



TWENTY-SEVENTH ANNUAL MEETING  
OF THE ASIA-PACIFIC PARLIAMENTARY FORUM  
Siem Reap, Kingdom of Cambodia, 14-17 January 2019

## Chairman's Statement

- 1. We, Parliamentarians from twenty-one countries from the Asia Pacific, assembled from 14 to 17 January 2019** for the Twenty-Seventh Annual Meeting of the Asia-Pacific Parliamentary Forum (APPF-27) under **the theme of “Strengthening Parliamentary Partnership for Peace, Security and Sustainable Development”**, in Siem Reap, the majestic city of the Kingdom of Cambodia.
- The Executive Committee Meeting, held on 14 January 2019, under the chairmanship of Samdech Akka Moha Ponhea Chakrei Heng Samrin, President of the National Assembly of Cambodia and the 27<sup>th</sup> President of APPF, approved the agenda and program of activities. The Meeting nominated Hon. Dr. Nguon Nhel and Hon. Khuon Sudary as Vice-Chairpersons of the 27<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting, nominated Hon. Khuon Sudary as Chair of the Women Parliamentarians Meeting, nominated Hon. Hun Many as Chair of Drafting Committee. The Executive Committee Meeting approved 43 draft resolutions to be submitted to the Drafting Committee for consideration, and announced Australia as the next President of APPF. The Executive Committee Meeting took note of the Japanese delegation informing the Meeting that the Republic of Korea stands ready to host the 29<sup>th</sup> APPF Annual Meeting in 2021.
- The vibrant and dynamic Cambodia that we see today is not what it was forty years ago, as pointed out by Samdech Akka Moha Ponhea Chakrei Heng Samrin in his opening address. We noted that on 7 January 2019, Cambodian people across the Kingdom celebrated 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of victory over the Khmer Rouge Genocidal Regime. With hard work, resilience and dedication of the Government of the Kingdom of Cambodia, the country has achieved miracle in her own way as a Nation. Under the initiative and active leadership of Samdech Akka Moha Sena Padei Techo HUN SEN, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Cambodia, full peace was achieved in 1998 through Win-Win Strategy, bringing decades of civil war to a complete end and allowing the unifying effort of Cambodians to focus on development and integration into regional and international community. Since then the Kingdom is able to achieve on average of 7% GDP annual growth in the last two decades, with 7.3% last year, making it the sixth world's fastest-growing economies in the world. Our GDP in 1998 was around USD3 billion to USD24 billion in 2018. GDP per capita USD253 in 1998 to USD1,563 in 2018, while the poverty elevation moved from 53.2% in 2004 to now around 10%. Furthermore, after 40 years, Cambodia is no longer recognized as a war torn nation. From a nation that was known for its “Killing Fields” to a number one tourist destination; from a nation that received ‘UN peacekeeping operations’, to a nation that proudly send more than 5,000 troops to ‘UN peacekeeping operations’ in many parts of the world, notably Sudan, South Sudan, Chad, Central African Republic, Syria, Lebanon, Cyprus and Mali.
4. Adhering to the Constitution and the principle of multiparty liberal democracy, the election of

the 6<sup>th</sup> legislative mandate of the National Assembly was held in July 2018 and completed in a peaceful, free and fair environment under the observation of more than 80,000 national and international observers. The election saw an astounding 83.02% of registered voters went out to cast their ballot, freely making their political choice among the 20 contending parties. With the people's mandate both the National Assembly and the Royal Government of Cambodia of the 6<sup>th</sup> mandate have reiterated its commitments to peace, stability, democracy and development for the betterment and welfare of the people.

