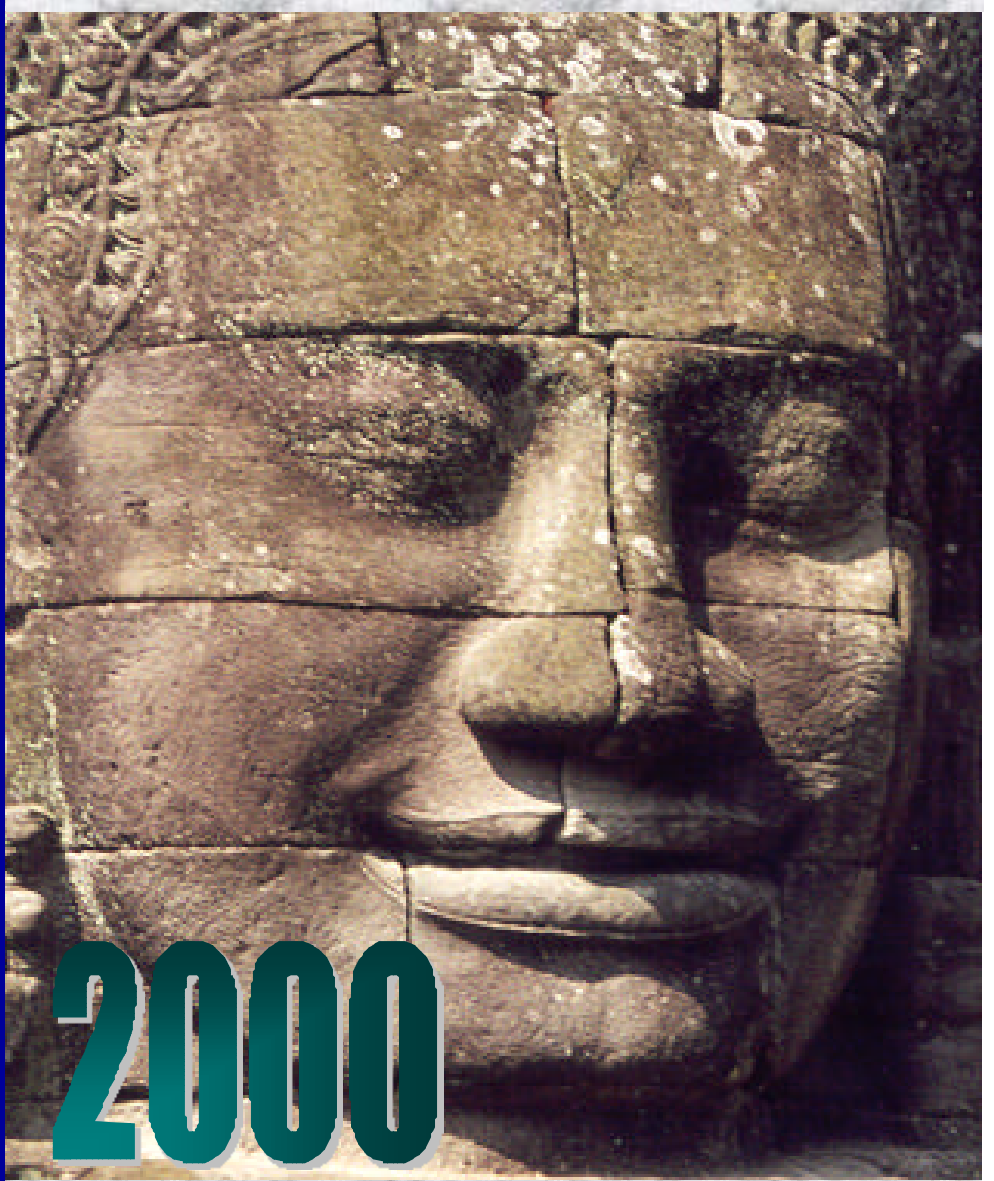
DEFENDING THE KINGDOM OF CAMBODIA



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Security and Development

"…National defense of the Kingdom of Cambodia is based on the people, with the Royal Cambodian Armed Forces as the core in implementing defense tasks. We must build the Royal Cambodian Armed Forces into an armed force which is absolutely loyal to the nation, respects the Constitution, is well disciplined, is polite, is morally clean, respects and loves the people, is capable of fulfilling the defense of independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity, and of maintaining and strengthening peace, stability and social security order. The reform of the Royal Cambodian Armed Forces must be enhanced so that it can be a well organized armed force with appropriate size, decent wages and allowances, and sufficient ability to perform its defense duties by contributing to national construction and development, and provision of assistance to people suffering from various disasters. This Defense White Paper clearly defines political guidelines for the RCAF in implementing its roles and tasks in an effective and useful manner. This document also represents Cambodia's commitment to the establishment of transparency, and efforts to build confidence in a peaceful and prosperous region..."

Hun Sen
Prime Minister
Royal Government of Cambodia

Message From
The Co-Ministers of National Defense

Because Cambodia has just emerged from numerous periods of instability, peace and social security have become vital to the Government's policy of ensuring the success of national development. This important Defense White Paper presents a score of pragmatic concepts and strategies drawn from the government's security guidance, defines new roles and responsibilities for the Royal Cambodian Armed Forces, and determines major objectives for future force development.

The important principle in this Defense White Paper is the emphasis placed on the close relationship between "Defense and Development of the Kingdom of Cambodia" an emphasis that is essential to the nation both in presence and in the future. The RCAF is greatly committed to ensuring that these two aspects are concurrently and successfully developed. The key role of the RCAF is to actively safeguard national independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity. It also consists of other contributions in order to maintain peace, stability and cooperation with neighboring and regional nations.

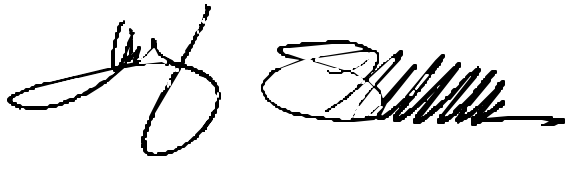
This Defense White Paper will benefit the following target audiences:

- All RCAF personnel who will be required to implement their roles and responsibilities in accordance with the principles of law, and the Government's policy guidelines on defense and security.
- The Government in order to allow it to supervise the implementation of a national defense policy and develop that policy in accordance with the regional and international political and security situation.

- The Cambodian people so that they may understand more about the obligations and duties of the RCAF, establish transparency for the use of national resources in defense, and promote people's confidence in the nation's armed forces.
- Neighboring and regional nations to allow them to understand Cambodian security perspective, and to encourage the efforts of mutual confidence building.
- Donor countries/agencies so that they are more satisfied with Cambodia's efforts for common security and the development of the RCAF towards a qualified and professional armed force.

We hope that this achievement will not only serve the national interests, but will also reflect our commitment to taking part in building a region of peace, security and development.

We wish to congratulate and thank the Working Group and our friends who contributed to the success of this invaluable project, and the many analysts both inside and outside the military who actively reviewed the draft of this document.



Tea Banh Sisowath Sirirath
Co-Ministers of National Defense

Message from The Commander-in-Chief of the RCAF

In light of the more complex challenges facing the RCAF during this decade, and in a time of severe budgetary constraints, we need to carefully examine our strategic policy in order that both national and defense objectives can be achieved concurrently, efficiently and effectively. As Commander-in-Chief I accept that the successful implementation of the government's security policy relies heavily on a number of factors including strong commitment from all leaders, great sacrifice from all RCAF personnel and the existence of a clear and pragmatic strategic defense policy.

This strategic policy document, the Defense White Paper, represents one of the above mentioned factors. It provides clear guidance for reform and professionalization of the armed forces. It also contributes to efforts for promoting confidence and transparency between Cambodia and its immediate neighbors and countries in the region.

Together with the recently released RCAF Five Year Plan, this Defense White Paper provides a realistic and affordable approach to taking Cambodia's defense into the future. We in Cambodia are very much aware that defense comes at a cost to the Royal Government and that we cannot move from our current state to a modern armed force overnight. We also clearly recognize the constraints on the national budget and the need to reduce defense spending in accordance with the Prime Minister's direction. Objectives and recommendations are clearly defined and portrayed in such a manner as to achieve real but incremental change.

The challenges we face are many. I am confident however, that with a commitment from all, that in the years to come we will look back and agree that the production of this Defense White Paper was the key turning point in the maturing the RCAF for achieving national defense.

General Ke Kim Yan
Commander-in-Chief
Royal Cambodian Armed Forces

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PREFACE

As a result of national reconciliation and the end of the Khmer Rouge's political and military organs, the Kingdom of Cambodia has achieved a complete peace. Political tensions and military confrontation in the nation have come to an end. This is the first time within the past decades that Cambodia has regained peace, following periods of sustained armed conflict. From the success of the Win Win policy which has brought full peace to the country, Samdech Hun Sen, the Prime Minister of the Royal Government of Cambodia, continues to put forward new visions to strengthen the country's stability, national reconciliation and development.

The integration of Cambodia into the international community is moving forward with a vigorous pace. A policy of strengthening political stability and social security is being focused on. A new order has been established to ensure that national resources are used more effectively. The national economy is improving, generating a stable environment for national development, and promoting greater confidence within the nation as well as among other nations and international institutions.

A reform policy is being undertaken by the Royal Government in order to improve all areas of Cambodian society. Of these, military reform, including the roles, structure, size and quality of the Royal Cambodian Armed Forces (RCAF), is important. The RCAF is an important instrument given its task of defending the nation and its interests against external aggression. With its significant skills, the RCAF can actively and broadly contribute to ensuring stability and national development.

Changes in political regimes resulted in limited opportunity for Cambodia to develop its military force. Consequently, the RCAF relied on its own initiatives in order to promote strong will, courage and public confidence. The linking of the military with the nation's interests also establishes good traditions. The process of developing the defense concepts by the Ministry of National Defense (MINADEF) and High Command Headquarters (HCHQ) at the present, and in the future must continue, based on experiences and lessons learned, clear objectives of the reform program and the two government principles for developing defense policy:

1. The RCAF must be capable of reforming its armed forces and developing the Royal Government objectives of peace, stability, democracy and the development of Cambodia in this new stage. Reform means the reduction of personnel and proper transfer of those people to civilian livelihood where they are to engage in farming and other productive activities. It also means the possession of appropriate active military personnel, effective equipment and reserves in readiness.
2. The RCAF must continue to maintain a good attitude, morals, courage and public confidence. At no time will the nation downplay the development of the armed forces and at no time will the armed forces themselves ignore the importance of their role in defending the nation and its interests. It is clear that in this new situation, where Cambodia has to maintain a sustained peace and stability, the virtue of the armed forces will not be forgotten. In this context, building the armed forces with quality, value, dignity, confidence and love from the people is a primary task for the RCAF and society as a whole.

