

KINGDOM OF CAMBODIA
PERMANENT MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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Statement

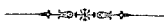
By

His Excellency Sea Kosal

Ambassador and Permanent Representative
of the Kingdom of Cambodia
to the United Nations

at the General Debate of the 68th Session
of the United Nations General Assembly

New York, 01 October 2013



Mr. President,

Mr. Secretary General,

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

1. At the outset, allow me to warmly congratulate His Excellency John William Ashe of Antigua and Barbuda, on your election as the President of the 68th Session of the United Nations General Assembly. My delegation has full confidence that under your presidency the new session will proceed to a successful conclusion in an efficient and effective manner. You can rest assured of Cambodia's full support and cooperation throughout your presidency.

2. I would also like to take this opportunity to extend my high appreciation to His Excellency Vuk Jeremic, President of the 67th session, for his wise leadership and relentless efforts in guiding us to many outstanding achievements during the last session.

Mr. President,

3. This year session's theme, "Post 2015 Development Agenda: Setting the Stage" is so timely as we have less than 1,000 days to reach the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) targets by December 2015. The Post 2015 Development Agenda will be one of the UN's most ambitious projects to date where all the nations will be called to galvanize actions to help the world live up to our pledges to end poverty, educate children, empower women and provide health services for all.

4. While the overall picture is encouraging, we must also recognize that the progress in MDGs attainment has been uneven and insufficient, and vary from country to country. Many developing countries still face many obstacles to achieve all the MDGs in the allocated time frame of 2015, being vulnerable to the global financial crisis and challenges by the debt burden and the unmet official development assistance (ODA) commitments. Poverty is still widespread, with more than a billion people living in extreme poverty. Inequality continues to persist at global, national and sub-national levels and among specific populations. Food insecurity still affects millions. High maternal and child mortality rates are still seen in too many places throughout the developing world. Environmental sustainability is under threat, with accelerating growth in global greenhouse gas emissions and biodiversity loss.

5. It is high time for donor countries to fulfill their commitments concerning ODA. In addition, international trade expansion can also contribute to the promotion of economic growth and poverty reduction. Debt relief is also one of the various financial assistance instruments which could increase the ability of developing countries to eradicate poverty. Furthermore, facilitating transfer of technology by developed countries to developing world plays a critical role in helping them in their development efforts and accelerates their economic growth.

6. In the case of Cambodia, MDGs are firmly imbedded as the cornerstone of the country's development policies and strategies. From a nation whose entire population once faced abject poverty and hunger after emerging from protracted wars and genocide in 1979, Cambodia now has the number of its people living below national poverty line drop steadily from 47.8% in 2007 to 19.8% in 2011 based on a redefined approach of measurement. Therefore, Cambodia is well on track if not well ahead in attaining its poverty reduction goal of 19.5%. In fact, Cambodia received a UN Award for reducing hunger by half well ahead of the MDGs target.

7. Cambodia is well positioned to meet some of its Millennium Development Goals (CMDGs) on schedule by end 2015, thanks not only to the government's correct approach and firm commitment but also to sustained peace and political stability. A few notable examples are the remarkable decline of poverty rate and success in combatting HIV/AIDS, malaria and other communicable diseases.

8. In controlling the HIV/AIDS, Cambodia has made great stride toward HIV prevalence, progressively reduced to 0.6% in 2012 from 2.4% in 1998. This proud accomplishment was acknowledged by the United Nations through its Award to Cambodia on 19 September 2010. Working hand in hand with all relevant stakeholders Cambodia developed and adopted its Third National Strategic Plan for Comprehensive and Multi-Sectoral Response to HIV/AIDS 2011-2015 with the goals to achieve the Three Zeros Strategies namely: Zero new HIV Infection, Zero AIDS related Death, and Zero Discrimination in order to assure Zero duplication, Zero incoherence and Zero waste.

9. On the Malaria front, Cambodia attaches high priority to tackling the high rates of morbidity and mortality. In response to the appeal of the World Health Organization (WHO) and International Agencies for the global elimination of malaria beyond 2030, Cambodia developed the National Strategic Plan for Elimination of Malaria 2011-2025.

