



Asia Pacific Leadership Forum  
on HIV / AIDS and Development

*Unofficial translation*

## M E S S A G E

**of Samdech Kittipritthbindit Bun Rany HUNSEN**  
President of the Cambodian Red Cross  
and The National Champion of the United Nations Secretary General's  
Joint Plan of Action for Women's and Children's Health

On The Occasion of the Nation Day for Maternal Newborn and Child Health,  
21<sup>st</sup> February 2026

Under theme:

***“Together for Quality, Safety and Efficiency of Antenatal Care to Ensure Healthy Mother and Newborn even in Conflict-Affected Setting”***

ប្រាប់បងប្អូន

- *Respected Samdechs, Excellencies, Lok Chumteavs, Neak Okhnas, Okhnas!*
- *Ladies and Gentlemen, Beloved Compatriots!*

On the occasion of the National Day for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health, February 21<sup>st</sup>, 2026, on behalf of the Cambodian Red Cross and on my own behalf as the National Champion of the United Nations Secretary General's Joint Plan of Action for Women's and Children's Health, I am very pleased to join the Royal Government and all my fellow people in celebrating this important day under theme: *“Together for Quality, Safety and Efficiency of Antenatal Care to Ensure Healthy Mother and Newborn even in Conflict-Affected Setting”*. This theme truly reflects the Ministry of Health's commitment to continuing the implementation of the Royal Government's key measures, in line with the spirit of vigilance in a precaution, proactive, active and interactive manner, while promoting innovation for rapid recovery from crises and further strengthening the resilience of our health system to become stronger and more sustainable in the long term.

Taking this opportunity, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to the military heroes who sacrificed their lives in the cause of protecting the territorial integrity and

sovereignty of the country from foreign aggression. I extend my deepest appreciation to all frontline soldiers who have been and continue to be stationed along the border areas. I would like to pray that all our military heroes and their families enjoy good health and continued success. I would also like to express my deepest admiration and appreciation to our “white-uniformed soldiers”—the health professionals—who have demonstrated unwavering dedication, courage and resilience in overcoming obstacles, hardships and life-threatening challenges to provide care, education, prevention, treatment and essential support services to all Cambodian people, especially internally displaced persons, most of whom are women, newborns, children, the elderly and persons with disabilities. Their noble efforts remind us of the true value of peace, solidarity and unity in standing firmly together for our beloved homeland.

At the same time, I wish to emphasize that health care, health security and health system resilience are fundamental pillars for nation-building and toward achieving Cambodia’s Vision 2050. We must therefore invest our resources and efforts in improving health care systems and advancing universal health coverage, ensuring that these efforts are inclusive and resilient. Indeed, people are our most valuable strategic assets. The future of our nation depends on the next generation—newborns, children and youth! Therefore, we must provide them with the best possible care and protection.

On the auspicious occasion of Nation Day for Maternal Newborn and Child Health, 21<sup>st</sup> February 2026, and in line with Cambodia's firm commitment to the shared vision of “all people live in health and well-being to participate in human capital development and sustainable economic growth”, I would like to call upon all fellow compatriots and all stakeholders to continue our noble mission, actively collaborate with the Ministry of Health, and implement the following activities:

**1. Promote greater awareness and help women by:**

- Providing guidance to (or Encouraging) all pregnant women to undergo at least 4 prenatal check-ups at the specified time to receive comprehensive health check-ups for both the mother and fetus; to obtain

education on self-care during pregnancy, proper nutrition, screening for diseases related to pregnancy, prevention of mother-to-child transmission of infections, tetanus vaccination, and **especially understand and recognize danger signs, such as bleeding, headache, blurred vision, etc.;**

- Reminding women to monitor their fetal growth by regularly observing fetal movements and to seek immediate medical attention if any danger signs are suspected;
- Advising pregnant women not to work hard, remain in well-ventilated and cool environments, ensure adequate rest. In particular, not to take non-prescription painkillers, and strictly avoid smoking, alcohol consumption and drug use.

**2. Authorities at all levels and community-based structures are encouraged to:**

- Assist women who are about to give birth by arranging transportation or ambulances to transfer them promptly to health facilities when complications or danger signs arise;
- In emergency or disaster situations, ensure that pregnant women have access to prenatal check-ups and childbirth services at designated safe centers established by the Department of Health/Ministry of Health.

3. Leaders, officials and health service providers are urged to continue fulfilling your noble duties with improved quality, enhanced safety and greater efficiency in serving the people.

4. Red Cross officials, staff and volunteers at branches/sub-branches and the Working Groups for the National champion at both National Headquarters and branch levels, are encouraged to work closely with health officials/staff and relevant authorities to educate and widely disseminate essential health messages for the benefit of all people, especially mothers and newborns throughout Cambodia.

5. National and international institutions and all stakeholders, including civil society organizations, the private sector, and development partners, are encouraged to continue providing technical and financial support to safeguard the health of mothers, newborns, and children, which remains our shared responsibility and common goal.

I strongly hope that Cambodia will overcome these difficulties in the near future and continue moving forward firmly in a spirit of solidarity, strengthening efforts to improve maternal and child health in order to achieve the goals of the National Strategy for Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights in Cambodia 2025-2030 and the Operational Framework for the Prevention of Mother-to-Child Transmission of HIV, Syphilis and Hepatitis B, and the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals.

Once again, I would like to express sincere appreciation to the Royal Government, relevant institutions, experts at all levels, national and international organizations, territorial authorities, competent forces, and all philanthropists, especially the leaders, managers, doctors, and health workers of all health units at the national and sub-national levels who continue to carry out their daily responsibilities with a strong sense of accountability, guided by the operating principles of “Universality, Trust, Integrity, Quality, Innovation, and Collaboration”.

I would like to dedicate the spirit and message of the National Day for Maternal, Newborns, and Child Health, which this year focuses on “Together for Quality, Safety and Efficiency of Antenatal Care to Ensure Healthy Mother and Newborn, even in Conflict-Affected Setting”, as an inspiration for every citizen to contribute to the greater good of our beloved homeland.

*Made in Phnom Penh, on February 18<sup>th</sup>, 2026*

*Signed and sealed*

***Samdech Kittipritthbindit Bun Rany HUNSEN***