



*Parliamentary Centre
Le Centre parlementaire*

**Cambodia-Canada Legislative Support Project
Final Report on the President's Forum on Good Governance:
Exploring Transparency Measures & Mechanisms**

*Intercontinental Hotel, Phnom Penh Cambodia
December 13 & 14, 2005*

Prepared by the Parliamentary Centre

Background

The need to strengthen institutions and mechanisms of good governance is one of the greatest challenges facing Cambodia today. Promoting good governance through fighting corruption, increasing accountability, legal and judicial reform, and the protection of human rights have been emphasized on a number of occasions. As a result of these concerns voiced by civil society, businesses and donors, His Royal Highness, Prince Norodom Ranariddh, the President of the National Assembly, indicated a need to reflect on the concept of "good governance" and what it means not only on a wider scale, but also specifically in terms of the Cambodian and regional context. Over the past few years, Cambodia has been involved in the process of drafting a Law on Anti-Corruption, and a number of workshops have been held to seek input on this issue. During these workshops, Cambodian parliamentarians expressed an interest in exchanging experiences on transparency-related issues, such as Conflict of Interest and Code of Ethics mechanisms.

As part of its ongoing activities, the Cambodia-Canada Legislative Support Project (CCLSP) organizes a "President's Forum", which is an annual conference that seeks to build a national consensus on ways to strengthen the institution of Parliament. In order to capitalize on the interest as indicated above, the CCLSP focused the 2005 President's Forum on issues related to transparency in combating corruption. Transparency requires that the system in place for designing rules and regulations be open, that regulations be simple and clear, and that financial, supervisory and enforcement institutions have strong disclosure requirements. These and many such issues were explored at the "President's Forum on Good Governance" held on December 13-14, 2005.

Participants of the Forum included parliamentarians and senior staff from the Senate and National Assembly of the Kingdom of Cambodia (approximately 80 participants). Speakers included parliamentarians and experts on transparency related issues from Cambodia, Canada, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand. The President's Forum was hosted by H.R.H. Samdech Krom Preah Prince Norodom Ranariddh, President of the National Assembly of the Kingdom of

Cambodia & H.R.H. Prince Chivanmonirak, Acting President of the Senate of the Kingdom of Cambodia.

Objectives

The main objectives of the President's Forum on Good Governance were:

1. To develop a shared understanding of the concept and practice of good governance in Asia, specifically in terms of transparency;
2. To review experiences on the actions taken by Parliaments and parliamentarians in fostering a more transparent environment;
3. To share examples of transparency mechanisms that can be used within Parliament, such as Conflict of Interest Regulations and Codes of Ethics/Conduct;
4. To facilitate networking, foster dialogue, develop cooperation, and share knowledge, experiences, best practices and lessons learned on issues relating to governance and transparency among international and Asian parliamentary leaders.

Outputs

H.R.H. Samdech Krom Preah Prince Norodom Ranariddh, President of the National Assembly of the Kingdom of Cambodia, opened the President's Forum on Good Governance. In opening the Forum, His Royal Highness expressed his appreciation to the CCLSP for all it has been able to accomplish to date, as well as for organizing this particular event. His Royal Highness then proceeded to set the framework for the Forum, touching on concepts of Good Governance, with a special emphasis on the steps that Cambodia has taken to develop an Anti-Corruption Law, which aims to create a neutral independent body to ensure oversight of the government in corruption-related matters. He outlined the important principles of Good Governance including transparency, accountability, participation and predictability and emphasized the duty of all parliamentarians to strengthen these principles with mechanisms and measures that would improve the situation of good governance in Cambodia.

Mr. Michael Rymek, Chargé d'Affaires of the Canadian Embassy to the Kingdom of Cambodia, then proceeded to provide his opening remarks, which was followed by comments from Mrs. Amelita Armit, Director of Asia and Eastern Europe Programs at the Parliamentary Centre. Mrs. Armit provided a brief background on the CCLSP Project and the invaluable support that the Parliamentary Centre has received from its Cambodian partners during the implementation of this Project.

This section will now summarize the main lessons learned from the presentations and discussions according to the specific topics addressed during the President's Forum.