Initiated by the Cambodian Ministry of National Defense, the Defense White Paper Seminar was organized in September 1999 with the support from the Australian Department of Defence and Australian National University. (Picture: DAO)

Cambodia's defense policy is a national defense bulwark relying on the commitment of the entire people of Cambodia. All Cambodian people have an obligation to participate in nation building and defending their motherland. Therefore, selective compulsory military service will be applied according to the rule of law. This means that selective compulsory military service will be carried out under suitable circumstances to ensure the sustainability of the RCAF.

Cambodia's strategic defense policy, as portrayed in this White Paper, reflects the efforts of Cambodia's MINADEF and HCHQ to demonstrate transparency and a spirit of promoting security cooperation. This White Paper will also provide guidelines for reform of the RCAF and determine the roles and tasks of the force in the new millennium. As the first defense policy to be published by the Kingdom of Cambodia, this White Paper marks the achievement of all Cambodian people, clearly indicates the determination of the Royal Government and MINADEF to serve the nation, and will benefit the region as a whole.

CHAPTER ONE
THE IMPACT OF HISTORY ON THE CAMBODIAN DEFENSE POSTURE

Over its relatively short history, Cambodia's defense posture has been influenced by a number of factors including external direct dominance by foreign powers, indirect dominance as a result of Cold War hostilities, internal conflict, doctrinal tendencies and leadership shortcomings. Each of these influences has helped to restrict a maturing process generally reflected in other nations of the region, resulting in manpower intensive, poorly equipped and an ill-trained force.

Prior to its independence in 1953, Cambodia received military assistance in the form of training and equipment from France. Defense structures and military norms were modeled on the French style.

Commencing about 1955, Cambodia began to provide training for reserve officers. This was then followed by the initiation of training of reserve non-commissioned officers. Both categories were volunteers selected from high ranking and mid-level government officials. Practically, although a number of reserve cadres were trained particularly in the 1960s, the *Forces Armées Royales Khmères' (FARK)* structure did not include reserve units and formations. Consequently, many of the reserve cadres, after their short period of training, simply remained in the regular force, never returning to their civilian positions in government departments. Exacerbating this failure, certain reserve cadres were given priority to assume additional civilian appointments, including provincial governors and district chiefs. Reserve service disappeared with the advent of the Khmer Republic and has not been instituted since that time. The lack of a precise plan for the organization of reserve units resulted in force development encountering immovable obstacles, particularly because at this time, a large number of the regular force was reaching the end of service life and was ready for retirement.

Then came the US with its more diversified military assistance. The FARK now became subjected to transformation in many areas to meet the standard of American equipment – including

attempts to change the organization of the force. Unfortunately, the quantity of equipment provided by the US was not sufficient to modernize and support the reorganized FARK. When the US aid was terminated in 1963, the FARK found itself stranded halfway through modernization and military reform. During this same period, Cambodia received military assistance from other socialist countries – the Soviet Union and China. Consequently, the FARK encountered serious problems, and the divergence of materials affected the training of combat and technical personnel, maintenance and the supply of spare parts and ammunition.

During the period 1963 to 1969, a period that has been described as the 'time of the great economic leap' in Cambodia, the armed forces participated in the building of the economic livelihood of the nation. The majority of the armed forces' activities, and much of the equipment of the FARK, was devoted to supporting projects in the economic sector including construction of roads, dykes, dams etc. Military personnel also participated in administrative and territorial organizations throughout the country.

Prior to the coup d'etat in March 1970, the FARK General Staff was under the command and control of the Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces, and the Head of State. At that time, His Majesty the King, Preah Bat Samdech Preah Norodom Sihanouk held both titles. The General Staff controlled the three Services with its headquarters also serving as headquarters and staff for the Army. The Ministry of National Defense was a government institution under the Prime Minister and in charge of only the technical and administrative services. The Ministry had no control over operations. These distinct responsibilities continued until the end of the Khmer Republic regime in 1975, then reemerged and have continued to be applied to the current defense organization. Within the same period, Cambodia was divided into six military regions, with each military region commander having responsibility for the conduct of operations within his own region.

The military situation dramatically changed following the coup d'etat in March 1970. Because of its previous deterioration and lack of combat readiness, the newly renamed *Forces Armées Nationales Khmères* (*FANK*) of the Khmer Republic encountered serious difficulties as it commenced to undertake operations in the 'real' war spreading throughout the nation. Beginning with less than

35,000, the FANK was forced to conduct a risky military conscription program under the banner of 'general military service'. In response to a declared state of emergency, and the requirement to expand the force to 210,000 as demanded by the leaders of the Khmer Republic, the size of the force became dramatically inflated, bypassing most training procedures. The armed forces were eventually comprised of a mixture of students, civil servants and villagers who had received very little or no basic military training. However, some combatant and specialist units, and a number of military personnel, did receive overseas training with the support of the US, South Vietnam, Thailand, Laos, Indonesia, the Philippines etc.

In part, the increased effort to raise the combatant capability of the FANK stemmed from the bombing by US aircraft. From March 1969 to August 1973 the US dropped 539,129 tons of bombs on Cambodian soil, with just under half of this tonnage, approximately 257,465 tons, being dropped during the period 24 February to 14 August 1973. The bombing not only took the lives of thousands of Khmer people, but it also pushed the Viet Cong movement deeper into Cambodia's territory. One of the bitter tragedies of this bombing campaign occurred on 7 August 1973 when a flight of US B52s dropped approximately 20 tons of bombs on the crowded public markets and hospital of Neak Loeung; killing 137 and wounding 298 people, mostly combatants and their families.

Full dependence on the US, and unrecoverable corruption and the deadlock in political solutions resulted in the Khmer Republic facing a heavy social crisis. Approximately 2 million refugees poured into the cities, resulting in malnutrition, chaos and inflation. Serious corruption in the military encouraged ghost, irregular and unpaid soldiers with low morale, which resulted in the regime collapsing hastily.

The absence of development of force capability was clearly evident in the Khmer Rouge regime's defense posture. During the war against the Khmer Republic (1970-1975), most of the Khmer Rouge military cadres who joined the movement voluntarily were not given sufficient military training. Strategy was designed on a war of the masses and through political motivation. Their victory in April 1975 was generally achieved through political advantage and overwhelming support of the people; and because of deteriorated popularity, corruption, anarchy and internal rifts within the Khmer

Republic regime, rather than through the skilful application of military force.

After it came to power in 1975, no effort was made by the Khmer Rouge regime through training and modernization, to develop its armed forces, known as the National Army of Democratic Kampuchea (NADK). There are a number of reasons why the Pol Pot regime did not develop these programs. Firstly, large numbers of the NADK were forced to work on farms under reeducation programs, while others were involved in the regimes brutal internal security measures. Secondly, by the time the Khmer Rouge began to rule the country, Cambodia having been severely damaged by war, the first relaxed two years had not given the regime sufficient time to develop its forces. Soon after though, the regime began to wage war against its neighbor, and faced internal conflict, factors that led to mass purges and massacres of their own kind that resulted in millions of innocent people losing their lives.

At that time Pol Pot's policy first focused on resolving the internal security issue, especially the so-called purge of his social enemies. This genocidal policy applied to Khmer Rouge military personnel and cadres and forced some Khmer Rouge Units and members to flee to Vietnam. Pol Pot then commenced to consider Vietnam as his real enemy. Where previously the regime had eliminated those accused of being US CIA or Soviet KGB, now groups of families of innocent people accused of having Vietnamese blood, or being hostile agents, were brought to be killed. In 1977, because of land disputes and a clash of ideologies, the Khmer Rouge began a campaign to claim disputed territory, resulting in military tension on the border. Confrontation, with no attempt at a diplomatic solution, ignited into fill-scale war when the Khmer Rouge troops launched several attacks approximately 70 kilometers deep into Vietnam at the end of 1977 and throughout 1978. Subsequently, with an increase in the anti-Khmer Rouge movement, the Kampuchean Solidarity and National Salvation Front being established on 2 December 1978 at Kratie's Snoul District, and in accordance with the appeal from the Cambodian people, the Kampuchean Solidarity and National Salvation Armed Forces together with the Vietnamese People’s Armed Forces toppled the Khmer Rouge on 7 January 1979. For the above reasons and because of the implementation of the policy of killing its own kind, the Khmer Rouge lost support from the nation and was defeated abruptly.

From early 1979, the effect of the Cold War brought about a new security dimension to Cambodia: an increased effort to prevent the return of the genocidal regime, and a movement against the Vietnamese occupation of Cambodia. The Kampuchean People's Revolutionary Armed Forces, which later changed its name to the Cambodia People's Armed Forces (CPAF) of the Phnom Penh government, was rebuilt consistent with the socialist system, and with the support of Vietnam, the former USSR, and other socialist countries. The Army evolved from battalions to divisions. Besides this simple reorganization of military structure, the Phnom Penh government also set up other command and coordinating systems such as military regions and provincial unified commands. Further, to support its security plans across the country, and to fill out regular units during operations, the government established armed militia in communes and villages. The USSR and Vietnam provided various material and training. In addition, before its final withdrawal from Cambodia in 1989, the Vietnamese troops helped to strengthen the fighting spirit and combat techniques of the CPAF.

The creation of the Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea (CGDK) on 22 June 1982 – based on the Khmer Rouge Constitution, having the Khmer Rouge as the core force, and as a government recognized by the UN – extended armed conflict in Cambodia, and allowed the Khmer Rouge to exist until early 1999.

Because of the factors described above and the influence of the Cold War's ideological contest, and the interference of some global powers, Cambodia became bogged down in a disastrous tragedy within an insecure environment. This remained the case for the more than 20 years after 1970, and was only resolved through the free and democratic elections of 1993. Cambodia was forced to accept the consequences of the spread of the Second Indochina War, which saw the nation's towns, rural communities and farmlands become fields for new weaponry tests, as well as the frontline for Super Power ideological competitions.

External warring powers were also responsible for leaving another insidious legacy to the people of Cambodia, landmines and unexploded ordnance. With no care and no responsibility, these warring powers imported these criminal weapons into the nation free of charge, leaving behind them maimed and destroyed human lives,

and a crippled economy and national infrastructure. Estimates suggest that Cambodia will need many years to remove such obstacles, and only at immense financial expense to the nation.

A legitimate national armed force, the Royal Cambodian Armed Forces (RCAF), was reestablished in 1993 following the creation of a democratically elected First-Term Government. The formation of this government was a great achievement stemming from the Paris Peace Accords, UN peacekeeping operations in Cambodia (UNTAC), and the noble leadership of His Majesty the King Preah Bat Samdech Preah Norodom Sihanouk in achieving national reconciliation and unity. A formula whereby the armed forces of all parties were integrated into one national armed force was agreed. This new RCAF comprised 60% of the armed forces of State of Cambodia (SOC), 30% of the *Front Uni Nationale pour le Cambodge Independent, Neutre, Pacifique et Cooperatif* (FUNCINPEC) force, and 10% the Khmer People's National Liberation Front (KPNLF) force. Although stubbornly boycotted by the Khmer Rouge hardliners, and a failure of UNTAC to disarm and demobilize 70% of each armed force, this establishment was truly reinforced by an effective political solution as well as the peace-loving will of a large Cambodian circle.

