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Speech by Tea Banh, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Defense, Cambodia

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Dear Host, Ladies and Gentlemen, Ladies and Gentlemen,

First of all, on behalf of the Royal Government of Cambodia and in my own name, I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the Chinese Government, the Chinese Communist Party and the Chinese People's Republic of China on the 70th anniversary of its founding. I would like to sincerely thank General Wei Feng and the Chinese State Councilor and the Minister of National Defense for inviting me. The 9th Beijing Xiangshan Forum speaks!

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

I am very honored to be able to attend this forum and give a speech. The Beijing Xiangshan Forum provides us with an excellent opportunity to explore common issues and find common solutions. This is also a special opportunity for me personally, let me explore the interests of small and medium-sized countries. However, to understand the interests of small and medium-sized countries or what they want, we must understand the challenges they face. I think there are three major challenges:

The first major challenge facing small and medium-sized countries is that traditional theories are mainly concerned with the behavior of superpowers, mainly to understand why conflicts between superpowers and how to achieve balance among big powers, thus safeguarding world peace, the welfare of small and medium-sized countries. And the benefits are often overlooked. Many times people sympathize with the experience of small and medium-sized countries, but the interests of small and medium-sized countries are often sacrificed in order to achieve peace between the superpowers. Therefore, we see that when there is a disagreement between the superpowers, small and medium-sized countries are often forced to choose side teams or accept the choices imposed by the big powers. In contrast, when superpowers coordinate their own interests, sometimes at the expense of the interests of small and medium-sized countries. The ASEAN defense ministers have said that elephants are fighting for grass. But when the elephant is intimate, the grass will suffer. This statement is very humorous, but it does not make sense. For small and medium-sized countries, our situation is so unfortunate.

The second big challenge is that we have no way to get rid of the first big challenge I mentioned. Our world is interdependent. We can't have any contact with the outside world, because such a closed life is very difficult. Our opportunity cost is too high. However, if we are open to the world, we have to make contact with other countries and have to be influenced by the actions of other countries. Therefore, whether we like it or not, we have to deal with superpowers. In many cases, this kind of interaction is not equal. This is another big challenge we face.

The third major challenge is that international relations are self-contradictory. On the one hand, countries must achieve the maximization of national interests, while at the same time they must abide by a series of moral principles in international relations. In reality, this is very complicated, especially if we consider another difficulty, when the national interests and morality conflict, what choice should we make? Ideally, we want both to be chosen, but reality and theory cannot be both. Great powers and superpowers often at the expense of morality or sacrifice morality while realizing their own interests. Small and medium-sized countries do not have such luck. On the contrary, while our small and medium-sized countries realize their national interests, they are often restricted by the moral principles imposed by the big powers. For example, although Cambodia has been striving to benefit the people and strive to realize our national interests, we They often face pressure from other countries that accuse us of human rights freedom and democracy.

Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen, ladies and gentlemen,

Taking this opportunity, I would like to talk about my personal point of view and want to talk about the role of China.

China is a big country and plays a unique role. I would like to pay special tribute to China for its important contribution to regional cooperation, especially with ASEAN. China is now the co-chairman of the ASEAN Defense Ministers Extension Group. China also has anti-terrorism and disaster relief cooperation with Vietnam and Thailand. In addition, from 2020 to 2022, China will also cooperate with Cambodia. This year, China and ASEAN will hold exchanges of young military officers. China treats ASEAN countries equally. Regardless of whether the country is big or small, China and them all maintain friendly cooperative relations. I would like to quote the words of Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen. He said that "the reason why China-Cambodia relations have developed so well is because although our two countries are different in size, we can still develop bilateral relations on an equal footing." Prime Minister Hun Sen and President Jiang Zemin, Chairman Li Peng, Premier Zhu Rongji and Premier Wen Jiabao all have very good relations. China has always maintained a very friendly relationship with Cambodia. China and Cambodia have achieved peaceful coexistence. We have maintained unity. We respect each other and respect each other's independence and common interests.

Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen,

To reduce the risks and challenges faced by small and medium-sized countries, the Cambodian government has announced the principle of strengthening domestic reforms, achieving international friendship, and pursuing sovereignty and independence. Cambodia also plays a very important role in the United Nations. In an international organization such as the United Nations, Cambodia has made a very important and special contribution. It is the

United Nations peacekeeping operation. In the past 13 years, Cambodia has sent 6,352 peacekeeping operations. Personnel, including more than 300 female peacekeepers and officials, we dispatched peacekeepers to eight countries, including the Central African Republic, Chad, Cyprus, Lebanon, Mali, Sudan, South Sudan, and we also sent observers to Syria, we help In other war-torn countries, we hope that they will achieve peace and stability at an early date.

Finally, I want to emphasize in particular that for small and medium-sized countries, to get rid of the predicament I mentioned earlier, an important principle is to develop mutually beneficial and win-win cooperation with other countries, regardless of size. Win-win cooperation enables us to achieve common interests, which is not only reasonable but also feasible. If we are to sacrifice the interests of others to realize our national interests, then the result can only be to undermine trust and undermine cooperation, and partners will not work with you in the future. These factors will lead to misunderstandings and conflicts. As an optimistic person, I believe that win-win cooperation is not only theoretically feasible, but actually feasible. I fully agree that all parties should be able to have the ability to prevent impulsiveness from taking part in cooperation. The interests of the country, of course, are very difficult to do, but if we can do it, we can truly realize the community of human destiny.

Finally, before the end, I would like to appeal to all countries, big or small, to be able to join hands in order to achieve the dream of peace, stability and prosperity.

thank you very much!

(According to Chinese simultaneous interpretation)

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