Transparency within the context of Good Governance in Asia

Dr. Wang Kai Yuen, Member of Parliament from Singapore, provided an overview of the situation of corruption in the Asian context. Dr. Wang emphasized how certain countries were able to move ahead of others in terms of development, which he indicated was the result of these countries' efforts in addressing corruption issues. Dr. Wang stressed that corruption was indeed a part of rational human behaviour and that it is fostered according to three components: low pay

of the civil service compared to the market, opportunities available to partake in corrupt activities, and “low risk-high reward” activities (i.e. if the detection of corruption is low and penalties are slow or lenient, corruption will be high). He indicated that effective anti-corruption measures must include preventative, punitive and promotional components and that although transparency is one means in which to reduce corruption, other means are also necessary, including political will of the leadership over a sufficiently long period of time, a single dedicated agency beyond political influence and simple laws that are enforced rigorously and even-handedly.

Following Dr. Wang’s presentation, Ms Lisa Prevenslik-Takeda, Transparency International’s Programme Coordinator for Asia and Pacific, proceeded to give an overview of corruption and transparency issues at a general level and also specific to Asia. She discussed the human costs of corruption in that it interferes with governments’ attempts and resources in terms of furthering poverty alleviation and economic development. She provided an overview of Transparency International’s Corruption Perceptions Index and where certain Asian countries stood in regards to that measure. She outlined various priority issues in Asia in terms of addressing corruption, which included addressing political corruption, revising public procurement and contracting mechanisms, adherence to international and regional conventions, addressing private sector corruption, and the need for anti-corruption education. Ms. Prevenslik-Takeda then discussed various Anti-Corruption Instruments such as the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC) and the Asian Development Bank (ADB)/Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Anti-Corruption Action Plan for the Asia-Pacific, that can be used to address corruption or as sample documents that national governments can use to develop their own legislation. It is important to note that Cambodia’s Anti-Corruption legislation refers to the UNCAC document throughout its contents, which demonstrates that it has taken into account international conventions that should be adhered to at the national level once the legislation is passed.

Effective Anti-Corruption Legislation

During the session on Anti-corruption Legislation, H.E. Mr. Monh Saphan, Member of the National Assembly of Cambodia and Chair of the Commission on Interior, National Defence, Investigation and Anti-Corruption introduced the draft Anti-corruption Law that is to be tabled in the Cambodian Parliament. In 2000, the government of Cambodia drafted this law and over the past 5 years the government has sought input from international NGOs, local civil society organizations and the donor community in order to improve upon this law and ensure that it is in line with international standards. H.E. Mr. Monh Saphan provided a summary of the draft Anti-corruption Law, emphasizing that it covers all government officials, as well as civil society representatives, so in this case it has a far-reaching effect. Mr. Monh Saphan indicated that although the Law is quite effective in terms of ensuring that anti-corruption measures are addressed in legislation, he expected enforcement to be key in terms of effectively addressing corruption issues.

Senator Edgardo Angara, Senate of the Republic of the Philippines & Chair of the Southeast Asian Parliamentarians against Corruption (SEAPAC) then took the floor and described some of the Philippines’ experiences in terms of fighting corruption. Senator Angara indicated that corruption impairs political stability and undermines the respect for a Rule of Law based society, and therefore, all parliamentarians must unite to fight against corruption because it has the power

to permeate all parts of society in various countries. Agreements such as UNCAC and organizations such as the South-East Asian Parliamentarians Against Corruption (SEAPAC) are some ways that parliamentarians can work together to combat corruption. Senator Angara mentioned how corruption robs the poor of social services that cannot be provided due to the limited funding lost due to corrupt activities. Senator Angara was quite frank in his assessment of corruption in the Philippines, indicating that corruption has been on the rise in the Philippines. He indicated that the Parliament is aiming to address this issue through a number of laws such as the Procurement Reform Law (one of the biggest sources of corruption in the Philippines occurs during procurement), Ombudsman Law and Political Party Development Act. There does not need to be only one legislation that addresses anti-corruption, since corruption can take root in many different areas. Therefore, in the experience of the Philippines, a multi-pronged approach is required in order to effectively address the issue. Senator Angara also mentioned the importance of ensuring that colleagues in the National Assembly build up a coalition around the issue that will allow them to push anti-corruption measures through. Senator Angara indicated how the Philippines was well ahead of many other countries in the region in terms of democratic development and good governance, but that over the past few decades, the country has been losing its advantage in this area, which is largely a result of corruption in the country.

