

PRESS FILE

PRESS RELEASE

The Third Plenary Session of the **International Co-ordinating Committee for the Safeguarding and Development of the Historic Site of Angkor**, was held in Phnom Penh on 9th January 1995. This Committee is co-chaired by the Ambassadors of France and Japan, with UNESCO serving as secretariat.

This Session which marked the third anniversary of the inscription of the Angkor Site on the World Heritage List and the second anniversary of the Declaration of Tokyo, which established the International Co-ordinating Committee, was greatly honored by the profound concern shown to it by His Majesty the King of Cambodia.

His Majesty Preah Bat Samdech Preah Norodom Sihanouk Varman, who has always shown His constant and deep interest for the protection and the safeguard of the Heritage of Angkor, granted a Royal Audience to the members of the Committee during which the different programmes and work carried out on the site by the various intervenors were presented.

His Majesty expressed to the different experts His satisfaction of the excellency of the work carried out and on going and thanked Their Excellencies the Ambassador of Japan and the Ambassador of France, and the Representative of UNESCO, and all the countries and organizations which participate in the safeguarding of the Site for the importance of the considerable work undertaken, significant of the importance accorded by the international community to the task of safeguarding the monuments and the site, a masterpiece of the world's cultural heritage and a symbol of the national identity of the Kingdom of Cambodia, as well as to the task of developing the region.

On this occasion His Excellency the Minister of State offered to His Majesty the King the book entitled "*Angkor, a Manual for the Past, Present and Future*".

The Co-Presidents officially presented to His Majesty the King the Report of Activities of the Committee for 1995 which gives to the Royal Cambodian Authorities an account of the various activities, studies and projects that have been presented, developed and implemented in 1995, in cooperation and in coordination with the Supreme Council for National Culture, executing agent of the five-year Emergency Plan, adopted by the Government of Cambodia for the safeguard of Angkor and the development of its Region.

During the Plenary Session which followed this Royal Audience and in which the representatives of 24 countries and organizations participated, the Head of the Royal Government's Delegation, H.E. Mr Vann Molyvann, Minister of State, underlined the different activities undertaken by His Majesty the King and by the international community to ensure the safeguarding and development of the historic and cultural wealth of the Angkor Site and to promote the integrated development of the whole region.

The Minister of State emphasized that, of the five measures requested by the World Heritage Committee before the end of 1995, three were achieved in the first year. The two others have been approved by the Royal Government and the National Assembly. He stressed the importance of the establishment of the Authority for the Protection, Safeguarding and Management of the Angkor region (APSARA) and of the Law on the Protection of the Cultural Heritage.

On behalf of the Royal Government, the Minister of State thanked the different countries and international and non-governmental organizations which are carrying out restoration and conservation work on 9 monuments of the site of Angkor. He hoped that other countries and organizations would join together in these efforts.

The different delegations outlined their projects, and the means which the member countries and international organisations propose to provide in 1996 in coordination with the Royal Cambodian Authorities and close cooperation with the Supreme Council for National Culture and APSARA.

The Head of the Royal Cambodian Delegation presented the broad outline of the Plan of Operations for 1996, for which international assistance was requested.

Finally, this meeting offered the opportunity for countries and organisations to reiterate their determination to assist the Royal Government in the implementation of the Plan of Emergency for the safeguarding and development of the site of Angkor and the Siem Reap area and to implement, effectively, the commitments made in October 1993. It was also an opportunity to reaffirm the common wish to provide assistance to His Majesty the King, the Royal Government and the Cambodian people in their efforts to rebuild Cambodia and its culture.