Cambodia was rushed to formulate a professional military institution. Despite strong efforts in the initial stages, the process was hindered by a number of crises. The expansion of the crisis of ghost soldiers and political tendencies within the RCAF were some of the major obstructions that caused a number of well-intended measures to fail.

The internal security situation of the nation also contributed to the jamming of the force development process. As the outlawed Khmer Rouge rebels intensified their anti-government activities throughout the country, the RCAF was obliged to control this rebellion. The fact that the RCAF was constantly on operations meant that training, which is so important for developing military capability, was minimized and little maintenance of military equipment was undertaken.

Within the period of the second-term government, the political and security environment has been the most stable in recent history; indicating that Cambodia may have finally achieved total peace. This environment has been achieved through a policy of national reconciliation and unity under the rule of His Majesty the King, Preah Bat Samdech Preah Norodom Sihanouk, Samdech Prime Minister Hun Sen's initiated 'win win' policy of the Royal Government, and goodwill of the Cambodian people. This achievement has been gained through a change in government systems, disappearance of violent political confrontation (that had previously resulted in the application of military force), and the total disintegration of the political and military organs of the Khmer Rouge.

The RCAF now has to reactivate its reforms consistent with the Government's political guidelines. These guidelines direct the armed forces to demobilize to an acceptable size, achieve sound capability, and inculcate high ethics and dignity and advancement towards international standardization in the future. The RCAF now has to plan for its agenda to include security cooperation for the common benefit of the whole region. Instead of combating internal strife, the RCAF is now extending its relationships in the international arena. Just as importantly, the Government is desirous of reducing expenditure on defense and security and channeling the savings to other social development issues.

Having achieved security advantages, commitment of the nation's top leadership, and assistance from friendly countries, the Ministry of National Defense and High Command Headquarters are now embarking on producing their strategic defense policy. The aim is to achieve the desired outcomes of the Royal Cambodian Government and the people of the nation.

CHAPTER TWO
CAMBODIA'S STRATEGIC OUTLOOK

Global Security

Following the collapse of the Soviet Union in the 1990s, major ideological, political and economic confrontations that had plagued the world for over 40 years since World War Two have almost disappeared. However, that change has not led to a benign strategic environment. A number of regions in the world continue to witness uncertainty in their security outlook and new security concerns have subsequently reemerged. This uncertainty stems from many causes. These include the creation of many new nations, the changing role of major powers, internal unrest due to racial prejudice and religious and ethnic differences, and disputes over territory, both on land and in the maritime areas.

A number of regions have witnessed security problems, mostly ethnic crises. Military intervention, and a combination of military and negotiated efforts, has been used to resolve these problems. Often applicable solutions have been seen as reconciled negotiations. These means have been developed through bilateral and multilateral approaches, and through the UN or regional mechanisms. Military means alone could not ensure success in these settlements.

The strategic outlook is thus very complex. Hegemonic policies remain. These include the development of nuclear weapon's capability, strengthening of military alliances and the use of economic resources so that the modern technologies can be included in defense domains.

The new security agenda is, however, much wider than traditional balance of power issues. At present, the world is focusing its attention on a variety of security issues. Environmental security is promoting a great deal of influence on world societies. Environmental contamination with no controls, decreases in natural resources and changes to the environment have been drawing people's attention to consider their detrimental affects on security considerations. The world must acknowledge that pollution of the global environment and global warming resulting in rising sea levels are on the increase. Deforestation and destruction of various natural resources, lack of water and nuclear waste are the real threats to economic development. Environmental threats cause a danger to the social and political order and may ultimately lead to military conflict.

As the world struggles to free itself from conflict and tries to avoid economic crisis, other issues such as the production of lethal chemical and biological weapons, drug and human trafficking and international crimes and terrorism are spreading, especially in those countries facing social crisis. These illegal activities can lead to military confrontation or international economic sanctions.

Asia-Pacific Security

Despite an end to the Indo-China War that witnessed South-East Asia being used as a contesting field for ideological powers, the future security situation in the Asia-Pacific similarly remains a major concern. Both during and after the Cold War, Cambodia suffered the effects of ideological contests, plunging the nation into nearly three

decades of war and domestic crisis. While Cambodia has never been an opponent in such contests, nor will she initiate any problem in the region, she does have concerns about future regional security. These concerns have gained particular significance following her membership of ASEAN.

Of primary concern is that Cambodia may be indirectly affected by a protracted Spratly Islands dispute in the South China Sea. On the surface, this situation is a contest between powerful China and some members of ASEAN. ASEAN claimants appear to be searching for a solution that calls for self-restraint for the sake of regional stability and security. The ARF is playing a mediatory and mechanistic role, although it has been unable to contribute any positive solutions so far. ARF has been lobbying countries involved in this dispute to remain patient and not use military force. Because she maintains a very healthy relationship with China and is a member of ASEAN, Cambodia has adopted a cautious view towards how this crisis should be resolved. As a country attempting to maintain the interests of both sides, Cambodia will continue to advocate that a peaceful solution must remain the highest priority, whether through the ARF, or any form of bilateral or multilateral approaches.

Cambodia is concerned about the spread of any dispute in the South China Sea that may affect her own economic development. Economic development, especially in the field of trade, is significantly dependent on a good trading relationship with countries in the region. Any blockage in maritime lines of communication will affect Cambodia's economic development. Cambodia has to maintain her neutral position over the Spratly Islands and is willing to see an increased and more effective role for the ARF in solving this dispute.

In the future, military confrontation between nations will not arise simply due to military issues. As mentioned previously, mankind will continue to struggle with natural resources to maintain livelihood. Of these resources, those under the sea are of major concern. The present problem is to resolve overlapping Maritime Economic Exclusion Zones (MEEZ). Unfortunately, the problem appears to be growing, especially in the region of the South China Sea. Cambodia believes that solving such disputes between nations should be by way of peaceful bilateral negotiation as she has done with her neighbors when similar disputes have arisen. Joint cooperation is the only way to share such natural resources.

An additional security issue facing Cambodia is the use of the Mekong River system. Countries through which this river flows exploit this river considerably for their economic development. Worryingly, the physical condition of this river is in a dilapidated state. Cambodia remains concerned about the continuing construction of dams on this river by China, the absence of management in the irrigation systems and the contamination of its water due to industrial waste. Her people rely on the river to harvest food, drink and irrigate their crops. Cambodia believes that only through an effective Mekong River Basin Commission, providing mutual understanding and respect of the laws of water between countries situated along the river, which will result in the sustainment of all areas of the river resources, can this vitally important ecosystem be maintained into the future.

Environmental issues are, and will remain, an essential topic of interest in the region. Dumping of nuclear and toxic waste, pollution of the atmosphere with toxic gases, air pollution caused by smoke from deliberately lit forest fires in South-East Asia, deforestation and destruction of aquatic animals are major threats to regional security.

Increasing crime is also cause for concern. Unfortunately, Cambodia is witnessing a variety of illegal international activities as she recovers from the effects of internal crisis. These activities include acting as a transit point for drug and human trafficking, kidnapping, and money laundering. Cambodia's limited capability to control her maritime borders, primarily due to the Navy's lack of state of the art equipment and training, has allowed criminals with international abilities to conduct their illegal activities. Further, illegal immigration, principally due to the economic crisis, is also having an adverse effect on regional security. The uncontrolled illegal movement of people between nations across the region is on the increase and is bringing about a social crisis that includes sexually transmitted diseases and criminal activities.

In the past, Cambodia had little experience in dealing with drug trafficking, and drug abuse was not common. Currently, international drug dealers are using Cambodia as a transit point for their businesses. Illegal entry into Cambodia is often linked to an increase in illegal drug and human trafficking. These illegal practices are not only of concern to the Cambodian society, but may also produce a

detrimental affect on Cambodia's relations with countries that are final destinations for these illegal commodities.

Besides illegal immigrants from neighboring countries who are residing in Cambodia, there are many other illegal immigrants whose countries do not border Cambodia. They are using Cambodia as a staging post prior to movement to a third country. Illegal transmigration is threatening Cambodia's social security and controlling them is proving difficult. Often during their short stay they use Cambodia as their personal killing and kidnapping field. What is more, as they intend to live in a third country Cambodia has an international obligation to the security of that target country. Finding a diplomatic solution is sometimes the subject of complicated discussions.

The Effects of Regional Social and Economic Crises on Cambodia's Security

While Cambodia was less affected by the recent financial crisis than a number of its neighbors, those events showed clearly how a robust economy is the essential underpinning of an effective security policy. It provides the resources and skills to develop a strong military force to protect national interests. It provides commitment and unity among the people. It ensures that there will be much less scope for external forces to promote division or instability, whether through military activities, as in the past, or the new challenges of transitional crime.

For this reason, Cambodia must improve her ability to put in place economic systems that will ensure such a crisis does not deal a severe blow to her emerging economy. Military expenditure must be targeted at the primary security objectives and be maintained at a level compatible with overall national objectives. The capacity of the armed forces to contribute to those wider development objectives and to support the people in an emergency is a priority. Military capabilities that strengthen Cambodia's national infrastructure have particular value.

CHAPTER THREE
BUILDING A SECURE REGION

The changing nature of the security environment demands the nations work closely together to promote stability and to tackle shared concerns. The key to Cambodia's efforts in this area will be its membership of ASEAN.

ASEAN Cooperation

In a speech delivered by Samdech Prime Minister Hun Sen in the opening of Cambodia's entry into ASEAN on May 5, 1999, he raised four points on Cambodia's interests when admitted into ASEAN. Summarized, these points are:

- ASEAN has established security, peaceful and stable environments in the region, which are helping to boost economic growth. Peace and stability can be achieved through a framework of effective cooperation and consultation based on the principles of the 1967 Bangkok Declaration especially the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries. Cambodia believes that this principle is an excellent rule with which relationships and disputes within the circle of ASEAN can be strengthened and solved.

- ASEAN is a region for cooperation that helps foster community spirit among its members. The principle of "CONSENSUS" in decision-making is a strong foundation for the spirit and culture of cooperation in the community. Although some differences may arise, the spirit of cooperation in ASEAN will not allow the undermining of the group. While difficult to implement, ASEAN will try to maintain such an important principle.

- ASEAN's economic growth over the past two decades is famous. Although suffering from recent financial crisis, Cambodia believes that this will fade away in the near future. ASEAN's position will not only firm once again, but also its improvement will be double.

- ASEAN is a forum for diplomacy and a major international gateway. Over the past 30 years, ASEAN has established a mechanism for cooperation and consultation by maintaining a close relationship with its partners through ARF, APEC, ASEM and ASEAN Dialogue Partners. This mechanism has set up an effective network in foreign cooperation and relationship between ASEAN and its partners in the important political and economic fields throughout the world.

