



CICP Commentaries

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H.E Un Ning and Ung Hout and Their Leadership Experiences

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These are remarks made by H.R.H. Samdech Norodom Sirivudh, H.E. Un Ning and H.E. Ung Huot at the Second Training on “Rights Based Leadership” of the Young Leaders Mentoring Program in Sihanouk Province on August 22, 2009.



- *Leaders are those who could motivate people to work*
- *Good leader is a good listener*
- *Good leader is happy with all kinds of feedback and ready to make positive changes*

Very Good Morning Excellency Ung Hout, Excellency Un Ning, Ms. Pham Huong Giang, Respected Mentors and Mentees

Welcome to our second training program for the Young Leaders Mentoring Program (YLMP) 2009. Thank you for supporting the Program especially special gratitude to our senior respected mentors H.E. Ung Huot and H.E. Un Ning for joining us today.

Today training touches on one of the most important topics on leadership which is called a “rights

based leadership”. This training, I believe, is part of the exploration process to define and conceptualize what is “rights based leadership”. To me, I think “rights based leadership” is a kind of leadership which consider the values and importance of human rights in decision making process. A leader is required to understand and integrate human rights in their policies.

As human being, we are entitled to basic human rights which clearly and legally stated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. I just mention few of the basic human rights principle from the universal declaration as follow:

- All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights;
- Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person;
- No one shall be held in slavery or servitude;
- No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment;
- Everyone has the right to recognition everywhere as a person before the law;
- Everyone has the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association;
- Everyone has the right to take part in the government of his country, directly or through freely chosen representatives;
- Everyone has the right to education;
- Everyone has the right freely to participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts and to share in scientific advancement and its benefits.

In addition to these basic human rights, it is also important to emphasize the rights to development and the rights to live above the extreme poverty line (less than one dollar per day). These basic human rights are required to be embedded in the leaders’ mind. In every decision making process, it is necessary to take these human rights principle into consideration. Otherwise, the policy results would not reflect interests and benefits of the main stakeholder who are the people.

Cambodia has gone through tragic history particularly in the Khmer Rouge regime during which human rights were seriously violated. Now we have enjoyed much better comparing with our past, the respect of human rights. However, there are still many things need to be done the improve human rights in Cambodia. Leadership and human rights linkage is a determined factor in human rights improvement. Human rights education for the young leaders is even more important for the future rights based development of the country.

I believe that this two days training will equip young leaders with some crucial tools for making responsible and effective policy as far as human rights principles are concerned.



- *If we want to be a king in one particular area... You need detail information of that area.*
- *In modern world today we could not survive without information.*
- *In order to have security, you need to have people from all walks of life supporting you.*
- *I only respect those leaders who think right and act right*

H.E Un Ning, Chairman of Commission 4
Home Affairs, National Defense, Investigation, Anti-Corruption and Public Function
Cambodian National Assembly
Member of board of Directors, CICP

Today I would like to share with you about what is a good leader and what leader should do.

I was a former professor at Royal University of Phnom Penh in pre-Khmer Rouge period. During the Khmer rouge time I was a farmer in my hometown, Sodan District, Kompong Tom province. After the collapse of Pol Pot in 1979, I was requested to hold gun to fight against Pol Pot armed forces that were hiding in the jungle and rain forests. The disturbance and cruelty of Pol Pot pushed me to participate in the movement to fight against them. Later on I became a very ardent person of the movement. I was given love and respect from people and local communities. From time to time my activities were recognized and satisfied by local and provincial officials. Then they selected me to be the head of the village and leader of movement, and latter on I became the governor of Stoung district, Kampong Tom province. Stoung district was one of the hottest war zones during 1980s. In the beginning, I used to tell them that I didn't have any experience in shooting guns and even holding guns. But they told me that "Don't worry about that we would be assisted by our Vietnamese friends".

To protect Stoung district and the town of Kompong Province, it requires strong leaders, commanders and efficient armed forces given it was the main target of the Khmer Rouge forces mainly led by Ta Mok Sometimes, Ta Mok attacked and occupied Stoung District and other parts of the province and used that occupied zones to further attack the provincial city. Stoung district has a very strategic position for this war.

