On behalf of the Royal Government, I would like to express my most sincere congratulation for the successful creation of this Defense Strategic Review. It reflects the determination of the Ministry of National Defense and the High Command Headquarters to implement the Royal Government’s defense policy more successfully.

I fully believe that this Defense Strategic Review 2002 will be an effective instrument for the successful implementation of the Royal Government’s reform policy, particularly the reform of the Armed Forces. It demonstrates the efforts made by the Royal Cambodian Armed Forces in building its reputation internationally. It also represents Cambodia’s commitment in promoting transparency and building confidence in security matters with all nations in the region.

I totally support the measures and recommendations laid down by this document and request that it becomes widely understood within the RCAF and that it be released publicly in national and international circles.

Hun Sen
Prime Minister
The establishment of a realistic defense policy has inevitably encountered difficulties, but what is infinitely more difficult is the implementation of this policy to achieve ultimate success. This has been to experience to date regarding the implementation of the principles of the White Paper 2000.

The Defense Strategic Review 2002 contains further guidelines for fulfilling the roles and tasks of the Royal Cambodian Armed Forces (RCAF) productively and according to the current and future security environments. The Outlook has been developed based on studies, research and analyses on the evolution of the security situation and results already achieved in military reform. In addition, the presence of this strategic document is evidence of the firm commitment of the Royal Government of Cambodia to build transparency and confidence in national and international circles regarding national security policy.

Two years have passed since the official launch of the White Paper 2000. Although a number of principles, especially those in the military reform process, have been and are being carried out successfully, there have been many other major tasks that the RCAF must place greater emphasis on to completely achieve the defense policy objectives of the Royal Government.
Recent changes in the world security and domestic political, economic and security developments have encouraged many nations to adopt an urgent review of their strategic objectives. Despite that it has not been affected directly by the impacts of changes in world security, Cambodia views that this is an appropriate time for it to review its defense policy, especially to determine new priorities for strategic defense objectives and providing important recommendations for the successful implementation of the Defense White Paper 2000. This Defense Strategic Review is a significant tool in this regard.

Tea Banh         Sisowath Sirirath
Co-Ministers of National Defense
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Front Cover:  The Entrance of the Preah Vihear Temple.
The Preah Vihear Temple was built by the Khmer Kings from 9th
to 12th century. The most active construction period was in early
11th century under King Suryavarman I.
1. International Security Outlook

The international security situation has changed dramatically since the September 11th terrorist attacks in New York and Washington. The world is focusing on a common threat, that is, the fight against international terrorism. Almost everywhere, terrorism has become the top item in every debate. However, methods and ways to be used against this terrible crime remain an unresolved issue.

The operational tempo of the war in Afghanistan to apprehend Osama bin Laden and destroy Al-qaida terrorist networks has slightly eased, but this is not the end of that kind of war. The policy of Bush’s administration to root out global terrorist networks and to define “the Axis of Evil” has possibly proliferated the war against terrorism into other regions. The deployment of US troops in southern Philippines to help the government of that country to destroy Abu Sayyaf rebels, believed to be linked to Al-qaida, is evidence of the spread of the war against terrorism into Southeast Asia. On the other hand, the concern over possible nuclear, biological and chemical attacks on American and some allied targets have contributed to increasing insecurity and is affecting global economic development.

In the meantime, the most recent political and military confrontation between India and Pakistan has complicated the security situation in South Asia. The suicide attack on the Indian Parliament in December 2001, the recent repeated attacks on Indian military bases and the ongoing dispute over Kashmir have increased military tension between India and Pakistan to a dangerous level. Despite these tensions being eased as a result of willingness from the two rivals leaders to solve the problem diplomatically rather than through military force, together with diplomatic intervention by some countries, the possibility of war between the two countries, stemming from the unresolved Kashmir dispute and involving the use of nuclear weapons, remains a serious threat to the whole region.

The bloody conflict between Israel and Palestine is deteriorating and will be difficult to resolve. Violence and retaliations against each other involving the Israeli Defense Force and suicide attacks by the Palestinian militants are destroying human lives and properties relentlessly. Despite support from Arab countries for the peace initiative by the Saudi Arabia’s Crown Prince (wanting Israel
to respect the land occupied in 1967 in exchange for recognition of the State of Israel by Arab nations), the process towards declaring the Palestine State and the demand by the United States to remove Mr. Yasser Arafat from his position as the Palestinian leader have caused disagreements in efforts of finding lasting peace for the Middle Eastern region.