Bilateral Initiatives

Cooperation within ASEAN is complemented by enhanced relations between Cambodia and its neighbors.

Thailand. Thailand shares its sea and land borders with Cambodia in the north and west. Its population is six times more than Cambodia's and its military power is much more modern than Cambodia's. It also has close military relations with the USA and conducts annual military exercises, such as Cobra Gold, with this country. Recently, and especially prior to the financial crisis, Thailand accelerated its military modernization program. Although some critics suggest that this modernization lead to a regional arms race, Cambodia believes that because of her economic improvement and her military relations with the USA, Thailand required such a military modernization program.

General Mongkol Ampornpisit, Supreme Commander of the Royal Thai Armed Forces (center) and General Surayud Chulanont, Commander- in-Chief of the Royal Thai Army (left) pay a courtesy call to Samdech Hun Sen, Prime Minister of Cambodia, during their official visit in October 1999. (Picture: Minadef)

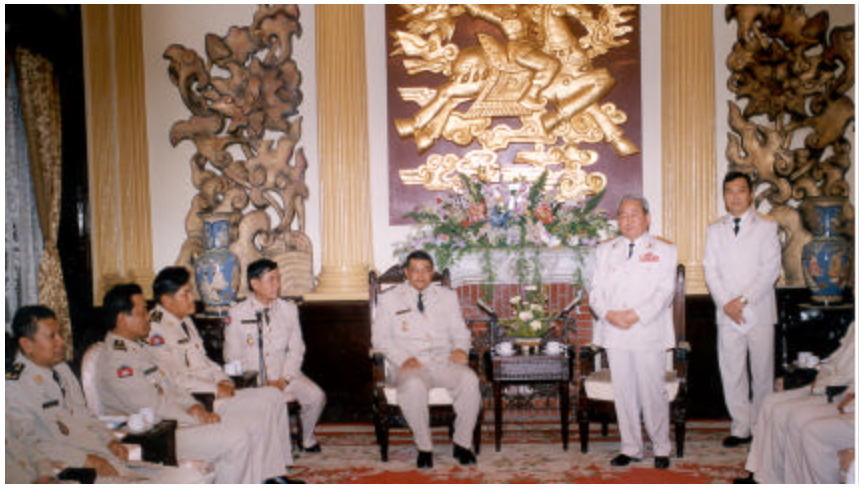
Cambodia has never thought of Thailand as a military threat to Cambodia's security. This opinion is premised on the view that Cambodia is not a competitor with Thailand, nor is there any evidence of a potential crisis that would cause Thailand to use military force against Cambodia.

In 1997, the two countries sought a solution to their overlapping economic areas. Through subsequent negotiations, both countries have indicated the possibility of establishing a joint venture in order to make possible the use of overlapping economic areas in the Gulf of Thailand. However, a question mark hangs over exploration for natural gas. While ever a lack of agreement remains about gas exploration, economic development in this area will remain out of reach, especially to Cambodia.

Land border disputes between the two countries have rarely arisen over the past two years with only minor incidents occurring. Because of wars and internal security concerns, Cambodia has not been able to maintain permanent control over the border. The continuing border defensive system established by Thailand in the 1980s, and other factors, resulted in the border line in some areas being unclear and needing to be inspected and resolve through negotiation. Because of these continuing border concerns the two countries agreed in 1996 to create a joint General Border Committee working from the local to the national level. This committee has worked tirelessly in an attempt to resolve border issues. As a result of the committee's efforts, security on the border is now stable, and trade corridors between the two countries are being opened regularly and securely.

In recent times, there have been numerous examples of effective cooperation between the two countries. Cambodia and Thailand through effective cooperation solved the problem of Cambodian refugees located in Thailand. Repatriation to their native country of all Cambodian refugees was conducted successfully. In mid-1999, Thailand approached the Cambodian Ministry of Foreign Affairs suggesting joint maritime patrol along the sea border. The purpose of this patrol was to prevent the destruction of natural resources and clamp down on piracy. Cambodia welcomed the approach and hopes that it can respond positively in the future.

Vietnam. Like Thailand, Vietnam, which lies to the east of Cambodia, also shares common land and sea borders. Relations between Cambodia and Vietnam are generally good apart from uncertainty over some border demarcations and overlapping maritime economic areas that need to be resolved through negotiation. A Border Committee, whose task is similar to that established between Cambodia and Thailand, has been established by the two countries. Recently, the National Commission on Border Issues of the two countries held talks in an attempt to seek a formula for solving existing border problems. The two sides agreed on an approach that should put an end to their border problems as soon as possible.



Gen. Ke Kim Yan (fifth from left), C-in-C 0f the RCAF, led a high level delegation to visit Vietnam in 1999 with a view to strengthening relations between the two Armed Forces. (Picture: Minadef)

The population of Vietnam is seven to eight times more than Cambodia's and the country maintains a large defense force. The defense force inventory includes large quantities of weapons and equipment. Although border disputes and illegal immigrants are of concern to Cambodia, there is no evidence to support military tension occurring between the two countries in the foreseeable future. Cambodia is drawn to this conclusion because the Cold War is over, Vietnam is a member of ASEAN and the priority for Vietnam now is to develop its own market economy.

Laos. Relations between Cambodia and Laos are generally good. Despite some uncertainties occurring in the northern border

regions of Cambodia, these issues are currently being resolved in a peaceful manner.

Cambodian delegation pictured with Laotian counterpart during the visit to Laos in July 1999. (Picture: Minadef)

Engagement with Global Nations

Security cooperation with the major Asia-Pacific powers is similarly important to Cambodia's future. Cambodia's relationship with the **USA** remains a priority in the field of economic development. The Most Favored Nation (MFN) Status and Generalized System Preference (GSP) boosts Cambodia's major industrial exports. In addition, the USA assists Cambodia in human resource development and other forms of humanitarian assistance. In relation to national security, Cambodia will continue to extend her cooperation with the USA in both the military and social security fields (such as the fight against drug trafficking).

In the past, the RCAF received assistance through the International Military Education and Training (IMET) scheme and the Title 10 Program of the USA. This assistance focused on human resource development through education, training, seminars and conference attendance. Additionally, the RCAF received assistance under the Military-to-Military Contact Program, which helped to increase the ability of the RCAF in the fields of engineering, mine clearance, health care, legislation and human rights. Following the

political differences in July 1997, all of these remain suspended except for tropical medicine research.

Lt-Gen. William Steele, Commander of the USA Pacific Command, accompanied by Col. Victor Raphael, Army Attaché to Cambodia, visit flood-affected areas in Kampot in 1996. (Picture: Chea Chheang – AKP)

Through a sequence of diplomatic and military consultations, the Cambodian Ministry of National Defense has tried to have the above-mentioned US military assistance resumed. This assistance is considered most important for the development of the RCAF's ability to perform its tasks and to participate in national reconstruction. The Cambodian Ministry of National Defense trusts that because of Cambodia's positive attitude towards reform of the RCAF, the above mentioned military assistance will be resumed and further extended.

France has had traditional cooperation with Cambodia in many areas. France maintains active military cooperation in the fields of training of cadet officers, training of the Royal Gendarmerie and the offer of training for the Ministry of Interior. Currently, France and the European Union are focusing on the reconstruction of Cambodia. Cambodia believes that this increase in France and European Union assistance will be of benefit to the whole nation as well as Ministry of National Defense.

Gen. Tea Banh (left) and Gen. Tea Chamrath, former Co-Ministers of National Defense (right) and French Ambassador, Gildas De Lidec, during the handover ceremony of French Equipment to the RCAF. (Picture: Chea Chheang – AKP)

The Cambodian Ministry of National Defense signed a memorandum on bilateral military cooperation with **Russia** in 1995. But as this powerful country encountered domestic economic crisis, cooperation so far has produced no outcomes. Russia's view is that defense cooperation should occur in the near future. The Cambodian Ministry of National Defense will always welcome defense cooperation with Russia given that most of the military equipment and materials used by the Cambodian military was secured from the former Soviet Union.

Co-Ministers of National Defense, Gen. Tea Banh and HRH Prince Sisowath Sirirath meet with Russian Ambassador, HE. Victor V. Samoilenco. (Picture: Chea Chheang – AKP)

China has long traditional relations with Cambodia. China's investment in the Kingdom of Cambodia has reached a high level in such fields as light industry and agriculture. Recently, trade relations also increased. In the military field China is also attempting to build closer relations with Cambodia. This includes granted non-refundable assistance for training, shelters, health, engineering and transportation. In the area of human resource training, China has accepted RCAF personnel for training in the strategic, tactical, technical and medical fields. The Cambodian Ministry of National

Defense will attempt to strengthen its relations, especially in the areas of engineering and specialized training.

Gen. Zhang Wan Nian, Vice Chairman of the Military Central Commission of the PLA, is welcomed by Cambodian high ranking officers during his visit to Cambodia in April 1996. (Picture: Chea Chheang – AKP)

Australia continues to provide assistance programs to many areas such as human resource education, agriculture, health care, criminal justice, mine clearance, and DCP. Resuming defense assistance in mid-1999, Australia changed the objective of its DCP by focusing on the development of strategic policy documents including the Defense White Paper, professional military education and training, English-language training and military medical assistance. Cambodia's Ministry of National Defense will continue its close relations with Australia in order to extend military cooperation in other fields such as military skills training, and other mutually agreed possibilities for Cambodian military servicemen, thereby allowing participation in international cooperative activities in the future.

English training is an important component of current Australian defense assistance to the RCAF. Lt-Gen. Pol Saroeun, Chief of Joint Staff (fifth from left), and Australian Ambassador, Dr. Malcolm Leader (third from left), preside over the opening ceremony of the language Laboratory at Reussey Keo Language Training School. (Picture: DAO)

Relations with the United Nations

From 1991 onwards, the image of the United Nations remains at the forefront of the minds of the Cambodian people. With the clear-sighted leadership of the King of the Kingdom of Cambodia, the UN helped to bring about peace and democracy to Cambodia by way of the 1993 general election. Having concluded its mandate, which at its peak included more than 20,000 personnel, the UN left in place its systems of assistance including the bureau of human rights and other functional agencies to help restore Cambodia's infrastructure, economy and legislative system. Cambodia intends to act as a responsible international nation and will retain strong links with the UN.

The Co-Ministers of National Defense meet with Special Representative of the UN Secretary General for Cambodia. (Picture: Chea Cheeg – AKP)

CHAPTER FOUR
CAMBODIAN DEFENSE POLICY

Cambodia's new stability, the importance of providing a secure environment for development, and the nation's reemergence into the international community demand a coherent and well founded defense policy.

According to Article 49 of the Cambodian Constitution, all Cambodian people have an obligation to contribute to the building and defense of the nation. The national defense strength fundamentally depends on people force, and the RCAF is the core in the implementation of this defense responsibility. The RCAF is born from the people and must implement the Royal Government's political guidelines of defending the nation and maintaining security, of engaging in nation building and to save people from disasters.