Dr. Wang Kai Yuen, Member of Parliament from Singapore, provided an overview of Singapore's anti-corruption strategy, in which the former Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew set a personal example of integrity in his country that set the precedence for fighting corruption in Singapore. Since 1960 the Parliament has amended laws to adopt a more punitive approach towards corruption that shifted the balance of power from burden of proof to an assumptions-based prosecution process. It is important to note that Singapore's fight against corruption was based on three pillars: meritocracy and the selection and promotion of civil servants, a market based pay system, and deterrence through stringent legislation and enforcement. These three measures formed the basis for Singapore's anti-corruption strategy. Dr. Wang indicated that based on Singapore's success, it is evident that certain pre-requisites are required in order to effectively address corruption:

- Political leaders must be fully committed to the fight against corruption
- Opportunities for corruption in vulnerable agencies must be reduced
- Anti-corruption laws must be adequate and provide sufficient punishment to serve as a deterrent
- The organization responsible for the investigation of corruption must be given independence to act against the corrupt irrespective of their social status or political affiliation

How this all relates to the draft Anti-corruption Law being proposed in Cambodia was then discussed by all panellists and the participants of the Forum. Senator Angara agreed with Cambodia's initiative to establish a Supreme National Council for Anti-corruption in order to strengthen law enforcement and investigation, as this agency can also act as one that could coordinate the efforts of all agencies and bodies. Dr. Wang also mentioned that certain organizations must be cleaned out before others. For example, since the prosecutors and police officers must enjoy public confidence and because it is these people that the public counts on to deal with corruption issues, they should be cleaned of corruption before progress can be made in other areas. H.E. Mr. Monh Saphan was encouraged from the experience of the Philippines and Singapore and indicated the need to create a new body to deal with corruption as opposed to trying to strengthen an existing one that may already be mired in corruption. However, Senator

Angara mentioned that it is not a good idea to put representatives of political bodies in the Supreme National Council for Anti-corruption because it will politicize the body, which is the current proposal of the Cambodia draft law that establishes the council (i.e. the Supreme National Council for Anti-corruption would have representatives from the National Assembly, Senate, government, etc). Furthermore, Senator Angara mentioned that the Secretary General of the Supreme National Council should be appointed by the commission itself as opposed to being appointed by the Prime Minister, otherwise the sense of loyalty that the Secretary General will have will go to the Prime Minister as opposed to the Council itself.

Access to Information & Media Independence

Dr. Likhit Dhiravegin, Member of the House of Representatives in Thailand, provided a brief history of access to information in Thailand during various regimes, including the military regime era. He indicated that since access to information is guaranteed in open political systems, the right to access information is usually identified in various articles in the constitution of a country. This is the case in Thailand, where access to information is guaranteed in Articles 58-61 of the Constitution. Also, in 1997, the right to access to information was specifically spelled out in the Data and Information Act. Dr. Likhit provided examples of situations where the articles in these specific documents allowed citizens to get information that they would have otherwise been denied. He mentioned that without a guarantee to access to information, abuse of power can take place and this can be harmful to a society that is based on good governance and democracy.

Dr. Likhit then went on to discuss media independence in Thailand. He indicated that freedom of the press is closely related to freedom of speech, which are both guaranteed in articles 39-41 of the Thai Constitution. Despite these assurances of freedom of the press, there have been instances when the media has been intimidated or pressured by such means as a withdrawal of advertisement, which has revenue effects. On the other hand, Dr. Likhit also mentioned that some people in the media have been partisan and sometimes sensationalize reports to the detriment of the government, which does not portray a balanced picture of the real situation.

Dr. Patrick Boyer, Former Member of the Canadian House of Commons, discussed access to information issues in the Canadian context. He described the work of the Standing Committee on Access to Information, Privacy and Ethics and its work in ensuring that the Parliament plays an effective oversight role in fostering a more transparent environment in Canada. He described how in 1983 the newly enacted Access to Information Act created a new culture of secrecy as opposed to bringing in a new openness to government that was expected. He spoke of how certain exemptions that were applied to issues that dealt with national security, personal privacy of individuals and the like were also applied in other areas in often unreasonable ways. In this regard, officials were protecting their departments and careers by slowing down the process of access to information. As a result, for the past 20 years Canada has been under pressure to reform its Access to Information Act and corresponding administrative regime. Many recommendations for legislative change have been proposed, however, nothing has been done to improve the situation. Nevertheless, these recommendations have been very good in terms of addressing the deficiencies in the access to information. On October 2005, the Information Commissioner in Canada presented a bill entitled the "Open Government Act" to the Committee on Access to Information, Privacy and Ethics, which recognized the draft Act as taking a positive step in the long process of access to information reform. It made two recommendations to the House of Commons: reaffirm the need to maintain the independence of the Information