Relations between China and the United States have been better than any other time since the events of September 11th. Despite recent bitterness (accidental bombing of the Chinese Embassy in Belgrade and the aircraft collision over the South China Sea), the United States support for China to enter the World Trade Organization (WTO), the lifting of annual review on Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) for China, China’s support for the war against terrorism and the recognition of one-China policy by the United States, have improve relations between the two countries.

At the end of May 2002, the United States and Russia opened a new historic chapter to end the Cold War legacy through the establishment of the NATO-Russia Council. One of the objectives is cooperation between the former rivals in the fight against global terrorism. Another positive development for global security was the agreement signed between the two leaders in Moscow at the end of May 2002. The two powers have agreed to further reduce nuclear weapons by two-thirds within 10 years. Also in May, in Kuala Lumpur, most of ASEAN leaders agreed to efforts to combat terrorism, though some differences remain in the establishment of anti-terrorist laws in each country. Three ASEAN countries, Malaysia, Indonesia and the Philippines, have signed an agreement on Information Exchange and Establishment of Communication Procedures aiming mainly at combating terrorism and preventing transnational crimes. Cambodia acceded to the above-mentioned agreement in early August 2002.

Despite considerable progress in cooperation to prevent and deal with transnational crimes, these crimes remain a concern particularly in the Asia-Pacific region. The regional security has been plagued by new occurrences of terrorist activities in Southeast Asia, the spread of drug trafficking, weapon smuggling, kidnapping, money laundering and so on. Also, security of maritime communications and trade through the Strait of Malacca and the
South China Sea remains a key issue on the agenda of the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF).

2. Relations with Neighboring Countries

As described in Chapter 3 of the Defense White Paper 2000, Cambodia’s security cooperation with its neighboring countries is developing. Cambodian-Thai General Border Committee held its second meeting in Phnom Penh in mid 2001 and the third meeting in Pattaya in early March 2002. Such meetings had been suspended since 1995.

In the Pattaya meeting, the two sides pledged to improve security on the Cambodian-Thai border. The two sides focused on maintaining security over trade corridors, joint cooperation to prevent and suppress cross-border criminal activities such as human trafficking; weapon, artifact and drug smuggling; illegal movement; and the maintenance of self-restraint in regard to the frequent irregularities that occur along the border.

Beside border security mechanism, humanitarian cooperation is being carried out with both Thailand and Vietnam; for example, the contribution by the Royal Thai Armed Forces in rebuilding Route 48 from Koh Kong to Sre Ambel and the cooperation between the RCAF and the Vietnamese People’s Armed Forces in search
operations to locate the remains of Vietnamese soldiers buried or missing in Cambodia.

3. Defense Cooperation

Chapter 3 of the Defense White Paper 2000 has already emphasized the importance of military cooperation with a number of countries.

One of the significant non-refundable assistance from China is the construction of the Combined Arms Officer School, Thlok Tasek. The Opening ceremony of the construction site and the hand-over of assistance were held in mid June 2002, with the participation of the Co-Ministers of National Defense, the Commander-in-Chief of the RCAF and the Chinese Ambassador. (Picture: Chea Chheang AKP)

Currently, defense cooperation with China has been significantly enhanced in the fields of human resource development, the constructions of military bases and officer training facilities, military health, engineering equipment and other material assistance. China’s assistance in human resource development could increase within the next 3 to 5 years.

At the same time, India has offered an annual program of tri-service military scholarships beginning in the 2001-2002 academic year. The Ministry of National Defense is also considering an Indian initiative to expand its assistance into other areas such as computer and English training.
France remains an important partner in military cooperation with human resource development, technical assistance to the Royal Gendarmerie and other material support. We hope that cooperation with France would be enhanced in the future, especially in the area of improving the capability of young cadet officers.

ASEAN countries, Thailand, Malaysia, the Philippines, Indonesia and Singapore are maintaining their training support. Recently, Thailand has expanded its construction assistance to the Tmat Pong Cadet School, a project of Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn.