In a state where the nation has just recovered from war, national defense and nation building are major strategic responsibilities for the RCAF, and the entire population must work cohesively to achieve this end, resulting in a prosperous Kingdom of Cambodia.

Factors Shaping Defense Policy

The framework for defense policy is clearly defined in Chapter Four (Article 51-55) of the Cambodian Constitution. Article 53 stipulates that The Kingdom of Cambodia adopt a policy of permanent neutrality and non-alignment. Cambodia shall not invade any country, nor interfere in any other country's internal affairs, directly or indirectly. Cambodia shall not join in any military alliance or military pact that is incompatible with its policy of neutrality. Cambodia shall not permit any foreign military base on its territory and shall not have military bases abroad, except within the framework of a UN request. Cambodia reserves the right to receive foreign assistance by way of military equipment and training of its armed forces, and other assistance for self-defense, and to maintain public order and security within its territory. Article 54 states that the manufacturing, use and storage of nuclear, chemical or biological weapons shall be absolutely prohibited.

The Royal Government's political guidelines, declared by Samdech Prime Minister Hun Sen on 30 December 1998 placed the emphasis on building the RCAF to become an armed force that has full allegiance to the nation, respects the Constitution, is well disciplined, has good ethics and politeness, respects and loves the people and has enough capability to safeguard national independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity as well as maintaining and strengthening stability, security and social order. The RCAF is to be transformed into a professional armed force with appropriate size, having better pay and capability to defend the country, engaging in national development, and offering relief and rescuing those people suffering from disasters. Efforts should be made to reduce defense spending and to increase expenditure on other social affairs. Good control is to be maintained over weapons and ammunition by eliminating arms trade in the black markets, confiscating illegal weapons and destroying unneeded weapons and explosives.

(Picture: Chea Chheang- AKP)

The RCAF is to comply consistently with the Royal Government's foreign policy principles of neutrality, peace, friendship, cooperation, non-alignment, and non-interference in its relations with countries in the world. The RCAF maintains a position of solving problems with its neighbors by peaceful means. The use of force and a military response will only be applied in cases of any encroachment on Cambodian territory and when peaceful solutions have produced no results.

Within the current environment whereby Cambodia has recently emerged from a chronic bonfire of war, continues to face numerous difficulties, and centers all efforts on rehabilitating and developing the country, the RCAF is incapable of joining any bilateral or multilateral military exercises. Further, the RCAF is currently incapable of providing military forces to participate in any UN peacekeeping operation. The RCAF is limited to participating in seminars and workshops to enhance ability and experience.

Since 1993, the RCAF has been manned on the basis of an amalgamation of the military forces of the previous factions in accordance with the Paris Peace Accords. There has been no new personnel recruitment except for a small number of officer cadets. In the meantime, the RCAF's reform plan requires the demobilization of 55,000 soldiers over five years in accordance with directions from the Royal Government. Because of the need to maintain the RCAF's manpower within authorized ceilings, and in accordance with Article 49 of the Constitution, selective compulsory military service might be needed under certain circumstances so that the RCAF's defense capability can be sustained. Without this option, the RCAF's human resources could fall short of requirement and the armed forces could end up with only commanders and aging officers with no fit, strong and young soldiers to perform their roles and responsibilities. Although Cambodia is not at war, the national defense obligation remains essential and must not effect reconciliation, multi-party democracy, respect for human rights and national development. The implementation of selective compulsory military service will, apart from maintaining the military force, result in a number of positive impacts such as the promotion of knowledge, a spirit of awareness and nationalism among Cambodia's youth, and will also heighten discipline, ethics and national values in the society.

Assessment of the Threats to Cambodian Security

A comprehensive approach to defense and security is important because of the wide range of challenges that Cambodia faces now and in the immediate future.

Military Threats. The military threat to Cambodia in the near term is low. This assessment is based on the following three factors:

- Successful implementation of the Government's national reconciliation policy as a result of which the country has enjoyed peace and stability;

- The adherence of "an amity policy" with the countries in the region. Cambodia fully intends to use peaceful conflict resolution measures to avoid physical confrontation; and

- Commitment to Trust and Confidence Building Measures, which are major objectives for the ARF.

Economic Threats. The successful emergence of the Asia Pacific region from its recent economic crisis, Cambodia's membership in ASEAN, the assistance from the world community, and its political stability and internal security are supporting the possibility of the country's economic prosperity for the next millennium. However, internal peace and security is vital to the Government's economic development. Cambodia must maintain border security by upgrading safety at the border crossing points, and ensuring the safety and security of its sea-lanes of communication.

Demographic Threats. The current Government's concern is to improve the people's well being. Part of the Government's effort is to build and enhance infrastructures in the remote countryside to allow the people the opportunity to develop their economy. This policy requires a strong promotion of national cohesion and a commitment to develop lines of communication. Any shortcoming in security maintenance, therefore, could create advantages for rebellion and disrupt economic development.

Another demographic concern is the spread of the HIV/AIDS disease. A recent survey has indicated a high rate of infection exists among the armed forces personnel. Without immediate and effective measures being taken, this "enemy" will not only endanger the human resources in the society but will cripple the efforts of developing the armed forces' capability as well.

Geographic Threats. Cambodia acknowledges that the current border questions and the issue of overlapping Exclusive Economic Zones require an urgent diplomatic solution. Cambodia, Vietnam, and Thailand have recently shown their commitment to resolve the problems. General Border Committees have already been established

with Thailand and through these mechanisms the matters can be resolved either on the ground or at the national level. Nevertheless, border issues are sensitive and need to be resolved effectively.

Environmental Threats. Because of a long period of social disruption, Cambodia has suffered a severe destruction of its national resources. About 40% of its forests have been destroyed; wildlife and marine and fresh water resources are endangered, and national properties such as artifacts have been looted. Understanding this serious threat, and placing all effort to stop these illicit activities at a high priority of national security measures, is essential. The lack of adherence to national security responsibilities will seriously undermine the country's culture and national values.

National Defense Objectives

Managing these security challenges effectively will not be an easy task and it will take some years to achieve a comprehensive outcome. National resources are not unlimited and the right balance must be maintained between expenditure on defense and security, and the resources devoted to overall national development. The clear national objective is to achieve security and development together.

To support this national goal, Cambodia's defense policy needs to pursue several key objectives in coming years. These are to:

- maintain the capacity to ensure stability and social order within Cambodia in support of national interests;
- protect the nation's borders against transnational crimes such as the unauthorized movement of people, drugs, criminal activity, firearms and other goods that may be detrimental to national security;
- reshape the RCAF into a smaller, more professional military force able to defend Cambodia's national interests;
- contribute to national development through the provision of specialist skills and services (e.g. engineering, communications, transport and medical);

- develop over time an enhanced capacity to protect Cambodia's interests in surrounding maritime areas;

- engage in confidence building measures with Cambodia's neighbors including meeting of senior officers and development of security dialogues.

The RCAF has an essential part to play in promoting national cohesion and development in support of other Government agencies. The specific initiatives set out subsequently in this White Paper provide a clear agenda for realizing that potential.

Organization of the Armed Forces

Effective implementation of the policy depends on the introduction of appropriate command, policy and administration arrangements. The responsibilities of each element in the defense organization must be clear and all areas fully committed to the national defense policy objectives. Recent initiatives have made important progress in this direction. As described in Chapter One, the current defense organization is structured along lines similar to the one that Cambodia had in the 1960s. In 1993, the First-Term Government reestablished the defense organization composed of three major institutions: the Ministry of National Defense, the High Command, and the General Staff. In accordance with the Constitution, the King remained Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces.

Under this structure, the Ministry of National Defense was a government institution in charge of policy, logistics and finance, and external relations only. The High Command Headquarters, which was established shortly after the formation of the RCAF, was commanded by the Co-Commanders-in-Chief of the Cambodian National Armed Forces (this varied from the 1960s organization which saw the Cambodian National Armed Forces include the National Police). The High Command was the highest echelon in the military command hierarchy, and both Prime Ministers were appointed to hold the titles of Co-Commanders-in-Chief. The General Staff commanded the three Services; Army, Navy, and Air Force, and was delegated temporary control of the newly formed Royal Gendarmes. Of significance, the General Staff had specific responsibility for operations, training, and

more importantly, the military's involvement in social security and public order.

The command structure of the defense organization was significantly revised in early 1999 – the time when the Second-Term Government commenced with only one Prime Minister. The Prime Minister relinquished his title as the Commander-in-Chief of the Cambodian National Armed Forces, and a new Commander-in-Chief of the RCAF was appointed. The current Commander-in-Chief no longer has command or control over the National Police.

Gen. Ke Kim Yan became Commander-in-Chief of the RCAF after the Prime Minister gave up his commanding role over the Armed Forces in January 1999. (Picture: Chea Chheang – AKP)

At the same time that changes were made to the national command and control structure, the Ministry of National Defense also changed its structure. Evolving from its previous organization where Departments were the main structural components, the Ministry upgraded its immediate subordinates to General Departments. There are now three General Departments in the Ministry and each General Department has a number of Departments under immediate control. The Ministry of National Defense retains powerful management over logistics and finance.

The High Command Headquarters continues to manage military training. The Research and Intelligence Department is also located in the High Command Headquarters. Although this Directorate primarily serves as the Defense Intelligence Agency, it performs additional roles in national intelligence activities. It routinely reports to the Commander-in-Chief, but the Director reports to the Prime Minister in circumstances involving special or sensitive issues.

Importantly, the General Staff was completely dismantled at the same time, and all three Services are now under direct command of the Commander-in-Chief of the RCAF. In addition to the normal chain of command, the Commander-in-Chief will have direct command over a number of units and formations. This has been detailed in the latest Five Year Plan.

Lt-Gen. Pol Saroeun, Chief of Joint Staff, meet with the New Zealand Defense Attaché to Cambodia, GPCAPT J. McMillan. (Picture: Chea Chheang – AKP)

A significant change has been the creation of the Joint Staff. Structurally, the Joint Staff has responsibility for coordination between the Services. As the Chief of the Joint Staff is also a Deputy Commander-in-Chief of the RCAF, the Joint Staff has assumed broader roles in the High Command Headquarters. The Chief of the Joint Staff oversees all working staff within the Headquarters, and automatically becomes acting Commander of the RCAF during the absence of the Commander-in-Chief.

These revised command and organizational arrangements will serve Cambodia well in the coming years. To be fully effective, however, they will need to be complemented by:

- enhanced professional training for senior and middle level officers in command positions; and

- the development of specific planning and management skills to ensure that the Government's reform objectives are carried out.

CHAPTER 5
ROLES OF THE RCAF

To achieve the nation's defense policy objectives, the RCAF must be capable of performing four basic roles:

- the direct defense of the nation and its strategic interests;
- promotion of national development;
- cooperation with the Interior Ministry in the maintenance of peace, stability and social order; and
- participation in international cooperation.

