

## An interview of Chamroeun Sophal President of FFWPU Cambodia

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*Chamroeun Sophal*

*Question: What view does Cambodian society have of our church?*

The Family Federation for World Peace and Unification (FFWPU) in Cambodia has a relatively small foundation in Cambodian society. Throughout the past years, we have been working closely with a very specific group of people who are government officials such as village chiefs, commune chiefs, district governors, and provincial governors and other government figures through various projects, such as the Asian Leadership Conference (ALC) and the Family Blessing Movement, particularly, in recent years, the Heavenly Tribal Messiah Blessing to local families.

One very recent important project was the Asia Pacific Summit 2019 in Cambodia. It laid a fundamental foundation by creating awareness among the Cambodian people that True Parents have been working for world peace around the world. Particularly, it highlighted the cooperation of the co-hosts, the Universal Peace Federation (UPF) and the Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC) who organized the summit, which brought more than seven hundred international delegates from around fifty countries, including head of states and former heads of state, speakers in national legislatures, members of Parliament, media figures, academicians, businessmen, religious leaders, woman leaders, youth leaders, etc.

Moreover, there were over four thousand Cambodia leaders (members of parliament, ministers, vice ministers, governors, deputy governors, district governors) as well as civil society leaders and families that participated in the summit and the Blessing Ceremony that year.



*Signing Ceremony on Protocol of Cooperation between organizing committee of the Kingdom of Cambodia and FFWPU and UPF*

Although, the Cambodian people nationwide don't know much about what FFWPU Cambodia is doing, there are thousands and thousands of families and local government officials from around ten provinces and cities out of the twenty-five provinces and cities in Cambodia that have connected to us through the grassroots blessing ceremonies and educational programs. They are enjoying True Parents' education and blessing ceremonies.

Throughout the past years, the work in Cambodia began with making a foundation to create the environment for witnessing through inviting local leaders, youth, and influential people from various sectors including the government, business, media, religion, academia, and NGOs to take part in local seminars as well as some internationally organized by UPF and by Youth and Students for Peace (YSP) in Cambodia and Asia. UPF and YSP-Cambodia are at the forefront of creating the environment for witnessing, therefore, many Cambodians learned the Unification Principle or Divine Principle and they are non-controversial and well received.

Importantly, after our regional president, Demian Dunkley, came to Asia Pacific Region One at the end of 2020 and True Mother appointed Dr. Tang Kimsrui, a Cambodian, to serve as regional vice-president of FFWPU Cambodia, they have focused on strengthening family values and expanding the works of Heavenly Parent to each district in the nation while increasing the number of leaders in each field and

each providential organization, especially to nurture and take care of the families who already received the blessing in the past years and to expand it more people, ultimately to all sixteen million Cambodians.

*Question: Do you speak to non-members about our church's desire for Korean reunification?*

Following recent providential developments, especially the work for the reunification on the Korean Peninsula, Cambodian members and the leadership have been working closely to align with True Mother's desire and direction. Although this issue is not well received with the general citizenry in Cambodia, it is well received and discussed among academicians, politicians, scholars, and think tank institutions through various endeavors such as the Rally of Hope organized by the International Headquarters and local events organized by the local churches.



*Dr. Yoon showing a box with the Royal Order of Sahametrei in rank of Mohasena which he received*

*Question: How do people generally respond to the idea of reunification?*

Cambodian people are very supportive of the reunification of North Korea and South Korea. The Cambodian people often feel that the Korean people must unify because it is just one Korean land, one Korean people, one Korean language and one Korean Culture. To an International Leadership Conference organized by UPF International in each region on the theme "Toward the Peaceful Reunification of the Korean Peninsula: Creating the Foundation for a Unified World, Best Practices in Track II Diplomacy and Prospects for Economic Development and Peace," Cambodia invited many participants in each field of UPF Pillars to promote the Reunification of the Korean Peninsula. They were deeply interested and touched by the forum for reunification. They want to see the two Korean unite as one again and eventually to see the world of true peace.

*Question: Ban Ki-moon wrote, "Mediation is one of the most effective methods of preventing, managing and resolving conflicts. To be effective, however, a mediation process requires more than the appointment of a high-profile individual to act as a third party. Could Cambodia be a third party to help North Korea and South Korea?"*

Mediation has been an instrumental method to prevent, manage and resolve conflicts. Cambodia can play some important roles, both as a mediator and as a facilitator, in a peace process, especially for the peaceful reunification on the Korean Peninsula. Being a mediator and facilitator, Cambodia has a number of tools to use and offer, from historical relationships with both Koreas to being a food supplier to North Korea. We can use different approaches and tracks of diplomacy.

*Question: Do you think that Cambodia's painful history (1975–1979) is part of the reason that your prime minister is sympathetic to the suffering of people in divided North and South Korea?*

Cambodia is a country of rich culture and history. The zenith of Cambodia's history was the Angkor Era (9<sup>th</sup> -- 15<sup>th</sup> century). However, due to many foreign invasions and internal political disputes, which weakened Cambodia, eventually the darkest time was between 1975 and 1979 when over two million innocent Cambodian people were killed. This painful history is what Cambodian leaders and its people fear the most. Thus, after long decades of sorrow and suffering, in 1991, Cambodia began a new path through a Paris Peace Agreement to solve its internal political conflict and with great support from the United Nations to host the first democratic election during the post-war era to form a government of Cambodian people, by the Cambodian people and for the Cambodian people.