Defense cooperation in six substantial areas is being established with Vietnam. Today and in the future, Vietnam will offer a number of skill training schemes for RCAF personnel.
Cambodia and the Republic of Korea are working to reach an agreement concerning an exchange of training in the future, through which Cambodia would send military personnel for training in the Republic of Korea.

Australia has increased its defense co-operation assistance for the period 2002-2004. The assistance is focused on defense policy development, English training, continued support for the Pich Nil Army Training Center and the Navy workshop at Ream Maritime Base, upgrading Military Region hospitals, establishment of a Command and Staff Center and a military medical program.

The RCAF is expecting the return of the IMET program previously provided by the US government from 1994 to mid 1997. Reopening of this program would offer a good opportunity for RCAF officers to enhance their capabilities and expertise which are essential for military reform and force development.
Meanwhile, Cambodia urges the United States to reconsider the reactivation of other programs, such as the Title 10, Military-to-Military Contact, Mobile Training in Cambodia and the possibility of support for the functioning of the existing Cambodian Military Institute’s Center for Strategic Studies.

With the above-mentioned defense assistance programs and in accordance with the agreement made during the Seminar on Defense Policy—RCAF Implementation held from 7 to 8 May 2002, the RCAF needs outside assistance in other areas, which not only benefits the defense force, but also contributes to national development. Those requirements include the enhancement of engineering capabilities, relief operations, counter-terrorism, engagement in peacekeeping operations under the UN framework, medical capability, improvement of communications among the three layers of defense system, quality of domestic training... etc and etc.


Chapter 4 of the White Paper 2000 has clearly defined national defense objectives based on threat assessment addressing military, economy, demography, geography and environmental considerations. But a new threat, transnational terrorism, is currently emerging. Nevertheless, the assessment from the Defense Seminar held in May 2002 concluded that the possibility of a terrorist threat did not pose a serious challenge to Cambodia’s security but may impact adversely on the nation’s economy. This could possibly also increase the level of poverty.

As mentioned previously, the war against terrorism could spread to Southeast Asia and international terrorist groups may seek all means to continue their activities. While Cambodia has a weak economy, terrorist groups could choose Cambodia as a place for trafficking their resources.

Border areas, both land and sea, could be the main targets for such infiltration. Cambodia is concerned about its defense effectiveness because the skills and technique of the Border Defense Units are inadequate. On the other hand, the complete lack of communication infrastructure on the borders is a major obstacle for any operation against those international terrorist and transnational criminal activities. The maritime area is also vulnerable, and the
Royal Cambodian Navy’s current resources and technology cannot guarantee a completely effective response.

Based on these concerns, the Border Defense Units desperately need capabilities to counter terrorism and transnational crimes. Enhancing these capabilities will require international assistance. These units must also have appropriate communication capability to conduct their operations and to facilitate the exchange of information with other national agencies.

Another key factor is the need to refurbish and put back into service some basic equipment for operations such as the means for ground troop mobility and small boats for patrolling maritime areas and so on.

To respond effectively to any threat and for national security as a whole, Cambodia needs to change its defense priorities to adapt to the current security environment. Those priorities include:

- Enhance border defense capabilities against transnational crimes and infiltration of terrorist groups. Increase efforts in infrastructural and community development in border areas.
- Maintain Navy’s technological capability and resources to achieve an effective patrol capability for the maritime border.
- Expedite military reforms, particularly demobilization, improve soldiers’ living standard, unit restructuring and the reform of the training system.
- Establish mechanism for force mobilization to ensure the sustainability and the quality of the armed forces.
- Expand military participation in national development, particularly in the areas of engineering, relief operations, suppression and crackdown on small arms trafficking, participation in safeguarding the environment (tree planting) and other humanitarian activities.
- Gradually build capabilities to participate in regional and international military activities, especially small-team participation in future UN’s peace operations.

5. Consideration for the RCAF’s Roles

The RCAF’s four primary roles defined in Chapter 5 of the White Paper 2000 have not been changed. However, there will be a reduced emphasis on the RCAF’s role of ensuring peace, stability and social orders. This is in accordance with current security situation and the Royal Government’s decentralization policy.