Defending the Kingdom of Cambodia

While the prospect of a significant direct military threat to Cambodia is currently assessed as unlikely, the defense of the nation and its direct strategic interests remains the RCAF's primary role. It is the ultimate defender of the constitution, and the freedoms and rights that the constitution provides for the people of Cambodia. It is essential that those rights are protected in the future and that the Royal Cambodian Government can pursue its policies free from external pressures. The constitution provides the essential guarantees that the policies of reconciliation and renewed national commitment can be maintained.

Importantly, substantial security challenges do remain in the possibility of illegal cross border activity, including transnational crime (the unauthorized movement of drugs and other goods, weapons and people) and possible low level military incursions. These challenges may have a disproportionate effect while the nation is rebuilding its economy and political cohesion. In addition, action is required to manage and protect Cambodia's interests in controlling movement through, and activities in, its maritime areas.

In current circumstances, the first priority is to strengthen the nation's control over border areas. This must be matched with the ability to respond quickly to events that do occur and to work closely with neighboring countries to prevent unauthorized movement. This

gives operational effectiveness to the work of the Joint Border Committees.

In capability terms, the key initiative has been the tasking of some regular units at battalion level with responsibility for border operations in each military region. These battalions will be able to gain a detailed knowledge of their operating area, establish links with the local community, and be located within the immediate response area.

These battalions will work closely with the police and other government agencies, including the Ministry for the Interior, in their areas of responsibility. Where additional personnel, mobility, supplies or weapons are required to support battalion operations, these will be available from the forces of the military region commander. The presence of these battalions will often allow situations to be contained while a political settlement is sought.

(Picture: Minadef)

In the event of more significant military activity in the border area, the initial response will be from forces assigned to the military region. These will be reinforced as required by additional units and firepower available from the Army and High Command Headquarters. Should a broader threat emerge, the High Command Headquarters would coordinate the campaign and be able to redirect units and supplies from other areas of the country as appropriate.

Protection of the coastal areas and adjacent waters will be enhanced in several steps. First, knowledge of activities along the

coastline and the inshore islands will be improved by a greater military presence including manned observation posts. This will then be complemented by the changes in the Royal Cambodian Navy away from its riverine emphasis to inshore patrol operations. This will involve either refurbishment of existing patrol craft or the acquisition of several additional vessels for patrol and transport activities. Offshore patrols will be added after these initial steps have been taken and will be supported by the use of maritime surveillance radar, cooperative intelligence exchanges and operational coordination with Cambodia's neighbors.

Promotion of National Development

The RCAF is an important instrument of wider national policy. It is available to support the nation both in a crisis situation and in larger scale development initiatives. Additionally, the presence of the force throughout the nation, and its network of linkages to the central government, allows it to support a range of activities of other government agencies.

These national development activities are valuable to the armed forces. They provide good relations with the people that are essential to effective operations and the gathering of intelligence. They support military operations and supply by improvement of the national infrastructure. They help promote a stable political environment that allows the force to concentrate on external security challenges. Large-scale activities such as disaster relief provide valuable experience in command and control, planning and force deployment. The main areas of national development assistance are set out below.

Engineering. The tasks of the RCAF engineers not only meet the needs of national defense, but also play an active role in improving landlines of communication, economic development and supporting provincial businesses. In cooperation with the Cambodian Mine Action Center (CMAC), RCAF engineers help clear landmines thus improving the living condition of the local people.

RCAF engineers are rebuilding and fixing roads and bridges, thereby enhancing land lines of communication for people living in the remote border regions. These improvements assist the RCAF in controlling border areas and help to prevent illegal smuggling.

Engineer units are currently engaged in rehabilitating national infrastructure particularly landlines of communication. In this picture, Lt-Gen. Kun Kim, Deputy C-in-C, inspected one of the road construction areas. (Picture: Chea Chheang – AKP)

Medical Assistance Program. The Royal Government, with assistance from international organizations, has focused on improving the health services available to the people of Cambodia. The RCAF, especially the units deployed to remote areas, has not only improved health standards in military units, but has also assisted with the provision of health care to local people whenever possible.

Protection of Natural Resources. Because of the Royal Government concerns with deforestation, the RCAF in cooperation with other Government agencies is tasked with preventing illegal forestry activities. This approach has been strongly supported by national and international opinion. The RCAF is committed to continuing this task until the Royal Government's requirements are achieved.

Protecting resources under the sea, and national property on land allows the RCAF to participate in national economic development. While some natural resources remain available, large quantities have been lost due to internal conflict and delays in resolving border disputes with neighboring countries. Effective enforcement of regulations controlling activities in maritime areas will largely fall to the RCAF's developing maritime capabilities. Efforts and cooperation will be made with neighboring countries so that disputes can be solved peacefully, and management made as efficient as possible.

Relief Operations in Natural Disasters. The most common natural disasters in Cambodia are those resulting from flood, severe storms, forest fires and drought. These disasters require the RCAF to provide emergency assistance to the people in the effected areas. The RCAF assists by helping with rebuilding homes following destruction, conveying emergency supplies to the victims and, if possible, helping to replant lost crops.

Cambodia suffered a severe flood in 1996. The RCAF was placed under state of emergency and soldiers worked all day and night to maintain flood protecting systems, rescue and bring food and materials to the people. (Picture: Chea Chheang – AKP)

For future capability in this area, the RCAF needs to be more prepared, trained with the essential skills and obtain additional necessary equipment to support this type of operation.

Support for Peace, Stability and Social Order

The policy of national reconciliation, especially the 'win-win' policy of the Royal Government, remains effective. Further, under the clear-sighted leadership of the King of the Kingdom of Cambodia as the father of national reconciliation, results in social stability and security environment are improving.

The RCAF, in cooperation with the national police assists with combating illegal activities such as armed robbery and kidnapping. As a result, security and social law and order are improving.

Although some difficulties exist in controlling weapons and ordnance following more than two decades of instability, the Royal

Government takes this issue seriously in order to maintain peace, stability and public law and order. The RCAF continues to cooperate with the police in preventing and suppressing criminal activities, and investigating and confiscating illegal weapons, and encourages local people to turn in their unlicensed weapons.

Well-trained Royal Gendarmeries have significant roles in ensuring security and social order, and preventing other unlawful and criminal activities. (Picture: Minadef)

As the internal security situation improved, primary responsibility for these operations was passed to the local/provincial authorities and other Government agencies. However, the RCAF continues to provide assistance to the police and will be able to offer support with mobility and communications as required. Distribution of the force throughout the military regions will continue to support cooperation and early response.

It is important to recognize that an effective, professional force for the defense of Cambodia against external threats will depend on the strong support of the people. Both intelligence and the provision of non-military support will be greatly improved through public confidence in the political neutrality and heightened external focus of the RCAF.

International Security Cooperation

International cooperation is an important element in Cambodia's security. It can:

- help to provide a stable environment within which national development can occur;
- prevent problems crossing the nation's borders;
- ensure good relations with Cambodia's neighbors, allowing them to work together on issues of common concern;
- foster the nation's prestige and influence, demonstrating its commitment to regional affairs and to wider international objectives; and
- provide important avenues for the nation to attract new skills and facilitate equipment acquisitions.

H.E. Hor Nam Hong (eighth from left), Minister of Foreign Affairs and international Cooperation and H.E. Tea Banh, Co-Minister of National Defense (on H.E. Hor Nam Hong's left) with diplomatic Representatives in front of Preah Vihear Temple. (Picture: Minadef)

It is particularly important to Cambodia for a number of reasons. These include the nation's membership of ASEAN and the sense of responsibility that goes with this, and the range of common security challenges which face South-East Asian nations. These include the new challenges of transnational crime and environmental

protection together with development issues of common interest. These include the development of maritime zones in the Gulf of Thailand and the Greater Mekong Sub-Region. Wider United Nations' initiatives may also require support.

International cooperation is not inexpensive. Accordingly, initiatives must be introduced progressively in parallel with the new capabilities offered by the restructuring and reform of the RCAF. The first step is to promote effective management of the nation's borders and the coordination of intelligence and operations required by the Joint Border Committees. The second step is the promotion of individual officer exchanges with other countries to enhance skills in command, planning and specialized military activities.

Cambodia's Military Strategy

All these different operational commitments for the RCAF are drawn together in the military strategy of **flexible and controlled response.** This is the overall concept for the structure and deployment of the force. It has been developed to ensure the most effective use of available resources in a variety of roles, to serve all areas of the nation, and to restore close links between a politically neutral force and the people.

The strategy has several layers:

- At the center is the High Command Headquarters. This is responsible for the overall coordination of military activities and distribution of support throughout Cambodia. It also works closely with the Ministry of National Defense in the development of policy and with other government agencies in coordinating responses to instability or unauthorized activities in the border areas. The High Command Headquarters will retain a surge capability of a limited number of formations under direct command together with specialist capabilities being developed on a nationwide basis.

- The core of operations will be the Military Region Headquarters. These will be responsible for oversighting operations and national development tasks within their region, and for developing effective linkages with the local

community. They will have significant infantry resources at their disposal together with centralized communication and mobility assets. They will coordinate regional intelligence and operations, and will provide a rapid response or reinforcement capability when necessary in contingencies and natural disasters. The strategic bases, when constructed, will provide a focus for training and the storage of weapons and supplies.

- The third layer will be the patrol and presence operations spreading out from the Military Region Headquarters. The priority for developing this layer will be first in the border areas with the tasking of the battalions mentioned previously in this chapter. Extension of this approach to coastal regions will follow. Their tasks will include:

    - ❖ responsibility for providing a presence in the community to support stability and development,
    - ❖ responsibility for the collection of intelligence on potential security challenges,
    - ❖ initial responsibility for crisis response operations,
    - ❖ operating cooperatively with other government agencies charged with the control of movement, and
    - ❖ the regulation of specific activities on behalf of the Royal Government.