5. As we gathered here at the 27<sup>th</sup> APPF Annual Meeting to discuss the theme of “Strengthening Parliamentary Partnership for Peace, Security and Sustainable Development”, we are mindful of recent developments across the world that arguably could make our common future even more uncertain. Issues such as persistent conflicts and tensions arisen from ideological differences, foreign interference into the internal affairs of a sovereign state, territorial disputes, terrorism and transnational crimes, all could undermine global peace and security. On the economical and trade front, we are following closely Brexit, ongoing trade war, increase in protectionism and unilateralism, would impact the functioning of global trade and spill over to state to state relations. The arrival of the 4th Industrial Revolution, where technology would become smart and enable more connected society and where data play an even more important role in daily lives, could present both challenges and opportunities for public and private sectors alike. The issues of gender inequality, climate change and SDGs need our full attention and commitment in order to create better opportunity and more conducive environment for all. These are some of the major issues that could impact us all one way or another. In this respect the Asia-Pacific Parliamentary Forum is an important platform for us to come together, discuss these major issues, exchange ideas and best practices so to better address these major challenges.
6. **We recalled APPF mission to promote a stronger regional identity and cooperation** focusing on peace, freedom, democracy and prosperity; open and non-exclusive cooperation to expand free trade and investment, sustainable development and sound environmental practices; and non-military cooperation that considers regional peace and security.
7. The Asia-Pacific Parliamentary Forum has not only demonstrated the continuation of friendship and solidarity and cooperation in our Asia-Pacific region but also an opportunity to show the world the important role of the APPF in sharing values, views, ideals and common goals in bringing about peace, stability, prosperity and harmony in the region.
8. The main outcomes of the 27th Annual Meeting reflect our shared intention and commitment to address regional and global issues with the right timing of the proposed and chosen theme by the Host of this year APPF Annual Meeting, including: gender equality and empowering women and girls; building mutual trust for peace, security, and sustainable development, fighting terrorism and transnational crimes, promoting the responsible use of cyber space for social progress; promoting regional cooperation to tackle climate change, encouraging cultural diversity and tourism, and in particular, strengthening cooperation and partnership, building strong institutions, promoting financial access and vocational training, and enhancing connectivity in the fields of trade and investment in the region.
9. **In women parliamentarians meeting**, we stressed the importance of women's role in development, economic growth and prosperity in the Asia-Pacific, and committed to strengthening Asia-Pacific regional partnership for gender equality and empowerment of women and girls for peace and sustainable development in the region. Five key policy recommendations were proposed including: First, the necessity to adopt a multifaceted policy-research agenda to bring about gender equality in the workforce, by providing support in skill development and vocational training. Second, the women role as agents of change, particularly by providing better access to knowledge and technology. Third, women

empowerment to take leadership roles in decision-making at all levels. Fourth, the strengthening of multi-stakeholder dialogue and cooperation to allow the construction of better frameworks and institutions, and the access to greater budgets and funding, as well as sharing of best practices and know-how in policy making. Fifth, necessary conduct on gender-based analysis by considering the diverse needs of women, men, and others as an assessment tool when building policies, programs, and initiatives.

- 10. In political and security matters, we reaffirmed that trust building among Asia-Pacific nations is an essential requirement for peace, security and sustainable development in the region.** We discussed the urgent need to tackle terrorism and transnational crime in the region. We welcomed efforts towards a collective approach to regional counter-terrorism and the need to enhance collaboration, share best practices and raise awareness in promoting digital literacy and the responsible use of cyberspace for social progress. In addition, we also exchanged view on regional and international issues, including situation in the Korean Peninsula. We welcomed the Inter-Korean Summits held on 27 April 2018, 26 May 2018 and from 18 to 20 September 2018 and the U.S-DPRK Summit in Singapore on 12 June 2018. We also welcomed all the efforts to ensure practical progress towards realization of peace and stability on Korean Peninsula, including through the full and expeditious implementation of the Panmunjom Declaration, the Pyongyang Joint Declaration, and the Joint Statement signed between U.S President Donald Trump and Chairman of the State Affairs Commission of the DPRK Kim-Jong Un as well as ASEAN supports as stated in the Chairman's Statements at the 33<sup>rd</sup> ASEAN Summit and the 13<sup>th</sup> East Asia Summit in Singapore last year.
- 11. In economic and trade matters, we highlighted the need to build strong institutions to promote trade and investment for sustainable and inclusive growth.** We reiterated our commitment to fight against protectionism to achieve our common goal of free trade and investment in the region. We also discussed promoting access to finance, science, technology and innovation for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and called for regional cooperation in education along with vocational training and lifelong learning to meet SME demand for critical skills in the changing global business environment. In addition, we discussed enhancing regional connectivity through e-commerce and called for investment in telecommunications infrastructure and harmonized rules, regulations and legislation governing digital trade to promote free flow of goods and services in the region.
- 12. In regional cooperation matters, we reiterated our commitment to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), and the Constitution of UNESCO.** We expressed our commitment to building resilient society, promoting inclusive and sustainable development, and fostering research and innovation for greenhouse gas mitigation, and adaptation to climate change. We also discussed about promoting cultural diversity and tourism, protecting tangible and intangible heritages, and urged member countries to adhere to the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism, especially principles for mutual understanding and respect between peoples and societies.
- 13. The Twenty-Seventh Annual Meeting concluded with the adoption of 14 resolutions, the signing of a Joint Communiqué and the handover of the Forum's flag from the Kingdom of Cambodia to Australia as incoming president.** Delegates congratulated Cambodia for successfully hosting the Forum's Annual Meeting for the first time and for discussions on cooperation for peace, security and sustainable development. We look forward to meeting again in Australia next year.