Commissioner, and that the Justice Minister introduces legislation based on the draft Open Government Act in the House before the end of the next session. However, the government was defeated on November 28, 2005, and no action was taken. Dr. Boyer indicated that two lessons could be garnered from the Canadian experience for those countries that are looking to improve access to information:

1. Avoid the problems that Canada has experienced, but instead utilize some of the well articulated solutions that Canada's reformers have been advocating for so long;
2. Even if you feel that you have a strong access to information regime, it is important to ensure that continuing reforms are made with the changing times

Dr. Boyer then addressed the issue of media independence in Canada. He talked about how the media often try to make news items interesting to their audience and how some believe that the media is unreliable because they sensationalize stories to make them more interesting or shape the context and content of news coverage in order to adhere to their commercial realities. One of the benefits of having a number of different news media is that there is more than one perspective that can be shared with the public. However, the increasing concentration of ownership in the news media is becoming more of a problem in Canada these days. Since media can sway public opinion, it is important that it is not owned by a small concentration of people. Dr. Boyer then provided an example of a corruption scandal in Canada that was discovered by the dedicated work of two journalists. This led to an investigation by the Auditor General of Canada, whose damning report caused the police to lay charges and the Public Accounts Committee to hold a number of public hearings to get to the bottom of the issue. An independent judicial inquiry was then called to investigate the issue further. As we can see from this example, the importance of freedom of the press and access to information is very important in ensuring transparency and in getting to the bottom of corruption.

Transparency through Public Consultations and Citizen's Engagement

Senator Edgardo Angara started off this session by emphasizing that the existence of a strong state depends very much on a healthy and dynamic civil society and active citizen's engagement in the public realm. Public participation is important because it brings about transparency through engagement with the issues, and provides people with ownership in decision-making. Senator Angara described how civil society's contribution to a country's fight against corruption could take many forms, and in the Philippines the government and civil society have taken joint steps to monitor the lifestyles of public officials and employees in order to detect and eradicate possible corruption and graft. He also mentioned that the civil society is heavily involved in the effort to reform the country's procurement system. Various NGOs exist, such as Procurement Watch Inc. and Transparent Accountable Governance (TAG), which are able to hold the government to account. And the media ensures that the information gathered from these organizations is reported to the public in order to hold the government to account.

In Thailand, Dr. Likhit Dhiravegin explained how transparency through public consultations and citizen's engagement are stipulated in Articles 58-61 of the Constitution, indicating that people have the right to access to information and participate in the decision making processes of the government. Therefore, public hearing practices do exist and are stipulated in the regulations of the Office of the Prime Minister. Also, referendums can be arranged for important issues under consideration by the government, as stipulated in article 214 of the constitution. . While the laws exist, enforcement depends much on whether the public is willing to challenge the laws in the

courts. Dr. Likhit indicated that the public must make demands for enforcements; otherwise the laws that provide them with this power are of no use.

During the discussion, various panellists voiced the importance of public consultations in the legislative process, especially since it is they who have to adhere to the laws passed by Parliament. Dr. Likhit stressed the importance of public consultations in law making, especially on sensitive issues. He talked about the characteristics of public consultations in the Asia region and stressed that it does not work in the same way as the West, and that it is through more local level consultations that citizens can voice their concerns. This is why decentralization of power is very important in Asian countries. The panellists agreed that in an increasingly globalized world, the access to information that citizens possess is increasing, which is in part due to the Internet and the media. Therefore, the ways in which the public can voice their concerns and make informed decisions are increasing more now than ever.

Independence of Oversight Institutions and Transparency of their Findings

Dr. Patrick Boyer provided an introduction to the Estimates and Public Accounts committees in the Canadian Parliament, as these are the main parliamentary structures that hold the government to account. Opposition members chair both of these committees in order to ensure that there is not a conflict of interest when scrutinizing government programs. The Estimates Committee examines the government's spending before money is approved, while the Public Accounts Committee investigates spending after it has been incurred to ensure that goals were met and money was not misspent. Dr. Boyer then explained the role of the Auditor General in Canada, who reports directly to Parliament but works independently from it. All Auditor General Reports are made public, as are meetings of the Public Accounts Committee. Furthermore, the Public Accounts Committee reviews the Auditor General's Reports and calls her in to answer any questions they have on the Reports including issues related to waste, mismanagement and corruption on behalf of the government. Dr. Boyer discussed how these two organizations were crucial in uncovering the details of the recent corruption scandal in Canada, as described above.