Mr. President,

10. With the advent of the MDGs, we observe that sustained, inclusive and equitable economic growth in developing countries is a key requirement for eradicating poverty and hunger and achieving the MDGs. In this context, my delegation highly appreciates the United Nations High Level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post 2015 Development Agenda for its relentless efforts to produce the report entitled "A New Global Partnership: Eradicate Poverty and Transform Economies through Sustainable Development", which sets out a universal agenda to eradicate extreme poverty from the face of the earth by 2030, and deliver on the promise of sustainable development. The report calls upon the world to rally around a new Global Partnership that offers hope and a role to every person in the world.

11. Cambodia is of the firm view that the Post 2015 Development Agenda should carry forward the spirit of the Millennium Declaration with:

- (a) a balanced integration of the economic, social, and environmental dimensions for sustainable development;
- (b) a determination to finish the work started out in the MDGs, particularly an aim to eradicate extreme poverty;
- (c) an emphasis on inclusive, equitable and sustainable development and economic growth aiming to effectively address inequalities and the factors underpinning them;
- (d) a focus not only on global dimension, but also on regional dimension of development while taking into account the particular challenges of least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States.

12. In line with the UN principles for sustainable development, Cambodia has adopted its national “Strategic Plan on Green Development for 2013-2030”, which aims at achieving economic and social development in a sustainable manner, while at the same time protecting the environment, through the efficient use of raw materials and natural resources, energy savings, waste minimization, clean development and green preservation.

13. Cambodia will reinforce and broaden the management of natural resources to strike a “balance between development and conservation”, by ensuring: (1) green cover, forest and wildlife conservation; (2) the sustainability of fishery resources; and (3) the sustainability of the eco-system, so that the quality of land and sustainability of water sources could be improved.

14. At the regional level, Cambodia is pleased with the progress toward achieving the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) in 2015. We are encouraged by the rapid development in the sectors under the AEC such as finance, energy, industry, information and communications technology, agriculture, tourism and transport. The steady implementation of cooperation initiatives and measures will facilitate the flow of trade, investment and people in the region as well as narrowing the development gap among ASEAN Member States, which would enhance ASEAN's competitiveness.

15. Cambodia welcomed ASEAN's continued engagement with its dialogue partners in its efforts to strengthen economic integration and linkages in the region. Already we noted with satisfaction the positive outcomes of the 1st Meeting of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership Trade Negotiating Committee (RCEP-TNC) in Bandar Seri Begawan in May 2013. The ultimate success of the RCEP will lead to a modern, comprehensive, high-quality and mutually beneficial economic partnership agreement that will become a platform for future trade and investment integration in Asia and the rest of the world.

Mr. President,

16. All of us are deeply concern at the alarming pace of climate change, which pose unprecedented threats to humanity and jeopardize our efforts to eradicate poverty. People around the globe suffer daily from the impact of global warming, sea-level rise, more frequent and intense storm, flood and drought caused by climate change which ultimately poses a threat to food security, sustainable development and territorial integrity.

17. Recent trends indicate that while greenhouse gas emissions is rising, the prospects for the reduction or at least stabilization of CO₂ - the main cause of global warming - have been gradually fading, and acute conflicts of interest among industrialized, emerging and developing countries remain a persistent obstacle.

18. We have high hope that the UN Climate Change Conference (COP-19), which will be held in November 2013 in Warsaw will bring consensus and will ratify the 2nd commitment period of Kyoto Protocol by 2015. We also hope that the COP-19 will make progress in climate financing to realize the goal of mobilizing \$100 billion a year by 2020. Climate finance is an investment for the future and must not be constrained by today's economic austerity. Therefore, it is absolutely important that developed countries deliver on their commitments. Cambodia highly values the developed countries' continued commitment to provide funds and technology to help developing nations tackle climate change in accordance with the UN principles of "common but differentiated responsibilities".

19. As a member of ASEAN, we are fully engaged in the implementation of the ASEAN Climate Change Initiative and the ASEAN Action Plan on Joint Response to Climate Change. We recognized the importance of water resources preservation and management for sustainable development. We agreed on the need for enhanced cooperation in this area within ASEAN and other sub-regional frameworks, with a view to preventing floods and droughts in the region, which could affect agricultural productivity and regional food security.

Mr. President,

20. Currently, the global and regional peace and security are being threatened by conflicts, armed confrontation and transnational organized crimes which take a heavy toll on many development efforts. Against this backdrop, Cambodia welcomes the signing of the Arms Trade Treaty, the first ever international treaty to regulate the trade of conventional weapons. This Treaty would be an effective deterrent against excessive and destabilizing arms flows, particularly in conflict-prone regions. Cambodia will soon add itself to the current list of 84 signatories and urges other nations to join them and together push for the required 50 ratifications and implementation of the Treaty so that

it could make a real difference in people's lives.