When I was a head of the district, I committed myself to get access to all information from all angles and sources. I even used my own property to give to the informants as an incentive. ***If we want to be a king in one particular place we are required to know about all information of that place. To be the leader of the modern world, we need information and in order to get the information, it requires investment.*** At that time I gave rice, salt and clothes to local people who told me about Khmer rouge activities and where their location was. ***To maintain security for our people we need their active participation and contribution.***

My first priority was to attack Khmer Rouge and maintain peace and stability in the district while economic, social and culture developments would latter came. We could not develop with peace and stability.



- *Leader has to know and understand social and economic issues.*
- *Leader is not necessarily a specialist but rather a generalist.*
- *Strong public support does not totally lead to success.*
It needs to incorporate with effective strategic plan
- *As a leader, you should not fear. My life was threatened when I fought against corruption during my time of the Minister of Education*

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H.E Mr. Ung Hout, Senator;
H.E. Ung Huot, Senator
Vice Chairman, Board of Directors, CICIP

The idea of good leadership is very hard to express, but according to my experience when I was the then well-known minister of the Ministry of Education Youths and Sport, I could share with you some of the decision and acts that the leader should take.

To be a good leader, it requires the deep understanding of complex social and economic issues. For example, now we are talking about gender issue, in which majority of people supports the women participation in social, economic, and political life. It is therefore necessary for the political parties to include gender issues into their policy agenda in order to get more votes in the general election.

When I was a minister of education, only really competent students could pass the exam. I was not a specialist in education since my educational background is accounting and finance. I got a Master Degree in Business Administration and I used to learn leadership skills in Australia. I am of the view that leader does not necessarily need specialist skills but generalist skills.

When I stepped into the Ministry of Education, I didn't know how to find and fight against corruption but I had in my mind and commitment to fight against corruption. I strongly believe that I could do it. Base on my belief and wisdom, I started to carry out measures to fight against corruption, a cancer of socio-economic development. For the first two months, I got lost and I did not know what to do. I latter on started to talk with most of the ministry officials and staffs to determine the roots of corruption. Through the discussion and consultation, I found out the ways to deal with corruption. ***The most important thing the leader should have is to acquire all necessary information from those working with you.*** No one really supported me to tackle corruption but I could get strong support from the school teachers who were willing to fight against corruption. I had a strong commitment that even though I could only achieve 50% of the total 100% I still was optimistic to do it. I travelled around country to discuss the issues with provincial officials leading up to get the majority of people to support my anti-corruption campaign. Only five percent of the bribes went to lecturers/teachers but the whole image of teachers was damaged. So it was a common interest of the teacher to join with me to fight against corruption. However, it should be reminded that ***“The strong public support not means to all success but it requires effective strategic plan”***.

My strategy was I moved the proctors from one province to another and from the capitals to the provinces and vice versa. By such movement of proctors, I believed that it could reduce personal connection that lead to bribery. Corruption could take place within the inter-personal connection network. However, some of them could still find an opportunity to have a personal network within two weeks of being a proctor. I got a piece of information which was related to bribery/corruption case. On Sunday before the correction day, I found the solution. I prepared the planning strategy before I left home. I had a meeting with the exam correcting committee. I learned that there was a problem of communication between and among the exam centres. Some centres communicated with each others to find way to commit corruption. I decided immediately to move the exam papers from one centre to another in order to cut the connectivity for possible corruption. I informed all teachers that if they wanted the exam processed smoothly 100 percent; they had to follow my instruction by changing exam papers from school/centre to another. ***Being a leader we have to see how the circumstance works and are flexible most of the time.*** At that time, there were opposition from some colleagues since it was complicated and time consuming. The administrative system could not successfully fulfil such an abrupt policy. In addition, they told me that they needed to type and seal the policy instruction to send to all the exam centres. I spoke in front of about 300 teachers that I was a minister so I could do this. I told them that I did not need a formal typed policy instruction paper I just needed to use my hand written policy instruction with seal and sent to all the centres to follow suit. Sometimes we don't need to follow strictly the bureaucratic and administrative system as we find that the acts are urgent and should be implemented immediately. We need to achieve our goal. Results are sometimes more important than process. In so doing, I could fight against corruption. In the war against corruption, it is

hard to avoid conflict with those corrupt officials. I was even threatened by some people as far as my personal security is concerned. But I was not afraid of that since I believed in what I was doing was right and for the society as a whole.