Transparency Mechanisms for Parliamentarians

H.E. Mr. Son Chhay, Member of the National Assembly of the Kingdom of Cambodia, started off this session by mentioning the limited decision-making authority of Cambodian parliamentarians when compared to the Executive in the country. He mentioned that defining "conflict of interest" is very difficult and that since there is not a definition or some code of conduct that exists in Cambodia, it is understandable that some people may undertake activities that are deemed to be in conflict of interest. In order for parliamentarians to do their work more efficiently, they need to have more responsibility and be given decision-making power and adequate resources to do their jobs. Accompanying this should be a code of ethics or conflict of interest code that keeps in check this decision-making power.

Dr. Patrick Boyer described in detail the "conflict of interest" and "code of conduct" regulations in the Canadian context. He also provided a history of such regulations in Canada and how they have transformed over time to take into account the changing environment. He talked about conflict of interest guidelines for public officials, as well as those for parliamentarians that are either elected or appointed. Dr. Boyer mentioned how when a conflict of interest does arise, it should be solved in a manner in which the public is benefited, and not by the person who is

temporarily in a public position. In the past, Dr. Boyer co-chaired a Conflict of Interest Committee during former Prime Minister Trudeau's government, at which time the Committee discovered that there were so many different rules that it was impossible to collect or even understand them all. They therefore started working on simplifying the rules to their present form. Dr. Boyer mentioned that in order to address issues in relation to conflict of interest, three points are imperative: 1) prevention; 2) proper procedures to deal with conflict of interest once it arises; and 3) education, such as a regular program for Parliament and government to train, educate and remind public office holders what the rules are and how to comply with them.

Dr. Wang Kai Yuen indicated that in Singapore there is no specific code of conduct or conflict of interest regulations for parliamentarians. He did mention that his particular party, the PAP, did have quite a rigorous code of conduct (82 of 84 MPs are from the PAP Party). While there are no detailed documents specifically for parliamentarians, they rely on common sense. Also, the constitution provides for certain deterrent clauses that may address the issue, such as the "disqualification clause" that stipulates that if there is a \$2000 offence, an MP is discharged of his/her duties. This serves as a deterrent for MPs. Conflicts of interest in Singapore are based more on the strength of the individual. However, the environment in Singapore is changing. For example, in the past parliamentarians were not allowed to serve in other professions. However at present, MPs can have different positions and are in fact only part-time parliamentarians. Dr. Wang indicated that for these reasons perhaps it is time to revise the conflict of interest issue.

In Thailand, Dr. Likhit was a member of the committee to draft a law on conflict of interest in the Thai Parliament. This law was drafted to prevent insider information from being used to the benefit of parliamentarians. Since MPs can be consultants to companies, it must be ensured that they will not enact certain laws that favour certain companies. The Philippines also has quite an elaborate code of conduct for parliamentarians and public officials. Senator Angara suggested that this elaborate code could sometimes be burdensome and cause delays. He suggested that Cambodia need not be too ambitious in building an elaborate code, and in fact can work on a simple code that will still allow the Parliament to attract people to public office.

Dr. Patrick Boyer mentioned that when looking to develop a conflict of interest code for parliamentarians, Cambodia must try to develop a system that meets the country's own values and norms and one that will work in reality. The Canadian code can be used as a tool only to what may work best in Cambodia. Dr. Boyer mentioned that you can have less detail in Conflict of Interest codes but a process must then be added to deal with the problems that may not arise in the code. The ideal of "no-code" is not enough when working in a modern society and when dealing with a lot of administrative procedures.