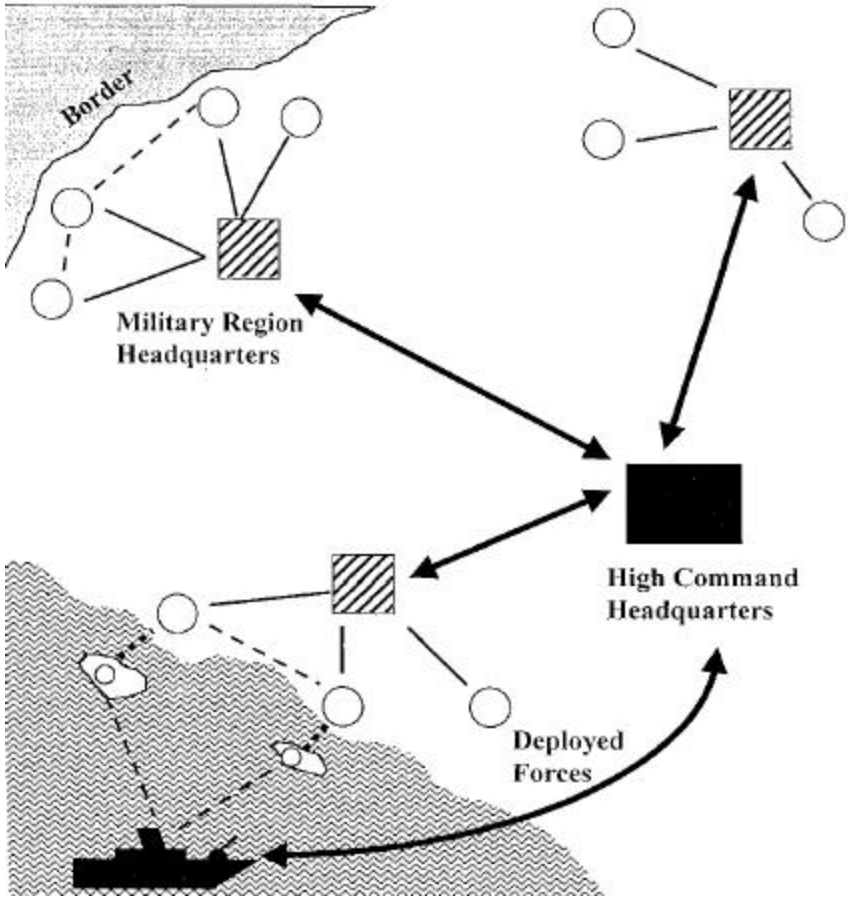
- Over time, an additional maritime patrol and response layer will be added. This will begin with inshore capabilities for protection of the sea approaches and islands and subsequently be extended to offshore patrols in support of Cambodia's maritime interests.

The aim of this strategy is to ensure a wide presence throughout the nation in support of stability and development and to provide intelligence on issues of security concern. Additional surge capacity, both in terms of numbers and specialist capabilities will be deployed as required form either the Military Region Headquarters or the High

Command Headquarters depending upon the location and scale of the task.

Using the force in this way will ensure the most effective use of the small number of higher level capabilities available within the force, and provide the most flexibility to respond to natural disasters and other crises, while not disrupting the overall military contribution throughout the country. This strategy will help deter those who are interested in promoting instability or disobeying national regulations (such as forestry controls). The strategy is set out in the diagram following.

FLEXIBLE AND CONTROLLED RESPONSE



CHAPTER SIX
REFORMING AND RESTRUCTURING THE RCAF

To strengthen its prestige in ASEAN, Cambodia will pay greater attention to developing its armed forces consistent with strategic concepts. Improving its armed forces to an acceptable quality and appropriate size, based on the ability of the state economy, will ensure a high level of combat readiness, thus preventing the possible encroachment on Cambodia's land borders, maritime areas and air space. The Cambodian forces will, in cooperation with other relevant national security forces, maintain peace, security and social order, and participate in national development, which is the prime task set out by the Second-Term Royal Government. It will also play an important role in maintaining peace and stability in the region.

The specific actions necessary to achieve this objective are set out in the following paragraphs. They will involve a significant transformation of the RCAF and cannot be accomplished quickly. Priorities have been identified to ensure that the most important initiatives are taken as soon as possible.

Demobilisation

The reform process is dependent on a substantial reduction in current manpower levels. This will free many soldiers to return to productive civil employment. It will reduce the burden of defense spending on the national budget. Within the RCAF it will lead to a better balance between expenditure on manpower, equipment and operations. It is important that demobilisation is undertaken in a way that is sensitive to the needs of the nation, the interests of the individual soldier, and the future strength of the RCAF.

The numbers to be demobilised, (55,000 by 2002-2003), and the reductions in particular unit strengths have already been identified. The majority will occur in the provincial forces whose role has been significantly reduced by the return to stability within Cambodia itself.

Command, Control and Communication

The downsizing of the force must be matched by a clear vision of the more streamlined and effective organization that is to replace it. The cornerstone of the future RCAF will be robust command, control and communications arrangements. The unified direction and control provided by the High Command Headquarters will be complemented by more effective Military Region Headquarters. These will have the primary responsibility for defense activities in their areas, carrying out the directions of the High Command Headquarters and providing that headquarters with a detailed understanding of security developments.

The chain of command will be simplified between High Command Headquarters, Military Region Headquarters and units. The introduction of reliable and secure communications between the High Command Headquarters and the military regions is an important priority. It will provide intelligence on developments of national concern, support timely response operations (including in the event of natural disasters), and be available to support wider government initiatives and communication with the people.

Improved tactical communications will be necessary as the RCAF give greater emphasis to protecting the nation against external challenges. The priority should be to equip forces patrolling in border areas with a reliable means of passing information to Military Region Headquarters including along the southern coastline. The relevant Military Region Headquarters should in turn establish links with other border control agencies, including the police, customs and immigration.

The breadth of the new security challenges that Cambodia is facing demand close coordination between the RCAF, the police and other security related agencies. This may involve exchanges of specific intelligence, operational coordination and a more integrated approach to policy development on issues of security concern. Regular meetings of planners from each area will promote this cooperation. Liaison officers might be designated to support intelligence exchanges. Cooperation with international partners will also be of value, particularly in supporting intelligence exchanges and providing early warning to any significant problems.

Training and Education

Improved training and education will be essential to a more professional and effective RCAF. It is also important to build up the respect of the people in a force that is politically neutral and able to support national development and stability and defend the national interests.

Much emphasis and efforts should be placed on education and awareness of national patriotism. The committed spirit in defending territorial integrity, dignity, good discipline, capability development, specialised skills, tactics and techniques should also be instilled at all levels. This will ensure that their duty, to protect the lives and properties of people, to defend territorial integrity and participate in the national development will be achieved successfully.

The objective is to develop a comprehensive professional training program with four levels to support personnel as they move through their careers.

The four levels of professional military education will be:

- **Comprehensive Recruit Training** to instil high standards of discipline and pride in membership of the RCAF and to improve understanding, patriotism, and neutrality. Standards must be improved in accordance with the motto: Nation, Religion and King. This training will primarily be the responsibility of the commanders in each military region. While the current downsizing means that there will be little new recruitment for some time, commanders should provide refresher courses for their non-commissioned officers and soldiers to lift standards and promote public confidence. Emphasis should also be given to physical training and sport to improve the stamina and resilience of soldiers.

Co-Ministers of National Defense Visited the Cadet School at Tmat Pong (Picture: Chea Chheang – AKP)

- Development of the courses at the **Junior Officer School** to strengthen the leadership and values of all newly commissioned officers. The emphasis will be on discipline, command responsibilities, organisational skills, humanitarian law and community awareness.

- **The Establishment of a Command and Staff Course** for middle level officers. Training of these officers is currently a major gap in the training of RCAF officers. Apart from limited opportunities overseas, they have not received the

training required to exercise more senior command positions.

Full establishment of a Command and Staff Course will take some time. The early introduction of in-country training in these areas for existing and newly promoted officers is, however, essential. Cambodia's strategic partners will be approached for assistance in this area.

- **Senior Officer Training at the Officer Academy**. This is important to ensuring that commanders develop high level skills in command, leadership and management. In the short term, it is not realistic to extend this training beyond the current three-month course. Selected senior officers should be identified for training overseas and encouraged to share these skills upon return to Cambodia. Education gained at this level will allow these officers to liaise effectively with senior members of the local community.

Training in **specialist** areas such as communications, engineering, medical support and information technology will be important to the RCAF in the future. Initially, these skills will also be acquired with the support of Cambodia's strategic partners. It might involve a combination of overseas training courses and, where possible, short in-country training sessions to develop a basic level of skills more broadly in the force.

If this new approach is to be sustained, attention should be focused on improving the ability of instructors, preparing training documents, learning from past experience and tactics, and extending tactic contents by cooperating with specialised units for their modern programs.

Mobility

Force mobility remains a major problem for the RCAF. Land movement is made difficult by the lack of national road infrastructure, the mountainous terrain to the south-west and the nation's river system in the centre and to the east. Off the coastline lie many small islands. During the rainy season, many roads and tracks become unusable.

Current military transport capabilities are limited. The majority of the military fleet of trucks is aging and unreliable. Maintenance difficulties, brought about by a lack of repair facilities and spare parts, have grounded aircraft and helicopters, and the Navy's patrol craft are in a poor state of repair. The Army's mechanised capability has also become eroded.

(Picture: Chea Chheang – AKP)

These problems cannot be overcome quickly. The first priority should be to equip each of the military regions and the strategic reinforcement force with a small group of vehicles able to deploy troops and materials on operations and for reinforcement in response to specific incidents and natural disasters. These vehicles should be normal civilian vehicles to contain costs and minimise support requirements.

The second priority should be to introduce 3-4 patrol craft for inshore maritime patrol and transport operations. Again, these should be of simple civilian design although it may be possible to refurbish a few of the existing patrol craft. Judgements must be made however, about the costs of doing so, the difficulty of supporting a mixed fleet, and the remaining operational life of the existing vessels.

Air transport may be very useful in the rainy season, but the costs and complexity of maintaining an operational helicopter force do not make this a priority. Civil aircraft may be used where available, for rapid movement between the major regional centres in

emergencies. However, the national civil capability is limited and movement will normally be by road or river. The disposition of forces to the various regions, and the more stable political environment should however, makes this need less frequent.

With economic growth in the future, the Air Force may consider the acquisition of a small number of short-range transport aircraft, possibly under a lease arrangement, including maintenance support. Resource expenditure on repairing the current fleet will, as with the case of the Navy's patrol craft, only be considered after the costs and future operational effectiveness of those aircraft have been carefully considered.

Engineering capabilities will contribute significantly to the improvement of roads and bridges in their local areas and on priority national tasks. These activities should be carefully coordinated to assist military movement and development across the country.

Force Development

The costs of retaining very large manpower numbers within the RCAF, and continuous internal strife, have left no scope for the development of the forces' capabilities. With the demobilisation process and the strengthening over time of the national economy, opportunities will exist to enhance these capabilities. It will be important that new initiatives are controlled in an orderly manner. They must give priority to the areas that will most quickly improve the operational effectiveness of the force and be in accordance with overall national development priorities.

A significant transformation of the force will be achieved in the short term. It will be primarily on light scales, mobile and possess a number of specialist capabilities. The first steps must be improving the communications and mobility of the force, particularly close to its land and maritime borders.

The second priority concerns the development of certain specialist capabilities within the force. These are, in particular:

- improvement in the Army's engineering capabilities in relation to roads, bridges, building construction and the repair and maintenance of equipment.

- strengthening of the nation's mine detection and clearance capability to match the efforts of Cambodia's strategic partners. This is a national task that will be ongoing and the need for a national capacity able to support military operations is important.
- the development of health and medical skills within the force both to support day to day needs, disaster relief and combat operations.