The RCAF will increase its engagement in the restoration and development of national infrastructure by using as much as possible of its existing resources. On the other hand, the military must be prepared and ready to help the people suffering from various natural disasters.

6. Maintaining Military Strategy

Military Strategy of “Flexible and Controlled Response” introduced in the White Paper 2000 remains fundamental to implementing the Royal Government’s defense policy. The three layers of the national defense system (the High Command, Military Regions and Deployed Units) are core actors in implementing this strategy effectively.

Nevertheless, the adoption of the following measures could ensure success in the future. Those measures are:

- Improve the effectiveness of command, control and communication system among the three layers of the national defense system, enabling timely exchange of intelligence and appropriate actions for response.
- Extend the means of patrolling for Border Defense Units where necessary and possible.
- The Intervention Units must be in a state of readiness to respond in time to any contingencies. This is aimed mainly at prevention and crackdown of cross-border illegal activities, combating terrorism and rescue operations.

- Be prepared to respond in a timely and effectively manner to any contingencies occurring in the maritime areas.
- Seek to improve the mobility of the force.
- Expand engineering capabilities available to all Military Regions.
- Focus attention on developing military bases.
- Continued efforts to improve soldiers’ living standard.

7. RCAF Force Development

During the past few years, the RCAF’s reform process has progressed in many areas. In general, the reform needs to be reinforced by a clear strategic plan, commitment from all echelon of leadership, appropriate resources and, if necessary, external support. These reinforcing factors must concurrently be available during the reform process.

a. Demobilization

Based on the Royal Government’s plan provided in Chapter 5 of the White Paper 2000, the RCAF has succeeded in the first large-scale demobilization in 2001, in which 15,000 soldiers of category 1
and 2 were discharged and removed from the military payroll. The Royal Government is planning to conduct the second phase of demobilization in 2002. According to Samdech Prime Minister Hun Sen’s remarks while meeting with Belgian and Luxembourg Defense Ministers, the Royal Government wants the RCAF to have an appropriate size that meets current national defense needs while improving soldiers’ living standards and transferring funds from security areas to social affairs. Samdech Prime Minister emphasized that the Royal Government will continue to demobilize more soldiers if necessary should the means be available.

General Ke Kim Yan, Commander-in-Chief of the RCAF, is presenting National Defense Medal to a demobilized soldier.
(Picture: Chea Chheang AKP)

Detailed studies must be undertaken to determine the optimum RCAF force structure. In order to achieve the above-mentioned objective, demobilization must be applied to all levels of the defense hierarchy in order to avoid the situation where at the end of the demobilization process only high-ranking officers remain. A comprehensive implementation of the retirement law would also help to relieve this difficulty.

The Royal Government is considering the establishment of arrangements to ensure that manpower is available to meet defense needs. Through the application of these arrangements, in the future, young soldiers would be recruited (depending on manning requirements) to fill the RCAF’s units. Meanwhile, we also hope that if the conditions of service are upgraded appropriately, recruiting for military service could be done on a voluntary basis.
b. Unit Restructuring

In 2001, the High Command has successfully restructured the Army units by reducing divisions to brigades. In the future, particularly at the end of the demobilization, further reductions in the number of Army units are expected. This practice would also help to improve the effectiveness of command and control in the units. Border Defense Units have also been readjusted in terms of the number of the units and their locations. These measures are further detailed in the High Command’s Five Year Plan.

c. Training and Education

The Ministry of National Defense and the High Command have been reforming their professional training system which is the key to ensure quality and effectiveness of military forces.

Soldiers from 911th Airborne Brigade are conducting training.
(Picture: 911 Bde.)

The three levels of professional training; Cadet, Command and Staff and Strategic Studies; will provide basic and advanced capabilities and experiences to officers at all levels in the RCAF. The recent Seminar on Defense Policy – RCAF Implementation has also demanded that more effort is required in establishing training doctrine, extending language education programs and improving students selection processes.

d. Engineering

As mentioned previously, engineering capability must gradually be extended to the military regions, where many
responsibilities – border infrastructural developments, demining, assisting communities in rural development and disaster relief, other constructions for the interests of the military regions themselves – are RCAF responsibilities.

Lt. Gen. Moeung Samphan, Director-General of Logistics and Finance receives a set of engineering survey equipment donated by Australia at the Department of International Relations.

