

**Remarks
by
Samdech Akka Moha Sena Padei Techo
A Five-Star General HUN SEN, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Cambodia
and President of Cambodia Veterans Association
At the
19th General Assembly of Veterans Confederation of ASEAN Countries
(VECONAC)
Phnom Penh, 10 December 2019**

- **Samdech, Excellencies, Lok Chumteavs, Members of the Royal Government !**
- **Excellencies, Lok Chumteavs, President, Vice-President of the Veterans Confederation of ASEAN, and Leaders of Veterans Association of the Confederation Member States !**
- **Excellencies, Lok Chumteavs, Distinguished National and International Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen !**

Today, I have the pleasure to join with Samdech, Excellencies, Lok Chumteavs, Ladies and Gentlemen in the 19th General Assembly of Veterans Confederation of ASEAN Countries (VECONAC) is being held in Phnom Penh Capital of the Kingdom of Cambodia, while Cambodia to be the host and rotated chair after Lao PDR's Veterans Confederation.

Taking this opportunity, I would like to express my sincere appreciation for the presence of Excellencies, Lok Chumteavs, Ladies and Gentlemen here in this general assembly. I would also like to highly appreciate to the Executive Committee of Veterans Confederation of ASEAN Countries for their utmost efforts to smoothly proceed its General Assembly happened with the sequential substance and agenda to meet the expected outputs.

Today, it is indeed a unique opportunity for our Veterans Confederation of ASEAN from the confederation member states to convene its annual general assembly aims at continuing the implementation of its goals and working activities as planned. I would also be confident that our general assembly will bring about fruitful as significant event that reflect the high attention from representative of Veterans Confederation of ASEAN member countries. The ASEAN Veterans sector is being recognized by ASEAN as one part of the global humanitarian affairs for the war veterans and their families left by the wars to fulfil the requirements for our ASEAN activities, either at the present or in the future.

In matter of fact, while reviewing the history of war veterans which experienced the consequence of wars in all countries are not much different. The veterans are considered as the group that sacrificed for the sake of their homeland. It is a symbol of devotional spirit in its patriotic consciousness to be inscribed in the respective nations' history.

In Cambodia particularly, the war veterans have been undergone several historic generations of either prosperity or underprivileged, especially in the wake of devastated wars since 1970-1975, followed by the fall of the Pol Pot genocidal regime from 1975-1979 and continued with subsequent civil wars until 1998. Cambodia has acquired a full peace under the win-win policy devised by the Royal Government of Cambodia.

Whereby, since Cambodia had put the war to an end in 1998, the first and foremost tasks to be addressed were social affairs, political, security and diplomacy that had to deal with the consequences left by the war. In particular, the social affairs policy was one of the priority issues to be considered and addressed. In fact, the Royal Government of Cambodia has laid out its Rectangular Strategy from Phase-1 up to date Phase-4, including the launch of sequent five-year National Strategic Development Plan (NSDP) that plays an important role in the implementation priority policies of the Royal Government of Cambodia as set out in the Rectangular Strategy Phase-4 and as part of promoting the coordination of foreign policy with friendly countries, associations, national and international non-government organizations. Partners either in multilateral or bilateral cooperation as well as continuing to ensure the policy frameworks on veterans sector of the Kingdom of Cambodia to be constantly improved.

In viewing the objective and necessity of which the General Assembly should pay attention, I wish to urge our general assembly to promote the quality of life, the impact of aging and wellbeing of victims affected by war for further in depth aware of the global concept, spirit of appreciation, and benefits of countries in region and promoting the legitimacy of war veterans' benefits and victims of war with the legal recognition of veterans associations of the confederation member countries. Enhancing the exchange of veterans and victims of wars in the region by creating the development programmes, seminars, sharing information, knowledge, and other activities for the benefit of confederation members. The confederation will expand its scope of incentives and participation of the leaders from the respective member countries aims at protecting the right to life, solidarity and personal safety.

- **Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen!**
- **The Entire General Assembly!**

Having viewed on its history for nearly four decades, since 1980, the ASEAN Veterans Confederation has been journeyed by starting from the status of a humanitarian organization which concentrated on veterans of five member countries. At present-day, 10 member countries have been implementing their activities and recognizing by ASEAN as the humanitarian entity. Currently, ASEAN is being explored the possibility and criteria of the confederation in order to incorporate the ASEAN Veterans Confederation into one of the ASEAN activities.

Along with this, I am delighted and proud of the 19th General Assembly, of which Cambodia to be the host and rotated ASEAN Veterans Confederation chair, and through this General Assembly, we have truly gained the valuable experiences, good relationships and cooperation in the field of our veterans, which will be evaluated in report and resolution of the 19th General Assembly.

Although, Cambodia has just joined the ASEAN Veterans Confederation, but I am confident that our Veterans Confederation will make a firm commitment toward an unanimous organization in the humanitarian vision on veterans of the respective countries as well as taking into consideration on the achievements and activities of our entire confederation including the capacity development in exploring solutions under the spirit of ASEAN based on a common perspective as well as to learn and exchange experiences in conformity with the resolutions of the General Assembly set out.

I strongly believe that all Veterans Confederation member countries will continue to work closely on the common commitments in the spirit of solidarity and cooperation. In this sense, I am confident that our Veterans Confederation of ASEAN Countries will be able to overcome every challenge to accomplish the new achievements, specifically our confederation will officially be incorporated as one of ASEAN sectoral activities in the near future, to show the world that ASEAN has paid high attention to the war veterans sector and their families which left by the wars, together with enhancing the quality of life and impact on war veterans and promote the peace and prosperity in region and the world as well.

On this note, I would like to emphasize that Cambodia will continue to carry out its duties with high responsibility toward achieving the goals of our ASEAN Veterans Confederation in a spirit of peace, prosperity and harmony and as one Veterans Confederation that serves the interests of the whole ASEAN Veterans, as well as promoting the respect for the rights and dignity of the veterans in our world.

Last but not least, I have the pleasure and would like to once again express my sincere appreciation to Excellencies, Lok Chumteavs, Ladies and Gentlemen, Representatives from all Veterans Confederation of ASEAN Member Countries, His Excellency General, Senior Minister **KUN KIM** and members of the VECONAC Executive Committee's Working Group for their utmost efforts and actively made this general assembly happened with smoothly and proudly.

Finally, to the opening of "the 19th General Assembly of Veterans Confederation of ASEAN Countries (VECONAC)", I would like to wish Samdech, Excellencies, Lok Chumteavs, members of the general assembly, distinguished national and international guests with good health, greater success in fulfilment of your noble tasks together with a long live and happiness.

Thank you!