

THE 8th AIFOCOM MEETING

OPENING SPEECH BY

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PRESIDENT OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF CAMBODIA

AND PRESIDENT OF AIPA

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the Kingdom of Cambodia

- Honorable Post Dr. Cheam Yeap, Member of the Standing Committee of the National Assembly of Cambodia and Chairman of the Cambodian National AIPA Group and Permanent Vice-Chairman of the Organizing Committee of the 32nd General Assembly of AIPA
- Honorable Antonio V. Cuenco, Secretary General of AIPA
- Honorable Heads of delegations and delegates of AIPA member countries and special observer country
- Honorable members of the National Assembly and the Senate
- Their Excellencies Representatives of the ASEAN Senior Officials on Drugs Matters and the Cambodian National Authority Against Drugs
- Distinguished guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

First of all, on behalf of the National Assembly of the Kingdom of Cambodia, I would like to express my warmest welcome to Your Excellencies Parliamentarians of the AIPA member countries, special

observer country and delegates for your attending of the 8th Meeting of the AIPA Facts Finding Committee to Combat the Drug Menace(AIFOCOM-8).

I am very happy and honored to be here presiding over this significant meeting. This meeting will raise challenging issues, which are the common concern of the ASEAN and the region as well as the world over, to be discussed and to work out the efficient strategic ways and means to prevent, manage, protect and combat the drug menace which has affected and continued to act on the socio-economy, development, security, social order, especially the well-being and the future of the next generations.

As *His Excellency Post Dr. Cheam Yeap* already mentioned in his welcome statement, since the Parliament of Cambodia was entrusted with the mission to be the host of the 32nd AIPA General Assembly, the National Assembly and the Senate of Cambodia have organized two meetings. The first one was on “the Accelerating the Achievements of the MDG-5 through the Role of Women Parliamentarians” and the second one was on “the Role of the Parliamentarians on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of the Migrant Workers in ASEAN”. The third meeting that we all are attending today takes into consideration the key topic which is the main common concern of our region. It does not only highlight the National Assembly of Cambodia's responsibility, but it also shows the commitment of the National Assembly of Cambodia to proactively carry its mission out with more substantial issues during the 32nd AIPA General Assembly held in the coming months. Furthermore, the meeting will also positively reflect the common efforts of AIPA in its fighting against the drug menace in order to attain the ASEAN’s vision: a drug-free ASEAN Community by 2015.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

As we all know, illicit drugs are one of the greatest challenging issues in the region and the world, due to their destructive ravage exerted on individuals, families, communities and the whole society, especially the young generations who are, according to Cambodian Proverb, the healthy young bamboo shoots give strong grow-up bamboos. According to the 2010 UNODC reports, the flow of “Opium, Cocaine” in the western countries was greatly decreased, but it has noticeably risen in the developing countries where the latter are used to be the place of drugs distribution and trafficking. This rising flow becomes a very complicated problem to be solved. On top of that, the “amphetamine/ATS” and the other related narcotics have been

upgraded to the second rank for the drug users. This makes the prevention and the combat of those drugs become the crucial concern, because they are locally produced, illegally and broadly circulated in the region. Besides, the chemical ingredients for those illegal drugs are easily obtaining from the market and the drug users are also of great numbers. Indeed, in the ASEAN region, the drug users of the “amphetamine” extracted from the pseudo-medical substances and in “crystalline form” have visibly been increased.

In responding to these problems, several countries in the region and the world have taken different measures and actions against them as being previously mentioned by *His Excellency Post Dr. Cheam Yeap* such as the creation of the legal frameworks, the ratification of international conventions and the signing of bilateral and multilateral Memorandums of Understanding in addition to the national laws aiming at preventing and combating the drug menace, and the establishment of national mechanisms and institutions for the sub-region, region and the world at large to solve the said problems. In parallel to those measures, the present methods of preventing and combating the drug menace are becoming vital for the world in terms of responsiveness, efficiency and effectiveness.

The Royal Government of Cambodia, under the wise leadership of Samdech Akka Moha Senapadei Techo **HUN SEN**, Prime Minister, with the support of Lok Chum-Teav Dr. BUN RANY HUN SEN, President of the Cambodian Red Cross and the prominent national Leader, has **its** strongly unwavering commitment and responsibility in **its** comprehensive and multi-sector mechanisms to implement the national strategy against drugs in with the sub-region, region and the world at large. Indeed, Cambodia has done and is implementing her national plan of drug demand and supply reduction, her strengthening of the capacity of law enforcement officers, her treatment and rehabilitation of the drug addicts.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen

We have realized that illicit drugs are the greatest and the worst problem for humanity. Even though there has been encouragement in the accomplishment as the result obtained from the positive cooperation, the protection and the fight against drugs menace, the danger and the consequences of the illicit drugs still remain the challenging issues for the ASEAN Member States. The illegal drug trafficking and the use of chemical substances for drug production remain the common concern for many

countries. Even though a great number of different drug syndicates are not located in the ASEAN region, the illegal drugs trafficking is still the main challenge for the national authorities against drugs and the governments of the ASEAN countries. Therefore, in order to know the characteristic of the said danger, the ASEAN member countries have to reinforce their cooperation programs to combat the drug menace. The efficacy of those programs have not been clearly formatted due to the different drug laws and policies in the ASEAN Member countries.

This 8th AIFOCOM meeting will provide a great opportunity for AIPA member countries to discuss and share experiences and skills, particularly taking more into account in the harmonizing drug laws focusing on capture and seizure of assets and facilities used in committing drug crimes, and the control of reactants and precursors. This requires the national intervention in the improvement of the demand reduction in order to achieve the commitment of ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly.

In order to achieve their goal and vision of a free-drug ASEAN Community by 2015, AIPA member countries should:

- Consider any problems that any ASEAN country faces as their common problems and concerns to be resolved together.
- Continue to strengthen and promote regional and global cooperation in order to prevent, eradicate and combat drug smuggling, production, distribution and the use of illicit drugs and addictive substances.
- Further promote the closer cooperation with ASEAN Senior Officials on Drug Matters (ASOD) through the regular and in time sharing of mutual experiences
- Continue to review the possibility and procedure in order to urge the establishment of the AIPA technical working group as fast as possible to enable the group to have the ability and capacity to cooperate with the ASOD and to review the possibility to proceed to the harmonization of the drug laws in the whole region.
- Continue to enhance the publication and education on the impact of drugs, and to improve the capacity building given to the law enforcement officers, so that they can effectively enforce the laws on drugs.

- Continue to effectively and efficiently strengthen the implementation of the drug laws.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I hope that Your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen who are Members of AIPA, Representatives of ASOD, and technical professionals will actively participate in the exchanging and sharing of views and experiences, information, good practices and legislative measures and the best methods of prevention and combat of the drug abuses together with the strengthening of the legal frameworks and policies of your respective countries in order to upgrade the effectiveness of the AIFOCOM towards building a drug-free ASEAN Community in the future.

Once again, on behalf of the National Assembly and the Senate of the Kingdom of Cambodia and on my own-self as president of the AIPA, I would like to reiterate my sincere thanks and profound gratitude to Your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen for your valuable time in attending this most important meeting and may I wish Your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen the four blessings: longevity, good health, great strength and full of happiness, as well as your successful deliberations. Please enjoy your stay in Cambodia.

Finally, I am happy to appoint Honorable Senator Chhit Kim Yeat to chair the 8th AIFOCOM Meeting and I declare it open.

Thank you!