(Picture: General Department of Logistics and Finance)

Although this capability development has always encountered difficulties and required time, the RCAF must put more emphasis on maintaining cooperation with international partners to absorb more assistance to benefit the military itself as well as the society as a whole.

e. Maintenance of Military Assets

Chapter 6 of the White Paper 2000 acknowledges the difficulties in obtaining fund to maintain RCAF’s assets. Moreover, the Royal Government’s policy has restricted the procurement of additional military equipments for the RCAF at least for the next three to five years. Therefore, all military assets are aging or becoming obsolete particularly due to years of poor maintenance. The Defense White Paper 2000 also underlines the extension of repair and maintenance capabilities to the military regions.

In the state of budget constraint, the Royal Cambodian Navy increases efforts to repair its aging equipments.

(Picture: Australian Embassy)
To avoid increasing losses of military assets, the Ministry of National Defense should consider the allocation of funds for repairs and maintenance to major military hardware such as naval ships, transport aircraft, military vehicle, engineering equipment, rescue equipment…etc. Like the engineering capability, seeking support from international partners in this area is also essential.

f. **Condition of Service**

Although there has been large-scale demobilization, the soldiers’ livelihood has not been improved. As described earlier, the Royal Government is committed to demobilize more soldiers, but it must be in harmony with the requirement for national defense and the availability of means. Possession of a smaller military force suitable for national defense while retaining appropriate defense spending would improve soldiers’ living standard. Budgets could be spent on training, modernization and technological capability. An appropriate salary will not only make the soldiers loyal to serving the nation, but it would also encourage the Khmer people to volunteer for military service.

g. **Contribution to Ensuring Security and Social Orders**

The campaign to prevent and subsequently eradicate the use of illegal weapons must continue enthusiastically.

*Tens thousands of confiscated and surplus weapons are destroyed under the campaign of “The Flame of Peace”. This picture shows the burning of weapons in Kampong Thom in early April 2001. (Picture: Chea Chheang AKP)*
Apart from destroying thousands of confiscated and surplus weapons, the RCAF will continue to fully cooperate with the EU-ASAC and the Ministry of Interior to control the use and trafficking of small arms. At the same time, it must also pay attention to storing weapons properly at various military bases and safe warehouses.

h. Humanitarian Activities

As countries enjoy peace and stability, most of the armed forces are putting more emphasis on capability development and allocating resources for humanitarian purpose – disaster relief, medical services and other humanitarian assistance.

Because widespread flooding affects Cambodia every year, the RCAF must be capable of rescuing the people. Further technical assistance in rescue capabilities should be maintained in Special Forces, the Engineers, the Navy, the Air Force and the Royal Gendarmerie. The RCAF has received some rescue equipment from friendly countries, which is an important source for the development of its humanitarian capability.

Acquiring more equipment and conducting regular training in this skill is another priority, which requires close liaison with friendly countries. To increase the effectiveness in operations and to ensure a state of readiness at all times, joint exercises should be carried out among related specialized forces and with foreign countries, if necessary, in the future. This could be done when we have the possibility and sufficient resources. Likewise, the establishment of small mobile medical teams with a field medical capability will offer great benefit for the RCAF as well as for the community. These
teams would be able to carry out their humanitarian activities throughout the country, particularly where public health services are not available. In the future, if possible, this capability could deploy overseas in the context of UN’s humanitarian assistance. Developing a reliable capability and providing necessary equipments, including mobility, could be obtained through foreign defense cooperation programs.

i. Counter-Terrorist Capability

The Southeast Asian region has not been spared from the global terrorist threat. Based on a wide-ranging assessment, Cambodia has not been a target for those terrorist threats. However, consequences may occur in the future, which might adversely effect Cambodia’s economy, trade, industry and domestic security.

Since the RCAF has been given roles to ensuring security and social orders, the enhancement of a state of readiness against any possible consequences is prudent. The establishment of a counter-terrorist capability in RCAF’s Special Forces would not only provide effective measures to the Royal Government for responses to any hostile occurrences, but it would display quality in defense and promote the RCAF’s reputation in national and international circles as well.

