

**The Forum on Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam**

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Michael Hayes  
Editor-in-chief  
Phnom Penh Post

16 January 1999

Dear Mr. Hayes,

We are writing for two reasons. The first is to update you on the 9th annual conference of the Forum on Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam which will take place 25-28 January 1999 at the Sunway Hotel and the CDC building. It is anticipated that between 350-400 representatives of government ministries, mass organizations and professional associations, local and international NGOs, bilateral and multilateral aid agencies, businesses, foundations, universities and research institutes from the region as well as from Europe, the Asia-Pacific region, and North America will attend the conference.

We will be sending out an official press release next week. The agenda attached is still in draft form as we are waiting to confirm some of the speakers, the delegation from Vietnam and the participation of H.E. Hun Sen at the opening session. We would welcome the Phnom Penh Post to send a reporter to the opening session. However, the rest of the conference proceedings are open to registered participants only. This is because the Forum is a working conference in which our primary goal is to have participants speak as frankly and unofficially as possible. Journalists can attend for background purposes or to make contacts for future stories and are expected to pay the registration fee and for meals like any other participant.

The second reason that we are writing is to inquire if you would be interested in taking part in a pre-conference panel discussion "Update on the Cambodian Political Situation" following the opening reception with government officials on Monday 25 January 8:00 p.m. The audience will primarily be conference participants who are traveling from the Vietnam and Laos or further abroad from neighboring Southeast Asia nations, Australia, Europe, and North America. Many will have some familiarity with the situation in Cambodia and many others have not heard of any news except the Clinton Trial for the past several months so are in need of an update of recent events in Cambodia and the implications for the nation. We expect an audience of approximately 100 people.

We are in the process of confirming the other panelists. Asked to participate are Tony Kevin, Raoul Jennar, Kao Kim Horn and Lao Mong Hay. Andrew Wells, Asia-Pacific Center for Justice and Peace, in Washington, DC will give a brief update on the current Washington attitudes towards Cambodia as the APCJP has just finished a series of office visits to key officials.

Please let us know if you are interested in participating, your insights would be very helpful in providing a stronger basis of understanding about the current political situation to our diverse audience before the conference discussions begin about some of the pressing social and economic needs of the country.

John McAuliff will be arriving in Cambodia in the middle of next week, though Susan Hammond can be reached at the Forum office at Tel/Fax: 23-367420 or Tel: 012804475.

We hope that you are able to join us.

Sincerely,

John McAuliff  
Forum Coordinator

Susan Hammond  
Conference Coordinator



Draft--list of confirmed speakers incomplete

**9th Annual Conference of the Forum on Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam  
January 25-28, 1999 Phnom Penh, Cambodia**

**"The Partnership Approach to Poverty Alleviation and Development:  
Sharing Experiences and Fostering Cooperation "**

**Monday January 25**

## Pre-conference options:

- Sight seeing in Phnom Penh: City Tour, visits to Tuol Sleng and Royal Palace
- Site visits to NGO projects or educational institutions in the Phnom Penh area
- 4:00 p.m. Registration open until 8 p.m. (at Sunway Hotel) Displays and literature tables open
- 6:00 p.m. Welcoming Reception hosted by Cambodian Government Officials at the Sunway Hotel
- 8:00 p.m. Informal panel discussion "Update on the Cambodian Political Situation from the perspective of International Observers"

**Tuesday January 26**

- 7:30 a.m. Registration (at Sunway Hotel)
- 8:00 a.m. CDC: Welcoming Remarks by organizers  
Country Plenary: Cambodia  
Opening Remarks by H.E. Hun Sen, Prime Minister of Cambodia (to be confirmed)  
Senior officials of the Royal Government of Cambodia to address the issues of Poverty Alleviation and Development in Cambodia and to discuss how these needs, the progress to date and ways that the international development community can assist.
- 10:45 a.m. Coffee break
- 11:00 a.m. First meeting of sectoral Groups (introductions, confirm agenda)
- 12:00 p.m. Lunch
- 1:30 p.m. Plenary: "Lessons for Transitional Economies from the Asian Economic Crisis"  
Mr. Someth Sous, Country Representative ADB-Phnom Penh, Robert Gofcheski, Senior Economist UNDP; Linda Scheider, World Bank Chief Liaison Officer, Laos; and Nicola Bullard, Focus on the Global South
- 3:30 p.m. Coffee break
- 4:00 p.m. Simultaneous Panels, Session 1