There were four important figures in all endeavors to bring Cambodia to a peaceful nation, starting with the Paris Peace Accord in 1991 were former King Norodom Sihanouk (representing FUNCINPEC Movement), Samdech Hun Sen (Representing the Royal Government of Cambodia), Hon. Mr. Son San (Representing the Khmer People's National Liberation Front (KPNLF), and General Secretary Khieu Samphan (Representing of the Democratic Kampuchea, the Khmer Rouge).

In a recent article published by the Phnom Penh Post, Cambodian Prime Minister said that "despite the Paris Peace Agreements on October 23, 1991, the civil war in Cambodia had dragged on between government forces and the Democratic Kampuchea side led by Pol Pot. The Post added that "Under Hun Sen's win-win strategy, the civil war came to an end in 1998 when Cambodia achieved full peace and prosperity until today."

In fact, this is the legacy and trademark of Cambodian Prime Minister Samdech Hun Sen who brought all responsible parties to the table to negotiate and finish the internal political dispute in Cambodia. In this regard, I think that Cambodian Prime Minister wants to contribute to peace building and national conflict resolution for the reunification on the Korean Peninsula and as well as for the world stage. Indeed, it is very amazing to see how True Mother's vision and the works of the Cambodian Prime Minister are connected to each other in this modern history.



*Dr. Yoon receiving the Royal Order of Sahametrei in rank of Mohasena from Samdech Prime Minister Hun Sen at the Peace Palace*

*Question: In what ways were you able to support Dr. Yoon while he was in Cambodia?*

The meeting itself is a top-level meeting between Dr. Yoon and Cambodian Prime Minister. There had been many months of preparation and jeongseong by True Mother. I could assist in everything requested from UPF and from the Cambodian government as a local mediator. As representative of True Parents in Cambodia, I supported Dr. Yoon completely with absolute faith, absolute love and absolute obedience.

We are always praying for Dr. Yoon to be able to share Mother's vision and love to Cambodian people through the head of government. I had this amazing opportunity to see and serve Mother's representative while in Cambodia and it is the great blessing for heavenly Cambodia, ASEAN nations, heavenly Asia Pacific, a heavenly unified Korea and a heavenly unified world.

Throughout the time when Dr. Yoon was in Cambodia, with jeongseong from members and blessed families, I could support in coordinating with government officials, with the Cambodian National Assembly, with the Asian Vision Institute (AVI), where the Think Tank 2022 secretariat works are located, and with some specific work and urgent issues that needed to be dealt with on the ground, so that the work could bear fruit, however, I believe that all the work and the successes took place based on the foundation of True Mother's love, jeongseong and investment. It was a miracle revealed to Cambodia.

As a representative of True Parents as well as of Cambodian blessed families and members in Cambodia, we are looking forward to seeing True Mother all the time. The official visit of Dr. Young-ho Yoon to Cambodia brings heavenly fortune to Cambodia, especially, since True Mother sent him to Cambodia. We can see Mother's heart and love toward Cambodia. As a local coordinator, I did all that was requested from both sides, UPF and the Cambodian Government such as follow up and confirmation. I am very grateful to Eknath Dhakal, the chairman of the Universal Peace Federation.

*Question: Please tell the story of Dr. Yoon's visit and the result of the visit in as much detail as you can.*

It is my greatest honor to meet and serve Dr. Yoon, the representative from True Mother, to visit Cambodia for the greater purpose, especially to realize the heavenly unified Korean Peninsula, and to establish the substantial Cheon Il Guk in Cambodia. I could feel our beloved True Mother's greatest love and blessing to see her son, the prime minister of Cambodia and all her children who are longing for True Mother. The Cambodian people are very grateful to True Mother for everything.

Dr. Yoon's visitation to Cambodia is bigger than Cambodia and Asia Pacific Region One itself. I felt this was truly a miracle and it happened because of our beloved True Mother's investment and jeongseong over many years. Our beloved True Mother made a promise bring a substantial national offering to Heavenly Parent, thus she started to work very hard beyond her physical limitations.

Dr. Yoon's visitation to meet the Cambodian Prime Minister took place based on the great works of our beloved True Mother who invested for Cambodia through the Asia Pacific Summit in Nepal in 2018, the Asia Pacific Summit in Cambodia in 2019, and the World Summit in Korea in 2020. It is also connected to the work that our beloved True Mother invested in Cambodia many years ago through the heavenly tribal messiah providence through which hundreds of blessed families from Cambodia, Japan, Korea, and others around the world, poured in their resources and offered their jeongseong to support the providence in Cambodia as well as through the unchanging heart of love from each Cambodian blessed family, members and leaders united with True Mother's vision.

These great works are spiritually and physically crucially important for Cambodia as now it has been chosen as a central nation in the Asia Pacific region, especially for the sake of a heavenly unified Korea and for a heavenly unified world. Through the meeting with Prime Minister of Cambodia, we could see his smile and warm welcome of True Mother with a heart of filial piety. Cambodia is a nation of filial piety; we are a nation that emphasizes respecting our parents. True Mother is the Mother of the universe, Mother of peace, and the only begotten daughter who is present on earth. We must all become filial sons or daughters and unite with her.

As the representative of Cambodian blessed families, members, and leaders, we would like to convey our love and heartfelt regards to our beloved True Mother. We pray for True Mother to be healthy, to live a long life and that her love embraces the whole world. We miss you and we love you very much, True Mother.