

## **Intervention**

**Hon Chheang Vun**, Chairman of the Commission on Foreign Affairs, International Cooperation, Information and Media, National Assembly of the Kingdom of Cambodia, at the Ninth Plenary Session of the Asian Parliamentary Assembly, Siem Reap, November 28 - December 1, 2016

### **Respect to:**

- **Honorable Dr. Nguon Nhel, Chairman of the 9th Plenary Session of APA**
- **Honorable Heads and Members of APA delegation of APA Member of Parliament**
- **His Excellency Secretary General of APA**
- **Excellency, Ladies and Gentlemen**

It is a great honor and pleasure to lead the Cambodian delegation today in the overall debate on the occasion of the Ninth Plenary Session of the Asian Parliamentary Assembly.

Please allow me to express my appreciation to the Honorable Dr. Nguon Nhel, chair of the organizing committee, who has smoothly arranged this event. Our theme is to promote sustainable peace and development. It reflects a strong commitment to our determined role in collaborating and cooperating in building a culture of peace and contributing to national, regional and global development.

### **Honorable Members, Ladies and Gentlemen**

Peace is required by families, nations, regions and the world. It does not exist alone so building and keeping the peace are at our own risk.

Peace will prevail if we have tolerance, mutual understanding and no prejudice, coming together for political, social and economic stability with no internal interference and with respect for the privileges of member states. Moreover, peace acquired results in national unity and reconciliation, stepping towards unity and reconciliation with neighbors, the region and the world.

In New York last year, the United Nations highlighted that ensuring peace was a major goal in the Post-2015 Development Agenda to build sustainable societies and create prosperity and equity for all people by 2030. This reflects the

paramount need of both the nations and people of Asia, who are hungry for sustainable peace and development.

Cambodia is very proud of achieving remarkable progress in maintaining full peace, political stability, security, better public order and rapid economic growth over the past two decades. This is the result of efforts by our wise leaders, particularly Samdech Techo Hun Sen, prime minister of the Kingdom of Cambodia, with the help of our neighbors and development partners.

How did we get to where we are today? Before achieving national reconciliation, peace and development, Cambodia experienced four decades of internal conflict with civil war followed by a genocidal regime in which our society fell under unfriendly influence from outside as part of the confrontation between Cold War superpowers. Cambodians were not only the victims of war but also suffered from illegal economic sanctions by some countries.

On Friday we commemorate the thirty-eighth anniversary of the founding of the National Salvation Front on December 2, 1978. The front has been active in protecting and building the country since then. However, the loss, suffering and great tragedy of the Cambodian people still linger. The unforgettable memories and lessons remind us all of the spirit of national unity, patriotism and common obligation in building and maintaining peace, which we achieved only with difficulty and countless sacrifices.

Maintaining peace has come with ensuring diversity of opportunity for the people, the pillars for restoring and developing the national economy. With strong political leadership, Cambodia has also been participating in world peace-keeping efforts. Participating in this parliamentary forum today is real evidence of the spirit of peace in which a regional legislative body holds sway over armed confrontation between member states. While maintaining peace, ensuring and applying democracy in conformity with the circumstances and real environment of society are important ingredients for contributing to sustainable development.

Achieving the sustainable development agenda requires close partnerships between the public and private sectors as well as development partners and civil society. These partnerships should be based on non-interference and common values, visions and goals that allow us to study and understand each other clearly

in order to unite and cooperate with one another to address local and global challenges in a spirit of responsibility and efficiency aimed at maintaining harmony for all.

### **Honorable Members, Ladies and Gentlemen**

Cambodia has integrated its economy into regional and international frameworks in a responsible manner. With strong commitment, the government has developed the economy remarkably over the past two decades. Cambodia is among only eight countries liberated from war to achieve rapid economic growth. In terms of improved social indicators, we rank first in the Asia-Pacific region. We also achieved the Millennium Development Goals of the United Nations ahead of the deadline set for 2015. Having recently graduated from the class of least-developed countries, Cambodia is now a low-income developing country and we aim to be a country with medium average income by 2030.

Cambodia has been embracing national reconciliation towards real peace — free from violence and armed conflicts. Through assemblies like ours, we are optimistic that peace will prevail in Asia and the rest of the world. Cambodia will continue to actively take part in extending and maintaining and long-lasting peace. Without national reconciliation, there will be no peace — and without peace, there will be no development. In this sense, Cambodia will endorse every initiative leading to national reconciliation and regional peace for ensuring sustainable development.

I hope that peace and sustainable development will continue to be our goal, particularly among top world leaders.

Finally, on behalf of Cambodian delegation, I would like to express by sincere appreciation for your discussions and participation.

Thank you.