*A) "Integrating multilateral and bilateral development agencies, foundations, non-profit organizations and grass roots priorities into national plans"*

Moderator: Charles Bailey, Vietnam Country Representative, Ford Foundation  
Cambodia: Representative of Council of Minister, Ministry of Finance or CDC  
Laos: Dr. Bountheuang Mounlasy, Deputy Director General, Committee for Investment and Foreign Economic Cooperation, Prime Minister's Office  
Vietnam: Representative of the Office of the Government, the Ministry of Planning and Investment or the Ministry of Foreign Affairs  
Comments given by UNDP- Cambodia, and other aid givers and INGOs

*B) "International private business as a motor for development, source of philanthropic funds, and setter or subverter of labor standards"*

Cambodia: H.E. Cham Prasidh, Minister of Commerce.  
Laos: Mr. Viravanh Khamtanh, Chief of Division, Foreign Investment Management Department, Committee for Investment and Foreign Economic Cooperation, Prime Minister's Office  
Vietnam: A representatives the of the Ministry of Planning and Investment or the Vietnam Chamber of Commerce and Industry  
Comments by Mr. Gerald Herman, Lotus Communications - Hanoi Vietnam, and representatives of foreign business organizations investing in Cambodia and Laos,

*C) "Organizations working at the grass roots and their role in meeting development needs"*

Cambodia: Mr. Ho Yeth, Project Monitor, Krom Akphiwat Phum, Battambang, Cambodia and Scott Leiper, CARERE  
Laos: Mrs. Chanthoum Latmany, Director General, Development and International Relations Department, Laos Women's Union.  
Vietnam: A representative of the Women's Union and/or the Vietnam Youth Association.  
Additional Comments by an INGO supporter of local organizations

- 6:30 p.m. Catered Dinner at the CDC ; performance by dancers from the Royal University of Fine Arts
- 8:00 p.m. Film premier of "Dancing Through Death: The Monkey, Magic & Madness of Cambodia" A documentary film on the revival of classical Khmer dance in Cambodia after the Pol Pot era

### Wednesday January 27

- 8:30 a.m. Country Plenary: Laos  
Leader: H.E. Mrs. Khempheang Pholsena, Vice-Minister, in charge of Foreign Economic Cooperation, Prime Minister's Office  
2-3 additional delegation members
- 10:30 a.m. Coffee break
- 11:00 a.m. Second Session of Sectoral Groups (principle program issues within each country)
- 12:00 p.m. Lunch
- 1:30 p.m. Simultaneous Panels, Session II

A) *"Addressing social evils at the grass roots: prostitution, trafficking of women and children, and drug addiction."*

Cambodia: A representative of the Ministry of Women's Affairs.

Ms. Sery Phal Keat, President, Cambodia Women's Development Agency

Laos: Mrs. Amphayvanh Vilaychaleun, Deputy Director General, Social Welfare Department, Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare

Vietnam: A representative of the Vietnam Women's Union,

B) *"Water resource development: economic, environment and resettlement issues"*

Cambodia: H.E. Mok Mareth, Minister of Environment

Laos: Mr. Soukata Vichit, Director General, Environmental Quality Development and Promotion Department, Sciences, Technology and Environment Organizations

Vietnam: A representative of Ministry of Science, Technology and Environment

Comments by: Mekong River Commission and INGOs from Vietnam and/or Laos.

C) *"The challenge of maintaining a system of primary and preventative health care in rural areas."*

Cambodia: H.E. Mam Bun Heng, Secretary of State, Ministry of Health

Laos: Dr. Khamilene Pholsena, Director General, Hygien Department, Ministry of Public Health

Vietnam: A representative of the Ministry of Health

Comments by a representative of MEDICAM; and other health NGOs

- 3:30 p.m. Coffee break

4:00 p.m. Plenary: *"Cooperation between international non-profit organizations and host governments"*

Cambodia: A Representatives the Ministry of Foreign Affairs or Council of Ministers

Laos: Mr. Chacky Boudtavong, Chief of NGOs Division, Department of International Organizations, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Vietnam: A representative of the Committee on NGO Affairs or the People's Aid Coordination Committee

Comments by: Russel Peterson, Representative Cambodia NGO Forum; Carol Strickler of Cooperation Committee for Cambodia; Michelle Brown VUFO-NGO Resource Center and; a representative of an INGO from Laos

- 6:00 p.m. Reception with Embassies and Multilateral Agencies  
Remarks by Ambassadors of INGO home countries (Australia, Canada, E.U., Japan, U.S.)