The Road to "Good Governance"

All speakers made concluding remarks on their experiences over the past day and a half of the President's Forum. Mrs. Amelita Armit succinctly summarized the highlights and the key themes that emerged from the Forum. She indicated that there had been much discussion on the concept of good governance versus democratic governance and that it is evident that good governance is a big idea, with many dimensions; an ideal of something to continually strive for, like Peace, Truth and Justice. Governance comprises of a set of institutions or institutional frameworks, like an election system, a parliament, an independent judiciary, and an effective public service. It was also evident from the Forum that the road to good governance is not one straight highway and

that one size does not fit all. Different countries have different historical contexts, cultures and traditions, and the concept of good governance in Cambodia will have to be made to fit the country's own contexts. The principles, mechanisms, and structures of good governance do not exist by themselves; they are interactive and mutually reinforcing. The questions of what structures or mechanisms to choose, when to implement them and the reasons for choosing the particular structures and mechanisms require a balancing of interests. Mrs. Armit emphasized that Parliament is the best forum for balancing and mediating different interests, as it reflects the will of the people. It represents different views and different regions. It has rules and procedures for regulating debate, for bringing public views to Parliament through its various committees, through public consultation, and other mechanisms. Bringing Parliament to the public is essential in order to give it legitimacy and for it to be truly a voice of the people. It is Parliament that plays a key role in ensuring that the road to good governance is followed and that continuous improvements are made on the path towards a truly effective democracy.

H.R.H. Prince Chivanmonirak, Acting President of the Senate of the Kingdom of Cambodia, officially closed the Forum. His Royal Highness mentioned that the need to strengthen institutions and mechanisms of good governance is one of the greatest challenges facing Cambodia today. He was pleased to see that the President's Forum brought together leaders from many different countries to learn from each other and foster mutually beneficial relationships. His Royal Highness indicated that he sees this Forum as just the beginning of such a dialogue as there is much more that we need to do and many more lessons that we need to share in order to build richer societies. "Richer", not only in financial terms, but also in human resources terms, morality terms, and societal terms. His Royal Highness then officially closed the President's Forum.

Appendix A: Final Agenda

*President's Forum on Good Governance: Exploring Transparency Measures & Mechanisms
Intercontinental Hotel, Phnom Penh, Cambodia
December 13 & 14, 2005*

Tuesday December 13, 2005

- 8:00 Arrival of Members of Parliament and Guests
- Registration
- 8:40 Arrival of **H.R.H. Samdech Krom Preah Prince Norodom Ranariddh**, President of the National Assembly of the Kingdom of Cambodia
- National Anthem
 - Introduction by **Mr. Ok Serei Sopheak**, Facilitator of the President's Forum
 - Welcome Speech by **H.R.H. Samdech Krom Preah Prince Norodom Ranariddh**, President of the National Assembly of the Kingdom of Cambodia
 - Opening Remarks by **Mr. Michael Rymek**, Chargé d'Affaires, A.I., Canadian Embassy to the Kingdom of Cambodia
 - Opening Remarks by **Mrs. Amelita Armit**, Director of Asia & Eastern European Programs, Parliamentary Centre of Canada
- 9:15 – 10:00 **Session I: Overview of Transparency within the context of Good Governance in Asia**
- Speakers:
- Dr. Wang Kai Yuen**, Member of Parliament, Singapore
- Practical insights on the concept of transparency and good governance from an Asian Parliamentary Perspective
- Ms Lisa Prevenslik-Takeda**, Programme Coordinator for Asia and Pacific, Transparency International
- Overview of current issues and trends on the concept of transparency and good governance in general
 - Analysis of the practice of transparency in specific Asian political and social contexts and examination of transparency mechanisms employed in various Asian countries
- 10:00 – 10:30 **Discussion - Questions and Answers**
- 10:30 – 10:45 **Break**
- 10:45 – 11:45 **Session II: Designing and Implementing Effective Anti-Corruption Legislation - Learning from the Past and Looking to the Future**
- Speakers:
- H.E. Mr. Monh Saphan**, Member of Parliament, Chair of the Commission on Interior, National Defence, Investigation & Anti-Corruption, National Assembly of the Kingdom of Cambodia
- Analysis of the proposed Draft Law on Anti-Corruption in Cambodia, particularly in terms of how it addresses transparency issues such as disclosure and access to

information and the effect of such legislation on the Cambodian political, social and cultural climate

Senator Edgardo Angara, Senate of the Republic of the Philippines & Chair of the Southeast Asian Parliamentarians against Corruption (SEAPAC)

- History and analysis of Anti-corruption and transparency-related Legislation in the Philippines and the challenges faced in implementing such legislation, including effective redress procedures

Dr. Wang Kai Yuen, Member of Parliament, Singapore

- Overview of the comprehensive anti-corruption strategy in Singapore, including an analysis of meritocracy, market-based payments and enforcement mechanisms in ensuring transparency and holding the government accountable

