

**Introductory Remarks by Ambassador Pou Sothirak  
Executive Director of the Cambodian Institute for Cooperation  
During the Launch Event  
Handbook “Parliamentary Oversight of the Security Sector”  
Raffles Hotel Le Royal, 9 December 2016**

- H.E. Dr. Nguon Nhel, Second Vice President of National Assembly of Cambodia
- The Honorable Members of Parliaments of Cambodia
- H.E. Ivo Sieber, Ambassador of Switzerland to Cambodia
- H.E. Hanafi Rais, Member of Parliament and Member of Committee on Defense, Foreign and Information Affairs of Indonesia
- Dr. Hans Born, Deputy Head Research, Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF)
- Prof. Dr. Mayong Aguja, Secretary-General, Inter-Parliamentary Forum on Security Sector Governance in Southeast Asia
- Distinguished Participants, Ladies and Gentlemen

On behalf of all of the co-organizers, namely the Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF) and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), the Cambodian Institute for Cooperation and Peace is pleased to warmly welcome all of the distinguished participants to this Launch Event in the capital city of Phnom Penh.

My Institute, CICP, is deeply gratified to be able to host this handbook launch “Parliamentary Oversight of the Security Sector” in order to promote the importance for the elected representatives of the people in parliament to ensure that the nation’s security policies are properly implemented in accordance with the underlying values and principles relating to security which the state seeks to foster and protect.

There is no denial that security is vital to the welfare of all citizens and there is no reason why parliament should not be able to make proactive contribution toward ensuring that security agents, including the army, the police, and other

relevant security providers, are properly monitored and controlled through a process of effective governance so as to achieve the prevalence of a complete peace and sustainable development for the whole country.

In a democratic society, parliament exercises its oversight duty over security sector through the setting of legal parameters, adopting the budget and overseeing security activities. Parliamentary oversight can be fully effective if it has broad access to information, the necessary technical expertise, and the power and intention to hold the government to account.

Although Cambodia has literally enjoy peace and stability since the rebirth of the second kingdom after the successful election in 1993, the country is still confronted with serious challenges related to its security sector such as the lack of modernization of the security forces to become more professionalize armed forces and the absent of effective institutions to manage and oversee the security sector properly.

Therefore, effective parliamentary oversight is absolutely essential to ensure full transparency and accountability of the security forces. Without a robust oversight by parliament, there is a danger of security services misinterpreting their mission and acting freely with excessive freedom, either placing heavy strains on limited national resources, or exerting abusive influence over other part of society that may lead to violent and conflicts. Thus, effective parliamentary oversight can help instill stable democracy, peace and order while keeping a cohesive society and striking a right balance between civilian and military relations so as to keep pace with the changing security environment.

When CICIP was approached to translate the handbook into Khmer language, we enthusiastically agree to the task because we hold the view that the handbook on “Parliamentary Oversight of the Security Sector” contain a concise and accessible guide that would offer a comprehensive set of practical concepts and mechanisms which might shape parliament's contribution to security oversight.

The original English text of the handbook provides a global overview of the role of Parliament and other state institutions in security issues.

The handbook describes the complex issues of security and provides numerous examples of laws and regulation as well as highlights the democratic practices of parliamentary oversight of the security sector in various countries. At the end each chapters, there are specific and concrete recommendations given for Member Parliaments' consideration to monitor and oversee the security sector.

The handbook is indeed quite comprehensive and also includes such sub-topics as national security policy cycle including international regulations which are relevant to national security policy, the role of civil society and the media in security sector, who's who of the security sector which includes the military, police and intelligence services, other state military organizations and private security companies, tools and instruments that parliaments can use to oversee the security sector, challenge to security such as states of emergency, threats to internal security, terrorism and cyber-crime. Resources related to the security sector, including the defense budget and its control both by parliament and by other state auditing bodies were also described in the handbook.

Other important aspect related to enhancing the capacity of parliaments including training and equip parliament with appropriate personnel as well as procurement procedure and arms trade and transfer were also discuss in the handbook.

CICP finds the handbook most comprehensive and provide an in-depth understanding of security issues and the role of parliamentary oversight, including numerous set of practical recommendations. The handbook should be considered as good guide book for oversight of security sector. However, one should bear in mind that these recommendations have to be looked at from the national context.

The Khmer translation of the text book will be distributed freely to Member of Parliaments and other interested government agencies dealing with security force as well as to other relevant institutions.

CICP fervently hope that the translation of this handbook, although it is not perfect in any sense of the word, could serve to expose the fundamental approach to oversee the security sector allowing the representative of the people's to exercise its monitoring role over the security forces with efficiency and in accordance with democratic governance.

CICP further hope that this translation can contribute more substantively to promote the security sector reform and security sector governance and thereby ensuring that security policy and practices are genuinely reflect the aspirations of the people they are meant to serve.

On this occasion, CICP would like to extend our thankfulness to the Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF), represented here by Dr. Hans Born, and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), represented by H.E. Ivo Sieber, Ambassador of Switzerland to Cambodia for their invaluable support in making the translation and publication of the handbook in Khmer language possible.

I should not fail to express my profound appreciation to the Honorable Dr. Nguon Nhel, Second Vice President of National Assembly of Cambodia for honoring us with his presence at this book launch. His participation represents a keen interest on the part of the Cambodia Parliament in overseeing the security sector.

In addition, I would like to thank all the distinguished participants, both national and international guests, for coming to this B ook Launch.

Thank you for your intention!