 will be almost 185,000. EU ASAC, the program of the European Union to assist Cambodia in small arms management, have given financial and technical assistance for the destruction of over 130,000 of these weapons.

Between 2001 and 2005 all small arms and light weapons (SALW) in Cambodia's six military regions of the Army as well as those of the Royal Gendarmerie were registered in a centralized computer database and securely stored with the assistance of EU ASAC.

Similar projects are being implemented in 2006 with the Royal Air Force and the Royal Navy.

Following the destruction of 5,100 weapons in Kratie in July 2001, this would be the second major Flame of Peace ceremony in the province.



UN World Food Program welcomes aid to Cambodia

On March 10, 2006 the Office of the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) based in Cambodia welcomed the donation of Saudi Arabia in a budget of US\$444,000 to purchase 1,034 metric tons of rice for supporting WFP projects in Cambodia. Mr. Thomas J. Keusters, the Country Director of WFP Office in Cambodia expressed his high appreciation to the government of Saudi Arabia for selecting WFP Cambodia as the first country to donate to outside of the Muslim world. He further added that this support will not only allow WFP to improve the nutritional status of the Cambodian rural poor, but also encourage farmers to increase their production through the development and improvement of provincial infrastructure.

Since 1999, WFP has been providing food assistance to Cambodian children in many primary schools in rural areas through its “school feeding” project. Nutritional status and school feeding participation of 544,000 children have improved through the support of WFP Cambodia.

The “food for work” project is one of WFP’s largest projects targeting household food security. The purpose of this project is to offer food to the local people who work for establishing and rehabilitation of infrastructure such as roads, ponds, dams and irrigation system as well, in their rural communities. This project is significant contribution to the process of rural development, family food security and poverty reduction.



Cambodia's Khmer Rouge Trials

The Khmer Rouge leaders will face trials in accusing of genocide arising from their rule from 1975 until the regime was overthrown in 1979. The Khmer Rouge drove people out of Cambodia's cities to work at forced-labor collective farms as it attempted to impose a communist agrarian state. An estimated 1.7 million people died during its rule.

The UN General Assembly in May 2003 approved the plan to create tribunals within the national court structure of Cambodia that will contain international and Cambodian judges. Cambodia will establish one court to conduct the trials and one to hear appeals.

The 2003 agreement between Cambodia and the UN provides for three Cambodian and two international judges to preside over what will be called the Trial Chamber and a Supreme Court Chamber with four Cambodian and three international judges. The Trial Court and a Supreme Court within the Cambodian legal system will investigate those most responsible for crimes and serious violations of Cambodian and international law between 17 April 1975 and 6 January 1979.

A three-year budget for the trials is about \$56.3 million, of which the UN will pay \$43 million and \$13.3 million is earmarked to come from the Cambodian government. The UN Security Council has agreed that the funding will come from voluntary contributions.

On 08 March, 2006, the UN announced that the Secretary-General Kofi Annan submitted a list of 12 international judges and legal experts to Cambodia's Prime Minister as nominees to serve in the Extraordinary Chambers in the courts of Cambodia for the prosecution of crimes committed during the period of Democratic Kampuchea. The agreement provides that five international judges will be appointed by the Supreme Council of Magistracy of Cambodia from Annan's list.

On 14 March 2006, the United Nations and Cambodia's Government signed agreements putting in place the legal foundations for the administrative set-up and operations of the Extraordinary Chambers to try Khmer Rouge leaders. A UN spokesman said the two agreements established the "last legal instruments needed on the logistics and administrative sides before the trials take place". One of the agreements concerns supplementary arrangements on the facilities, utilities and services the Cambodian Government would provide for the premises of those Chambers; the other deals with safety and security arrangements.