

## SPEECHES & ADDRESSES

### **Toward a Harmonious Future: Reclaiming Humanity in the Age of Disruption**

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#### **I. A Philosophy of Development Rooted in Harmony**

In both governance and public discourse, we must reframe development-not merely as output or efficiency-but as the art of nurturing a just, cohesive, and compassionate society. Harmony is not a static end-state; it is a dynamic process-one that requires a delicate balance between economic ambition and cultural wisdom, between individual freedom and societal duty.

From the smallest and most remote villages to the offices in Phnom Penh, true progress begins with how we relate to one another-with trust, mutual care, and moral clarity.

This philosophy calls us to move away from development models that alienate, and toward models that integrate-bringing together diverse sectors, communities, and worldviews under the shared purpose of uplifting humanity.

## **II. Collective Harmony in the Buddhist and Confucian Traditions**

Our region is blessed with two profound traditions-Buddhism and Confucianism-which offer valuable insights into human flourishing.

In Buddhism, compassion arises from mindfulness and the realization that the boundary between self and other is an illusion. Ethical action is not only a path to personal liberation, but a reflection of our deep interdependence with all beings.

Confucianism teaches that societal harmony is achieved when individuals fulfill their roles with virtue, responsibility, and reverence. Peace is not imposed by force, but cultivated through daily rituals, education, and moral development.

Together, these philosophies remind us that leadership must be ethical, inclusive, and deeply human. They call for institutions grounded not in control, but in conscience.

## **III. Common Prosperity**

The principle of common prosperity must address systemic inequality at its root. It refutes the myth that wealth will naturally trickle down and instead demands deliberate policies to redistribute opportunity.

This means ensuring access to quality education, fair wages, reliable healthcare, and inclusive technologies. It also means listening-truly listening-to the voices of the marginalized: rural youth, women, and persons with disabilities. Their aspirations must be central to our policy design.

Shared prosperity is the only lasting prosperity. It strengthens not only economies, but the social fabric that holds nations together.

#### **IV. Happiness Above Material Obsession**

For too long, our economies have been structured around the idea that “more” is always better-more production, more consumption, more growth. But we must now ask: More of what? And for whom?

True happiness cannot be bought. Nor can it be outsourced to markets. Fulfillment is not a luxury; it is a right.

Public policy should aim not merely to grow GDP, but to reduce suffering and enhance the quality of life-by supporting mental health, family cohesion, spiritual enrichment, and the space for reflection.

The purpose of development is not to consume endlessly, but to live meaningfully.

#### **V. People Above Technology – A Caution on Disruptive AI**

Artificial intelligence is neither intelligent nor wise. It is not neutral. It encodes the values of those who design it. Without careful human oversight rooted in cultural ethics and justice, AI risks reinforcing bias, deepening inequality, and weakening human agency.

Cambodia must not be a passive consumer of imported systems. We have the opportunity-and the responsibility-to build our own ethical frameworks. By drawing on Buddhist compassion and Confucian accountability, we can shape AI governance that protects dignity and promotes fairness.

We must teach our children not only how to use technology, but how to question it-ethically, wisely, and bravely.

## **VI. A Call to Human-Centered Leadership**

Think boldly. Think deeply. Lead wisely. To think philosophically is to truly think, for all transformation begins in the mind. And when the mind is locked, the future is lost. But when the mind is wide open, then wisdom flows freely, compassion finds its course, and the seeds of a just and visionary future can take root.

## **VII. Three Reforms to Guide Our Future**

Finally, may I humbly call you all to consider three reforms-undertaken in this order:

- Reform the Heart – Awaken virtue; true reform begins with moral clarity and inner renewal.
- Reform the Purpose – Align institutions with wisdom and the common good.
- Reform the Tool – Shape laws and technologies to serve-not control-guided by conscience.

## **Closing**

Thank you.

Let us walk together toward a harmonious future, rooted not in disruption, but in dignity.