

## The International Community Must Work Together to Fight Against COVID-19

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One Million Rally of Hope for the Realization of a Heavenly Unified World

Cheongshim Peace World Center



Excellencies, distinguished leaders, Honorable Hak Ja Han Moon, co-founder of Universal Peace Federation, Honorable Jose de Venecia, co-chairman of ICAPP, Dr. Thomas G. Walsh, chairman of the Universal Peace Federation, Excellencies, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen! Today, I have the great honor and pleasure to address ladies and gentlemen at the Virtual Summit, a "Rally of Hope" organized by the Universal Peace Federation. The theme, "Rebuilding and Renewing Our Nations in the Post-COVID-19 World: Interdependence, Mutual Prosperity and Universal Values" is especially important and vital at a time when all nations around the world are struggling to fight COVID-19.

As we all aware, COVID-19 has been threatening our daily lives -- customs, lifestyles, economies, and societies -- in all countries around the world. To date, no one knows when the COVID-19 crisis will end, and no one can precisely estimate the effects of the pandemic on all aspects of each nation, including their economy, politics, and social order. For Cambodia, we can assess that the situation of COVID-19 is not severe given that no community-level transmission has yet occurred in the country; the current cases of infection were all imported, and we have experienced zero mortality.

Like other countries, Cambodia has put in place stringent measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19 by devising three fronts: (1) Preventing the recurrence of imported cases into Cambodia, (2) Preventing

community- level transmission, and (3) providing treatment to the infected. To ensure the highest level of efficiency, Cambodia has established a national committee to combat COVID-19 under joint central command to lead, launch and promote the implementation of all adopted measures. So far, the fight against COVID-19 in all countries has largely concentrated on their own domestic measures. However, in the context of globalization and regional integration, I believe that the fight against COVID-19 as well as the socio-economic recovery after the pandemic crisis cannot be solved at the national level. It requires deepening and broadening international cooperation in all fields.

### **We are under the same threat**

This means that the international community must work together to turn the fight against COVID-19 into a common battle. In this spirit, allow me to share some views as follows: First, the spread of the Covid-19 pandemic has posed unprecedented challenges to public health security, disruptions of gatherings and of the functioning of the global supply chains, all of which are seriously effecting livelihoods and aggravating the global economic downturn.

In this context, a joint response and universal solidarity aiming at supporting multilateralism is becoming increasingly more urgent. In this regard, while the world is awaiting a breakthrough in vaccine development, Cambodia is calling for the adoption of a vaccine as a global public good, which people anywhere and everywhere can access.

Second, we must avoid racism and the blame game, which leads to disunity, because the whole world needs to join hands to fight this pandemic. In the spirit of humanitarianism and international solidarity, Cambodia granted permission to the MS Westerdam cruise ship, with more than two thousand, two hundred passengers onboard, to dock in Cambodia on February 13, 2020. Cambodia has not only provided treatment to infected Cambodian nationals but also the infected foreigners in the country.

Third, moving forward, we need to be strategically well-prepared for post-COVID-19 crises. To realize this, we should develop a specific recovery plan by setting out a number of scenarios for a gradual reopening of cross-border travel and trade between countries in the region and for recovering the sectors severely hit by the crisis. Fourth, we must continue to strengthen cooperation in promoting globalization and in strengthening multilateral mechanisms to ensure a conducive environment for promoting economic growth, eradicating poverty, and improving people's livelihoods.

We must ensure that our cooperation mechanisms remain open and supportive of the multilateral trading system, especially in accelerating our social and economic connectivity to advance each country's development agenda and to achieve a global agenda of sustainable and inclusive development.

Fifth, building and maintaining peace and security in the world is an indispensable foundation for development. Therefore, building and maintaining peace and security is a must; it should be the highest priority of each country. We cannot achieve peace by chance. We must promote mutual love, mutual respect, and the value of humanity, coexist peacefully and harmoniously, and respect the diversity of faiths, religions, and cultures within and between societies.

In closing, may I call upon all leaders to register a high level of goodwill and responsibility to respond to this global challenge and to maintain a conducive environment for peace, stability and harmony, development and prosperity of all nations. Cambodia is ready to contribute to this noble goal with all stakeholders.