

**Excerpt of Samdech Techo's speech at the Plenary Session of the 32nd ASEAN Summit
28 April 2018, Singapore**

I am delighted to participate in this 32nd ASEAN Summit, and I would like to thank Singapore for being the warm and friendly host.

In fact, the theme of "Building a Resilient and Innovative ASEAN" is truly significant and deeply related to the currently evolving regional and global context of political, economic and social issues, as well as the rapid development of technology. ASEAN is a community with potential and growing economy and trade. With the objective to maintain resiliency and to seize the utmost potential of technological development, I would like to share some of my views as follows:

First, ASEAN shall accelerate the implementation of plans that have been set out, finalize the outstanding agreements with high commitment, increase efficiency in institutional coordination, legal and regulatory frameworks and strengthen the connectivity in finance, trade, and economy. At the same time, ASEAN shall learn to regularly adapt oneself to the new conditions and maintain opened and flexible behavior to those changes because what makes ASEAN different from other regional groups are good cooperation, acceptance of new opportunities, and willingness to review and re-evaluate policies and strategies.

Second, in the context of rising Trade War, ASEAN must be dare to go against this protectionism trend by further accelerating trade liberalization and comprehensive regional integration through addressing major challenges such as non-tariff measures, trade facilitation issues, implementation of ASEAN Single Window..., etc. In this spirit, ASEAN shall endeavor to speed up the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) negotiation to be completed by end of 2018, and shall continue urging the ASEAN-EU Free Trade Agreement negotiation as soon as possible.

Third, in order to achieve full potential on trade and production as well as successfully adapting oneself with new technologies, ASEAN certainly has many priority works to be necessarily completed, including to continue strengthening education sector and skill development, investing in physical infrastructures, especially on transportation and telecommunication, supporting research and development, and creating favorable conditions for foreign direct investment.

Fourth, Cambodia would like to highly value the ASEAN Leaders' Vision for a Resilient and Innovative ASEAN, which illustrates the ASEAN commitment in building a community that is filled with openness, transparency, and inclusiveness by focusing on people centered approach, especially youth, and aligned with the opportunity of technological advancement and high creativity via smart and resilient digital connectivity.

Fifth, the advancement of digital technology is a great opportunity for socio-economic development. However, the use of internet for the purpose of terrorism and other crimes as well as the dissemination of terrorism activities are serious challenges for national, regional and global security. Cambodia expects that the implementation of the ASEAN Leaders' Statement on Cybersecurity Cooperation, adopted during this ASEAN Summit, will surely promote closer coordination among ASEAN member states on Internet Security Policy and Capacity Building Initiatives through sharing of experiences, knowledge and new innovation.

Sixth, Cambodia believes that via the initiative on the establishment of ASEAN Smart Cities Network, ASEAN will be able to explore new approaches to exploit the benefits of technology for boosting economic growth, improving the living standards of the people. However, based on my observation, the development of cities in each ASEAN member states is different and has wide gap among each other, for instance, the differences between Singapore and Phnom Penh. Thus, in real implementation, the preparation of ASEAN Smart Cities shall also pay attention (1) to establish their own operation management mechanism; (2) to set up preferential financial mechanism, which can be realistically implementable in order to help develop smart cities for each ASEAN Member State; and (3) to set up joint standard and mechanism to support the whole ASEAN smart cities development.

Thank you!!