

Declaration

The Outcome of the Round-Table Discussion on the Temple of Preah Vihear and the Candidacy of Cambodia to the World Heritage Committee

The round-table discussion on “the Temple of Preah Vihear and the candidacy of Cambodia to the World Heritage Committee (WHC)” was held on 22nd October, 2009 with the participation of members of the Senate, members of the Parliament, representatives of the Joint Border Commission (JBC), representatives of the Royal Academy of Cambodia, senior researchers in culture and history, and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs). The discussion was conducted for the purpose of clarifying national and international opinions concerning the inscription of the Temple of Preah Vihear on the World Heritage List and the submission of the candidacy of Cambodia to the WHC. The outcome of the round-table discussion is as follows:

- 1- The decision to submit the candidacy of Cambodia to WHC was appropriate, in line with the common objective of all States Parties which encourage new countries to have role in WHC, because Cambodia is rich in history and culture. Cambodia has been member of UNESCO since 1951, but she has never been member of any UNESCO’s committee or commission. Therefore, becoming a member of the WHC is purely a cultural issue for the purpose of learning from WHC experiences, enhancing international cooperation, continuing to assist in the conservation and sustainable development of world heritage properties, and sharing experiences which Cambodia has been acquiring through

cooperation with the International Coordination Committee on the Safeguarding and Development of the Historic Site of Angkor (ICC).

- 2- Cambodia exercises her sovereign rights without interfering in the internal affairs of any country, unlike Thailand which is continuing to interfere in the internal affairs of Cambodia and intergovernmental organizations with established rules and procedures, such as the International Court of Justice (ICJ), UNESCO and WHC. Therefore, as a sovereign state, Cambodia takes positive stance in strengthening international cooperation, supporting world peace, and reserving her rights to self-defense.
- 3- Thailand does not respect International Convention and Treaty and discredits international order by using unilateral, secret and falsified map without recognition from any countries against the international map which originated from the International Convention of 1904 and the Treaty of 1907 and have been recognized by Thailand in 1908, and decided as part of 1904 Convention based on judgment dated 15 June 1962 in the case concerning the temple of Preah Vihear. Moreover, Thailand has violated internal rules and the agenda of the international gathering, such as objecting the decision of the WHC's Bureau which prohibited any discussion on the issue of the Temple of Preah Vihear at the 33rd Session of WHC, in Seville, Spain.
- 4- Thailand lacks respect for Her Excellency Francoise Riviere, Deputy Director General of UNESCO for Culture by unfairly accusing her of being biased in favor of Cambodia was wrong. In fact, in 2008 both States Parties, Cambodia and Thailand had solicited UNESCO to provide a venue and to help resolve the obstacle concerning the inscription of the Temple of Preah Vihear

on the World Heritage List. During that time, both parties have agreed to a Joint Cambodian-Thai Communiqué on 18 June 2008 with the participation of the UNESCO representative, H.E. Francoise Riviere. It is worth recalling that the Temple of Preah Vihear has been inscribed on the World Heritage List in Quebec, Canada in 2008 on the basis that the temple of Preah Vihear was considered to be universal and exceptional value through careful evaluation by ICOMOS and ICCROM.

5- Thailand must cease using the Temple of Preah Vihear and the border issues to be an instrument for internal political in-fighting and faulting Cambodia in consequence, because the Temple of Preah Vihear is truly a property of the Kingdom of Cambodia, confirmed by the judgment of The Hague ICJ in 1962. On the other hand, according to the ANNEX I map delimited by the Commission of Delimitation between Indo-China and Siam of the 1904 Convention, which have been ratified by the King of Siam and the President of the French Republic, and recognized by the Siamese Government since 1908 until 1958, and further recognized by Thailand following the decision of the ICJ in 1962 until today. Therefore, the border between Cambodia and Thailand, which is the international border, there is no disputed and overlapping area adjacent to the Temple of Preah Vihear as it has been claimed by those Thai ultra-nationalist elements. Thailand should not have created problems to question the legitimate and lawful decisions in conformity with international treaties and agreements. It should not interfere in the internal affairs of other States Parties and world organizations in their international efforts to conserve and to sustainably develop world heritages, thus enhancing peace and harmony in the region.

- 6- In accordance with the 1962 Judgment of The Hague ICJ, Cambodia has been making her efforts for just cause and has been fulfilling all requirements. Furthermore, Cambodia has met all requirements relating the inscription of the Temple such as establishing a legal framework, preparing a management plan of the inscribed world heritage site and enhancing international cooperation. Cambodia's position and her behavior as a good member of UNESCO and as a State Party to the Convention on World Heritage are clear in her respect of principles and procedures aimed at expanding and strengthening international cooperation for the conservation and development of world heritage.
- 7- If elected member of the World Heritage Committee, Cambodia will fulfill the following missions:
- Increasing opportunities for rallying international cooperation in order to enhance the conservation and development of world heritage.
 - Increasing understanding and learning opportunities from the rich experiences of UNESCO, WHC, international fora and from the experience of the international community.
 - Sharing the experience that Cambodia has gained from her participation in the conservation and development of world heritage sites through ICC. As mentioned by His Excellency Director General of UNESCO in his speech in 2003, the ICC in Cambodia is a model for other partner countries in rallying international cooperation.
- 8- Prior to the 33rd Session of the World Heritage Committee in Seville, Spain, last June, Thailand stated that the inscription of the Temple of

Preah Vihear created a military stand-off between Cambodia and Thailand. Moreover, before the election of members to the World Heritage Committee at its 17th General Assembly of the States Parties to the 1972 Convention which will be held on 26th October, 2009, Thailand stated again that to elect Cambodia as member of the World Heritage Committee will ignite and instigate the conflict between the two countries. These Thai statements are a lie to mislead the national and international public opinion. In fact, the tension has been created by Thailand with the production of a secret and unilateral map aimed at invading the Cambodia territory and thereby disturb international cooperation for the conservation and development of the Temple of Preah Vihear.

In summary, the inscription of the Temple of Preah Vihear on the World Heritage List and the candidacy of Cambodia to the World Heritage Committee are purely cultural acts for the purpose of preserving and developing cultural heritage of humanity. Furthermore, it is an opportunity for Cambodia to learn and exchange experiences with the WHC to enhance international cooperation to preserve and develop the world heritage properties and to share experiences which Cambodia has gained from working with the ICC.