### Thursday January 28

- 8:30 a.m. Country Plenary: Vietnam  
Head of Delegation: Vo Xuan Hong, Executive Vice President of VUFO  
Plus 2-3 Senior officials
- 10:30 a.m. Coffee Break
- 11:00 a.m. Final Session of Sectoral Groups (conclusions and suggestions for future exchanges and cooperation)
- 12:00 p.m. Lunch
- 1:30 p.m. Simultaneous Panels, Session III at Sunway Hotel

A) *"Developing curriculum to meet new national needs: conflicting advice and competitive advisors"*

Moderator: Rachel Aiken, Indiana University

Cambodia: Representatives of Ministry of Education Youth and Sports: H.E. Toi Lah has been asked to speak or send a representative

Laos: Mr. Mythong Souvanvixay, Deputy Director General, National Institute Research for Educational Sciences, Ministry of Education

Vietnam: A Representative of the Ministry of Education and Training, Higher Education Department  
Comments by Mr. Vin McNamara, Advisor to the MoEYS, Cambodia, and other International Educational  
Advisors.

B) *"Food security and growth: modernizing agriculture and overcoming poverty while maintaining the  
integrity and viability of rural communities"*

Moderator: Mr. John Ambler, Social Science Research Council

Cambodia: A Representative of the Ministry of Agriculture

Laos: Dr. Tienne Vannasouk, Deputy Director, national Food Security Project, Department of Agriculture and  
Extension, Ministry of Agriculture

Vietnam: Dr. Vo Tong Xuan, Former Vice-Rector Cantho University

Comments by: Mr. Ken Noah Davies, WFP-Cambodia; other INGOs.

C) *"Grass roots efforts to address the legacies of war: land mines, unexploded ordnance, birth defects,  
weapons proliferation"*

Moderator: Richard Walden - Operation USA,

Cambodia: Mr. Sam Sotha, General Director CMAC; Ms. Janet Ashby, Working Group on Weapons  
Reduction

Laos: Mr. Bounpone Sayasenh, National Program Director, Lao National Unexploded Ordinance Program,  
Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare

Vietnam: Dr. Le Cao Dai, Fund for Agent Orange Victims;

comments: Mr. John Terrazano, Vietnam Veteran's Association Foundation; Handicap International

3.30 p.m. Coffee break

4.00 p.m. Plenary Wrap-up; Headlines from Sectoral Groups

6.30 p.m. Farewell dinner dance at restaurant across the Japanese bridge

Friday-Saturday, January 29-31

Post Conference options:

Morning visit to classes at the School of Dance

Overnight trip to Angkor Wat or Sihanoukville

NGO and educational institution site visits

### Sectoral Groups

The working core of the conference are daily meetings of people who are involved in the same sector in the three  
countries, whether they represent a government agency, mass organization, local NGO, professional association,  
foundation, university, multilateral development agency, bilateral donor, business or international NGO.

Sectoral meetings offer an opportunity to profit from each other's experience, develop means of ongoing communication  
and consider cooperative projects. The list will be expanded or contracted according to interest. Groups may merge  
with those having overlapping interests or divide for discussion of more specialized needs. Discussions may continue  
informally during the lunch break.

Agriculture, Fisheries

AIDS/HIV/STD

Child Welfare

Civil Society

Community Development

Culture

Disaster Preparedness and Relief

Education: Pre-School, Primary,

Education: Secondary, Vocational

Education: University, Graduate Work, Research,

Exchanges

Education: Non-formal

Environment, Ecology Restoration

Foreign Language Teaching

Handicraft Preservation, Development, Promotion

Health: Primary Health Care

Health: Reproductive Health

Historic Preservation

Internally Displaced, Resettlement of Refugees

Irrigation

Labor and Occupational Safety

Land mines, UXO, Agent Orange

Law and Legal Reform, Civil Rights

Micro-credit, Economic Development

National and Regional Peace

National Minorities and Highland Communities

Nutrition and Child Survival

Press and Mass Media

Private Investment, Trade and Tourism

Services for and with people with disabilities

Sub-regional Integration

Use of the Internet and Technology in Development

Women's Organizations and Priorities

Other \_\_\_\_\_