Some ASEAN countries who vow to combat terrorism have received support and assistance from other major countries, particularly from the United States. RCAF’s Special Forces might be able to obtain this support while the Royal Government would focus on creating a coordinating mechanism for the implementation of that special operations capability. Therefore, as an important factor, the
defense institutions should maintain relations with foreign friends, seeking ways and means to create and further enhance this capability.

**j. Construction of Military Bases**

Effective and timely response depends on readiness. Military base permits the concentration of forces, materials, training, condition of service, medical services, morale motivation, disciplines…etc. The Ministry of National Defense and the High Command must have a clear plan for the step-by-step building of military bases, based on available resources. On the other hand, seeking support from foreign countries is essential. Outside assistance is a significant source to achieve good results in construction of military bases.

![Mobile barracks donated by China to the 1st Infantry Brigade.](picture)

Concepts for building military bases must primarily be dependent upon studies of defense strategy, terrain and demands in the area.

**k. Policy and Planning**

Planning is one of the key factors that determines efficacy and success in task implementation. Commanders of all levels of war – tactical, operation and strategic levels – must understand the importance of planning. Planning is a combination of ways and means to achieve a certain objective. This means that if the Royal Government’s defense policy is understood, both military and defense objectives could be set.
Therefore, a comprehensive educational campaign of the Defense White Paper and the Defense Strategic Review is extremely important. Moreover, the Ministry of National Defense and the RCAF’s High Command should allow military commanders to have the opportunity to meet each other frequently in seminars, conferences, meetings, or in joint planning processes to develop their personal ability, knowledge and vision. It would also provide an opportunity for studies and exchange of experiences that could benefit efforts of building RCAF future reputation.
Appendix A

Composition of
The White Paper Implementation Working Group (WPIWG)

Chairman
General Pol Saroeun
Deputy Commander-in-Chief and Chief of Joint Staff, RCAF

Vice Chairmen
Lieutenant General Meas Sophea
Deputy Commander-in-Chief and Army Commander
Lieutenant General Phann Nguon
Under-Secretary of State for National Defense

Members
Lieutenant General Phuong Siphan
Deputy Chief of Joint Staff
Lieutenant General Hun Phoeung
Deputy Chief of Joint Staff
Lieutenant General Moeung Samphan
Director-General of Logistics and Finance
Lieutenant General Neang Phat
Director-General of Defense Services
Lieutenant General Chau Phirun
Director-General of Materials and Technical Services
Lieutenant General Chea Dara
Deputy Chief of Joint Staff and Director of Tactical Directorate
Lieutenant General Chea Saran
Deputy Commander and Chief of Staff, Army
Vice Admiral Ung Samkhan  
_Navy Commander_

Lieutenant General Soeung Samnang  
_Air Force Commander_

Lieutenant General Sao Sokha  
_Commander of the Royal Gendarmerie_

Major General Thou Sun  
_Director of Cabinet, HCHQ_

Major General Dam Vuthy  
_Director of Personnel Directorate, HCHQ_

Major General Eth Sarath  
_Director of Training Directorate_

Major General Mak Sarun  
_Director of Logistic Directorate_

Major General Lay Bun Song  
_Director of Department of International Relations_

Major General Nem Sowath  
_Director of Department of Policy and Planning_

Major General Dam Dararith  
_Director of Propaganda and Information Directorate_

Major General Meas Sam Ol  
_Director of Department of Personnel, MoND_

Brigadier General Suon Samnang  
_Deputy Director of Department of International Relations_
Appendix B

Composition of
The WPIWG Secretariat

Chairman
Brigadier General Suon Samnang
Deputy Director of Department of International Relations

Members
Brigadier General Yieng Kim Sour
Deputy Director of Cabinet, HCHQ
Brigadier General Chan Sarang
Deputy Director of Cabinet, MoND
Brigadier General Pich Ceath
Deputy Director of Cambodian Military Institute
Brigadier General Singkham Chantarong
Deputy Director of Department of Information
Brigadier General Chea Veasna
Deputy Director of Department of Legislation
Brigadier General Eang Phalleap
Deputy Director of Department of Finance
Colonel Some Ike
Deputy Director of Department of Policy and Planning
Colonel Kay Yomea
Chief of Planning and Administration Office
Department of International Relations