



**ROYAL SPEECH OF
PREAH KARUNA PREAH BAT SAMDECH PREAH BOROMNEATH
NORODOM SIHAMONI, KING OF CAMBODIA**

On the occasion of

"The Official Inauguration Ceremony of the Western Causeway of Angkor Wat Temple"
Angkor World Heritage Site

On November 4, 2023, at Siem Reap

- Samdech Vibolsena Pheakdey **SAY CHHUM**, President of the Senate of Cambodia
- Samdech Moha Bovor Thipadei **HUN MANET**, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Cambodia
- Samdech Akka Moha Sena Padei Techo **HUN SEN**, President of the High Privy Councillor of **H.M. the King** of Cambodia
- Samdech, Excellencies the High Privy Councillor of **H.M. the King** of Cambodia, Excellencies Deputy Prime Ministers, Senior Ministers, Ministers
- Her Excellency Dr. **PHOEURNG SACKONA**, Minister of Culture and Fine Arts
- Their Excellencies the Ambassadors, national and international distinguished guests
- His Excellency Mr. **UENO ATSUSHI**, Ambassador of Japan to the Kingdom of Cambodia
- Mr. **SARDAR UMAR ALAM**, UNESCO Representative in Phnom Penh
- His Excellency Mr. **AUGUSTINE SALI**, Chancellor of Sophia University

On this solemn and momentous occasion, **I** would like to present the enormous pleasure and the warmest congratulation to all participants involved in the coordination and organization of the Official Inauguration Ceremony of the Western Causeway of Angkor Wat temple, who have helped make this illustrious and historic event possible.

To begin with, **I** would like to convey the Royal Message of greeting and best wishes from **Her Majesty Queen-Mother** of Cambodia to Samdech, Excellencies, Lok Chumteavs, Ambassadors, national and international distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen who are present on this glorious occasion.

I would like to express my deep gratitude to Her Excellency Dr. **PHOEURNG SACKONA**, Minister of Culture and Fine Arts and Chairman of the Board of the APSARA Authority, for her detailed report on the great achievements of the activities, following the right policy of the Royal Government of Cambodia. The report highlights the activities of the APSARA Authority, which has contributed significantly to the maintenance of the western causeway of Angkor Wat.

In the meantime, it was a great pleasure to hear the report of Professor **YOSHIAKI ISHIZAWA**, Director of Sophia Asia Center for Research and Human Development of the Sofia University, Japan, and the speech of His Excellency **AUGUSTINE SALI**, Chancellor of Sofia University, which demonstrates the great efforts with good cooperation, research and repair the western causeway of Angkor Wat to be strong to preserve the valuable heritage of Khmer culture of the glorious metropolis. Indeed, Angkor Wat is evidence of the rise to the pinnacle of artistic culture in the 12th century, which is widely regarded as a wonder site and a symbol of innovation at the peak of humanity.

Samdech, Excellencies, Lok Chumteav, national and international distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen

The Sophia University Mission, a Japanese professional body under the leadership of Professor Yoshiaki Ishizawa, Director of the Sophia Asia Center for Research and Human Development, has been working in Angkor since 1989, prior to the initiative of the Government of Japan in establishing ICC-Angkor in 1993 by focusing on human resource development in the field of cultural heritage of Cambodia at the Royal University of Fine Arts, and subsequently participated in the training and conservation works with Cambodian experts on the sites of Angkor, including the establishment of the NORODOM SIHANOUK-Angkor Museum in 2007.

Samdech, Excellencies, Lok Chumteav, national and international distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen

The celebration of the Official Inauguration Ceremony of the western causeway of Angkor Wat temple in front of Angkor Wat temple, a masterpiece and a highest symbol of the great heroic of the Angkorian period, King Suryavarman II, is a historical event and a universal significance value. For all of us, this clearly marks another milestone in the history of close diplomatic relations over the past 70 years between Cambodia and Japan, officially began in 1953. The process of conservation and sustainable development of Angkor in the past, of course, starts from the participation of all stakeholders, both national and international, as a whole, and Japan, in particular.

His Majesty the King Father " **Preah Karuna Preah Borom RATANAK KAUDDH** " has taken great care to preserve the national cultural heritage, in particular Angkor Wat, which he always takes his distinguished guests, the Kings, the Heads of State, the Presidents, the leaders of many countries, to visit. During his tenure as President of Cambodia's Supreme National Council (SNC), he kept inviting distinguished guests to visit the temples of Angkor Wat. Angkor Wat was inscribed on the World Heritage List on December 14, 1992.

Through this, **I** sincerely acknowledge the monumental efforts of Samdech, Excellencies, Lok Chumteavs, ladies and gentlemen, national and international partners, as well as all leaders and staffs of APSARA National Authority, in particular, Samdech Vibol Panha **SOK AN** under the leadership of Samdech Akka Moha Sena Padei Techo **HUN SEN** and the former leaders who served our great nation with their seemingly limitless time and energy to accomplish these momentous tasks with high responsibility and a sense of national duty that has led to the establishment of Angkor as a site of universal renown.

This success also demonstrates the implementation of an effective Government Cultural Policy under the wise and prudent leadership of Samdech Akka Moha Sena Padei Techo **HUN SEN** and Samdech Moha Bovor Thipadei **HUN MANET**, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Cambodia, who have always paid great attention to the preservation, protection, conservation and development of national cultural heritage.

On this auspicious occasion, **I** sincerely thank and congratulate Japan that co-chaired the Plenary and Technical Sessions of ICC Angkor-Sambor Prei Kuk for the past 30 years with a vigilance and fortitude which has led to the success of the ICC Angkor-Sambor Prei Kuk.

I would also like to thank the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), Sophia University, especially Professor Yoshiaki Ishizawa, for his significant support in promoting the conservation, research, and training for Angkor in a sustainable way, in particular, his support until the completion of the restoration of western causeway of Angkor Wat temple and overall for the restoration of many other temples accompanied by the training of Cambodian human resources as well as disseminating Khmer history and culture to the whole world.

In this regard, **I** would like to encourage and support the continued development of human resources in the field of conservation and research of Cambodia in all forms with the institutions of Japan as well as with national and international partners in line with the vision of the Royal Government's Pentagon strategy, the spirit of the vision for the next 10 years of the ICC Angkor-Sambor Prei Kuk mechanism and in conformity with its reputation as one of the leading countries in Southeast Asia, in term of Angkor, the largest UNESCO archaeological site for human resources development.

Before concluding, **I** would like to take this opportunity to once again express my gratitude to all friendly countries, national and international experts, ministries, institutions, local authorities, armed forces and all the people who contribute to maintaining the universal value of Angkor, the Kingdom of Cambodia's World Heritage site.

I hope that the spirit for Angkor and the national culture will remain strongly, making APSARA National Authority and other relevant Cambodian cultural institutions be able to

continue perform their duties with great success in the conservation and development of the Angkor, Historic Site and other cultural and natural heritage for the benefit of the nation and the people of Cambodia.

Along with the Official Inauguration Ceremony of The Western Causeway of Angkor Wat Temple, the Angkor site, **I** wish Samdech, Excellencies, Lok Chumteavs, national and international distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen good health and success in their noble duties and to be blessed with the four blessings of the Buddha: longevity, nobility, good health and Strength.

Thank you!