11:45 – 12:15 **Discussion - Questions and Answers**

12:15 – 13:45 **Lunch**

13:45 – 14:30 **Session III: Improving Access to Information & Media Independence**

Speakers:

Dr. Likhit Dhiravegin, Member of Parliament, Thailand

- Overview of the actions undertaken in Thailand through measures to significantly increase the information made available to the general public so that they realize what officials are accountable for and how to judge their performance against those standards
- Analysis of the independence and the role of the media in acting as an effective conduit between government and citizens in Thailand, including an analysis of cases where the media has been suppressed and the affects of this on transparency and accountability

Dr. Patrick Boyer, Former Member of the Canadian House of Commons

- Overview of the work of the Canadian Standing Committee on Access to Information, Privacy and Ethics in fostering a more transparent environment in Canada and in ensuring that Parliament plays an effective oversight role in this regard
- Analysis of the independence and the role of the media in acting as an effective conduit between government and citizens in Canada, including an analysis of cases where the media has been suppressed and the affects of this on transparency and accountability

14:30 – 15:00 **Discussion - Questions and Answers**

15:00 – 15:15 **Break**

15:15 – 16:00 **Session IV: Transparency through Public Consultations and Citizen's Engagement**

Speakers:

Senator Edgardo Angara, Senate of the Republic of the Philippines & Chair of the Southeast Asian Parliamentarians against Corruption (SEAPAC)

- Analysis of active efforts undertaken to consult and engage civil society in order to ensure transparency in parliamentary decision-making and to advance accountability and integrity in the Philippines

Dr. Likhit Dhiravegin, Member of Parliament, Thailand

- Analysis of active efforts undertaken to consult and engage civil society in order to ensure transparency in parliamentary decision-making and to advance accountability and integrity in Thailand

16:00 – 16:30 **Discussion - Questions and Answers**

16:30 – 17:00 **Session V: Independence of Oversight Institutions and Transparency of their Findings and Reports**

Speaker:

Dr. Patrick Boyer, Former Member of the Canadian House of Commons

- Overview of role of oversight institutions such as the Office of the Auditor General and Public Accounts Committee in Canada and the transparency of the reports and findings of such institutions to Parliament, the public and media

17:00 – 17:20 **Discussion - Questions and Answers**

17:20 – 17:30 **Closing Session for Day One**

Wednesday December 14, 2005

8:30 – 8:45 **Review of Day One**

8:45 – 10:00 **Session VI: Transparency Mechanisms for Parliamentarians – "Codes of Conduct & Conflict of Interest Regulations for Parliamentarians"**

Speakers:

H.E. Mr. Son Chhay, Member of the National Assembly of the Kingdom of Cambodia

- Analysis of the needs of transparency mechanisms such as Codes of Conduct and Conflict of Interest Regulations for parliamentarians in the Cambodian context

Dr. Patrick Boyer, Former Member of the Canadian House of Commons

- Overview of transparency mechanisms such as Codes of Conduct and Conflict of Interest Regulations for parliamentarians in place in the Canadian Parliament and the analysis of the effect of such transparency mechanisms

Dr. Wang Kai Yuen, Member of Parliament, Singapore

- Overview of transparency mechanisms such as Codes of Conduct and Conflict of Interest Regulations for parliamentarians in place in the Singapore Parliament and the analysis of the effect of such transparency mechanisms

10:00 – 10:30 **Discussion - Questions and Answers**

10:30 – 10:45 **Break**

10:45 – 11:45 **Plenary Session: Strengthening the Role of Parliament in relation to Transparency Issues**

Moderator: **Mrs. Amelita Armit**

Panellists: **Senator Edgardo Angara, Dr. Patrick Boyer, H.E. Mr. Son Chhay, Dr. Likhit Dhiravegin, Ms Lisa Prevenslik-Takeda, H.E. Mr. Monh Saphan, Dr. Wang Kai Yuen**

- Based on studies presented and issues raised during the President's Forum, examination of best practices, lessons learned and follow-up actions that can be taken in order strengthen the role of Parliament in relation to transparency issues

11:45 – 12:00 **Closing Session**

- Closing Speech by **H.R.H. Prince Chivanmonirak**, First Vice President of the Senate of the Kingdom of Cambodia

12:00 – 13:30 **Lunch**