(Picture: Chea Chheang – AKP)

The third priority relates to enhancement of the force's surveillance and reconnaissance skills. Given Cambodia's varied terrain, the ability to identify and engage a potential target as early as possible is essential to effective operations. Many of the required advantages can be achieved by a high standard of training and concept of operations. These would be significantly enhanced by employing a range of equipment, from simple binoculars to maritime radar. In time, the use of remote sensors including satellite information will be introduced.

Cambodia's capabilities in the maritime environment are very limited, particularly in relation to the need to manage, and if necessary protect, its offshore interests. Depending upon available resources, the acquisition of several small patrol craft and maritime radar would greatly increase the nation's coastal and maritime protection capabilities.

The final priority is the gradual rebuilding of the Army's firepower. The ability to be able to deliver a decisive blow, if

required, is central to success on the battlefield. Similarly, armoured vehicles to provide protection in close quarter combat is important to troop survival and manoeuvre operations. These capabilities are not however, inexpensive. They are expensive to buy and maintain, and require extensive support.

The first steps, once the national economic situation permits, should be to enhance core training of light artillery and armoured vehicles. As the artillery and armour capability develops, it could be deployed as required to the military regions. The permanent deployment of such capabilities to each of the military regions, starting with those closest to the nation's land borders, is a longer term objective.

Support and Maintenance

Logistic support for the RCAF, and the repair and maintenance of its equipment remain a major problem. This is due to the mix of weapons systems (which are aging, costly to repair and have poor availability), the lack of national infrastructure, and the limitations on civil support in remote areas or during more intense operations.

(Picture: Chea Chheang – AKP)

To improve this situation, a number of initiatives would be of value in addition to the improvements proposed in force deployment and mobility. There should be a move to greater use of common systems across the Services. These should be based, where possible, on normal civil specifications and any purchase should include

provision for follow up maintenance. As development in Cambodia proceeds, leasing from the larger civilian companies might also be considered.

In addition, consideration will be given to the establishment of a small, mobile repair unit that deploys regularly to the various military regions to repair and maintain a range of military equipment. During a larger military operation, this unit would be located temporarily in that area. As the RCAF'S specialist skills increase, small maintenance detachments may be attached permanently to each military region.

The resources do not exist currently to stockpile significant supplies of fuel, spares, food and other equipment against the possibility of a short-term increase in operational activity. Several measures are being considered to ease this problem. Military regions will be tasked with their ordering and resupply to progressively build up an additional month's operational supplies (rather than letting their stores run very low).

With the establishment of the Strategic Reinforcement Force a small pool of additional resources will be set up for deployment to the military regions if necessary. Agreements might also be reached with large commercial businesses and, possibly, Cambodia's neighbours, to provide additional support in a crisis, including during natural disasters.

Development of Defence Bases

Command, operational effectiveness and the maintenance of a sense of commitment is greatly enhanced where soldiers work side by side, developing good personal relationships and an awareness of each other's role.

The existence of integrated military bases and barracks accommodation supports overall control of force conduct and operations, facilitates the delivery of single service and common training, and can improve the conditions of service of individual soldiers including administrative, health-care and family support. They may also assist with the secure storage of weapons and equipment. Over time, they may also be developed to provide basic repair and maintenance services. For these reasons, a series of

strategic bases and barracks is to be constructed progressively to support each of the military regions.

Conditions of Service

For a professional military force to develop, the conditions of service must encourage commitment to the force, support healthy and well-trained soldiers, and deter the possibility of soldiers becoming involved in other activities that compete with their military duties. The downsizing of the force offers the opportunity to improve the working conditions, training and accommodation of the RCAF.

The commanders and chiefs of institutions will be responsible for the living conditions of soldiers under their command. The establishment of bases and barracks in the military regions will provide a focus for training and support services, including medical and administrative services.

The salary for soldiers will be paid regularly and, if possible, increased. With national stability, self-reliant living conditions based mainly on agricultural crops might be made, perhaps by allowing soldiers to cooperate with investment units in the agro-industrial field. However, any trade corporation or abuse of regulations will be prohibited. The practices of corruption and graft affecting the living condition of soldiers will be observed and action will be taken accordingly.

The supply system must be reformed, with supplies properly distributed to the armed forces according to their rank and hierarchical levels, so that their living costs, accommodation and health care can be enhanced in conformity with their allowances provided by the RCAF'S policy.

In addition, measures should be taken to review the pension allocation to the remaining invalids. Responsibility for these invalids should then be transferred to the Ministry of Women's and Veterans Affairs. Pension entitlements and allowances for the wounded, the invalid and the disabled must be implemented thoroughly. Leadership at all levels must be improved so that control of pension entitlements and allowances can be carried out properly as determined by the Royal Government.

CHAPTER SEVEN
THE FUTURE OF THE RCAF

This White Paper represents a watershed in the development of the RCAF. The new stability and national priorities introduced by the policies of the Second-Term Government have created the opportunity for the RCAF to set aside the history of politicization and neglect of its primary role—the defense of the nation and its direct interests. Through the processes of demobilization and reform, it will be transformed into a well-trained and equipped military force able to meet national defense objectives and contribute to a stable regional and international security environment.

Economic circumstances demand that the changes be introduced progressively. Accordingly, the White Paper establishes a carefully ordered set of priorities for achieving these goals. The priorities match the downsizing and restructuring of the force with a reassertion of its standing among, and value to, the Cambodian people and the gradual introduction of a more comprehensive range of capabilities for national defense.

The Army

(Picture: Minadef)

Enhancements to the Army will begin with its reorganization around the general strategy of flexible and controlled response. The

role of the Military Region Headquarters will be strengthened. Communications will be improved between the High Command Headquarters, the Military Region Headquarters and the forward-deployed force. Initial priority will be given to those battalions responsible for controlling border areas. Transport capabilities within the military regions will be upgraded.

These changes will be complemented by more effective professional education and skills development. Both initial training and middle level command and management courses will have a high priority as they provide the basis for maintaining the new professionalism and efficiency within the force. The development of skills in engineering, communication, transport and medical support will underpin effective operations, contribute to national development and promote popular confidence in the armed forces.

More advanced combat capabilities will be developed gradually. The early focus on surveillance and patrolling skills will be followed by a core of light artillery and armored vehicles under the control of the High Command Headquarters. More significant strengthening of these capabilities if required and their permanent training in the military regions will only be considered when the national economy is much stronger.

Should additional manpower be required at some future time, the preferred approach would be to reintroduce selective compulsory military service. It can provide a significant pool of trained manpower to reinforce the Army in times of crisis, with relatively low costs. To be successful, it would need a comprehensive recruit-training program and close cooperation with government and private institutions and companies to ensure employees were available when necessary for both training and operations.

The Navy

The transformation of the Navy will take place in several steps. The first will be a shift in priority from riverine operations to patrolling of the coastline and nearby islands. It will involve the establishment of observation posts at key strategic locations, followed by the possible acquisition of coastal surveillance radar and dedication of several craft to inshore patrolling. The latter may involve refurbishment of existing craft or, subject to resources, the

lease or purchasing of several patrol boats of a relatively simple design that can be supported in-country. An improved repair and maintenance capability should follow, including in the longer term, the construction of a ship lift or dry dock facility.

(Picture: Minadef)

Developing offshore patrol capabilities is more complex. It requires vessels with improved sea keeping and a wide range of sensors and weapon's systems. It would also be most efficient when the systems are in place to coordinate closely with neighbors. The potential value of the offshore resources to the economy and the opportunities for regional cooperation suggest that these initiatives should be pursued as soon as funding permits.

The Air Force

(Picture: Chea Chheang – AKP)

Developments in Air Force capabilities generally do not occur quickly. This reflects the high costs of acquiring fixed or rotary wing aircraft and the training and support required to introduce and maintain them in service. Air transport is, however, valuable in supporting the rapid deployment of troops and supplies, and providing access to remote areas. Cambodia's limited national infrastructure strengthens their value.

The important decision that must be made is whether the existing squadron of utility helicopters can be repaired and maintained, and their operational availability assured, at a reasonable cost. If that is possible, available Air Force resources should be focused on achieving that operational output. The maintenance of pilot training skills is also important. Should existing equipment not be supportable, the purchase of new rotary wing aircraft and associated maintenance and support arrangements will be considered. Resources are, however, most unlikely to be sufficient to pursue such a purchase in the short term. In the longer term, the demands of force mobility and the potential advantages of aerial surveillance suggest that Cambodia should consider the acquisition of a small number of short range, tactical lift, fixed-wing aircraft. These would be based on normal civilian specifications and may be equipped with surface surveillance radar to assist maritime patrolling. While trainer aircraft may be equipped with weapons systems to provide fire support for ground forces, the maintenance of a significant air combat capability cannot presently be justified.

Policy and Planning

Preparation of the Defense White Paper and the policy objectives that it establishes is just the beginning of the process. For its recommendations to be carried through effectively, there is a need to ensure that the Ministry of National Defense and the RCAF:

- strengthen their skills in policy and planning; and
- develop specific studies and implementation plans to carry through the new initiatives.

The professional development of selected senior officers will be pursued in areas such as strategic policy development, international relations (to support Cambodia's enhanced regional role), and

capability analysis and resource programming. The RCAF must be in position to make informed judgments in relation to the development of new capabilities and effective management of the available defense resources.

The Ministry of National Defense will continue to take responsibility for the development and oversight of defense policy. It will coordinate the range of studies necessary to support the implementation of the recommendations of this White Paper. Initial studies may include detailed plans for the new professional education system, and the enhanced communication network, establishment of bases in the military regions and options for improving support to the force. Army, Navy and Air Force will each be tasked with developing plans to introduce changes and new capabilities identified in this White Paper.

Management of Defense Resources

Effective resource management is no less essential to the future of the RCAF. A critical aspect of the reform of the RCAF has been to bring defense expenditure into line with overall national development priorities while enhancing operational effectiveness. This is not an easy task.

The recent history of the RCAF has resulted in it becoming a numerically large force with a large proportion (50%) of expenditure devoted to salaries and the daily living costs. The remainder is spent on uniforms, fuel, maintenance and equipment, training and accommodation. It is insufficient to support effective defense operations or to provide for the acquisition and maintenance of any significant military equipment. Conditions of service for soldiers continue to be inadequate. At the same time, the defense proportion (23.7%) of national gross revenue is a major diversion of resources from development, even though the actual size of the defense budget is much less than some nations of comparable size.

There is a need to reduce this proportionally and to link future growth in defense expenditure to the overall growth in the national economy. Progress has already been made through reductions in rank structures. Demobilization of a significant part of the RCAF's manpower and the reintegration of these people, appropriately trained into the productive labor force, will be the next step. These initiatives,

together with holding down defense expenditure as the economy expands, will progressively allow scope to improve conditions of service and transform the RCAF into a more streamlined and efficient force.

The focus of the policy proposals set out in this White Paper is to give emphasis initially to those reforms that will increase the effectiveness of the current force. Major capability enhancements will occur later in the development program as the strengthening of the national economy provides more resources for such initiatives.