21. At the regional level, Cambodia underscores the importance of preserving the Southeast Asian region as a Nuclear-Weapon-Free-Zone and free of all other weapons of mass destruction as enshrined in the Treaty of Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone (SEANWFZ) and the ASEAN Charter. Along with other nine ASEAN Member States, Cambodia continues to encourage the Nuclear Weapon States (NWS) to sign the Protocol to accede to the SEANWFZ Treaty, without reservations, as early as possible. We also encouraged the NWS to provide full support for the ASEAN-sponsored UN General Assembly Resolution on the SEANWFZ Treaty at the this 68th Session.

22. The presence of landmines and other explosive remnants of war (ERW) in the soil continues to pose constant threats to human security and safety and hinders national development to some of the ASEAN Member States. Recognizing this serious threat to human security, ASEAN Leaders decided in Phnom Penh, in November 2012, to establish the ASEAN Regional Mine Action Center (ARMAC) to be based in Cambodia. Since early this year, ASEAN has been working on the modalities of ARMAC and planned to finalize these modalities by October of this year.

23. On its part, Cambodia has spared no efforts to address the human security threats, in particular incorporating demining and clearance of other unexploded ordnance as its additional MDGs. In fact, substantial progress has been made in realizing this goal, as demonstrated by a sharp decline in the number of mine explosion accidents, which decreased from over 300 cases in 2008 to 186 in 2012. By hosting and chairing the 11th Meeting of the States Parties of the Ottawa Treaty at the end of 2011, Cambodia had underlined its strong commitment to work toward a world free of landmines and UXOs. In addition, since 2006, Cambodia has made its contribution to the UN Peacekeeping Operations by sending its peacekeepers specialized in mine clearance, to a number of countries in Africa and the Middle East, such as Sudan, South Sudan, Central African Republic, Chad and Lebanon, as well as to Mali very soon.

Mr. President,

24. On the situation in the Korean Peninsula, we welcome the positive developments between North and South Korea which, I hope, would lead to significant improvement of inter-Korean relations, defusing tensions and building trust, as well as the resumption of the Six-Party Talks. We encourage the DPRK to comply fully with its obligations to all relevant UNSC Resolutions and to cease its nuclear program. It would promote a favorable and conducive atmosphere toward achieving the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula and the peaceful solution of the Korean Peninsula problems.

25. We reaffirmed our support for the Palestinian people's just demand for a sovereign and independent State of Palestine and a two-state solution to the Palestine-Israel issue, whereby both countries and peoples can live side by side in peace. We called on all

parties to make efforts for the resumption of meaningful peace talks and remove obstacles related thereto. We urge for dialogue and restraint and peaceful transition in Egypt.

26. In regard to the Syria situation, we condemn in the strongest terms the use of chemical weapons and all human rights violations in Syria. Cambodia welcome the Resolution 2118 (2013) adopted by the Security Council on 27 September 2013 to destroy Syria's chemical weapons. We support the ongoing efforts of the international community, notably the United Nations, to promote a peaceful and viable solution to the situation in the country.

27. Cambodia calls for an end to the unilateral embargo against Cuba that has caused for many decades untold sufferings to the people of Cuba.

28. We express serious concern over the extensive forms of sexual violence inflicted to innocent women, children and even men in armed conflicts around the world. My country endorsed the Declaration of Commitment to End Sexual Violence in Conflict launched on 24 September at a side event of the General Debate of the august General Assembly.

Mr. President,

29. Since the establishment of the UN in 1945, the global situation has changed so dramatically that there is a call for strengthening global diplomacy. In this context, the reform of the UN should be comprehensive and cover not only the Security Council, but also other UN organs, in order to maintain their relevance and legitimacy as an effective global governance institution to cope with the present world's reality.

30. The General Assembly should be more empowered so that it can play a leading role to strengthen the wider UN system, to improve the international governance, and to enhance multilateralism. At the same time, the ECOSOC should also be strengthened to effectively coordinate international cooperation and efforts to tackle social and economic challenges. The Security Council should be expanded in both permanent and non-permanent membership in an equitable manner so that it represents both the developed and the developing countries. There is an acute need for a comprehensive reform of the Council where real negotiations and compromises can take place.

Thank you!