



Speech

His Excellency Mr. Sok Chenda Sophea, Deputy Prime Minister, High Representative of Samdech Moha Bovorthipadei Hun Manet, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Cambodia
“Overcoming disruption, transforming the AIDS response”

Monday, 11th Waxing Moon of Mikasira, Year of the Dragon, Buddhist Era 2569
Chaktomuk Conference Hall – December 1, 2025

- Excellency **Ieng Mouly**, Senior Minister, Chairman of the National AIDS Authority
- Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, Members of the Royal Government, leaders of ministries and institutions
- Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, Representatives of Diplomatic Missions to the Kingdom of Cambodia
- **Ms. Patricia Ongpin**, Country Director of UNAIDS in Cambodia
- Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, National and International Guests, Members of the Armed Forces of all units, and all youth here today, dear friends!

Today, I am truly pleased and honored to attend and preside over this ceremony as the **High Representative of Samdech Moha Bovorthipadei Hun Manet, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Cambodia**, on the occasion of World AIDS Day, December 1, 2025, under the theme: **“Overcoming disruption, transforming the AIDS response”**.

On behalf of the **Prime Minister**, I would like to express profound gratitude to **Samdech Kittipritthbandit Bun Rany HUNSEN**, President of the Cambodian Red Cross and the National Champion of the Asia-Pacific Leadership Forum on HIV/AIDS and Development in Cambodia — has, since the outbreak of HIV/AIDS in 1991 until today, dedicated her physical and mental strength, wisdom, and direct involvement to expand excellence across all branches of the Cambodian Red Cross nationwide. **Samdech** has fought against stigma and discrimination toward people living with HIV/AIDS, provided support to affected populations, and strengthened the effectiveness of HIV/AIDS prevention and control in Cambodia to an even higher level.

On this solemn occasion, I also wish to convey the appreciation and gratitude of the **Prime Minister** to the leadership and officials of the National AIDS Authority under the direction of His Excellency Senior Minister **Ieng Mouly**, who have achieved significant progress in reducing the spread of HIV/AIDS in Cambodia in 2025.

I extend further thanks to Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, leaders of the Senate, National Assembly, ministries and institutions both at national and sub-national levels, the Cambodian Red Cross, civil society, religious institutions, the private sector, development partners, national and international organizations, and all Cambodians who have collectively supported, devoted their energy, wisdom, determination, and commitment to ensure the continued success of the HIV/AIDS response. Their collective efforts give us confidence that Cambodia is on the right path toward achieving the **“Three Zeros”** (Zero new HIV infections, Zero AIDS-related deaths, and Zero discrimination) and the **“95-95-95 targets”** (95% of people living with HIV knowing their status; 95% of those who know their status receiving antiretroviral treatment; and 95% of those on treatment achieving viral suppression) on schedule—despite challenges such

as geopolitical competition, economic pressures, trade barriers, technological disruption, and demographic changes.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, dear youth, and friends,

The letters from the **Samdech Prime Minister** and from **Samdech Kittipritthbandit Bun Rany HUNSEN**, the report by His Excellency Senior Minister **Ieng Mouly**, and the remarks from Ms. **Patricia Ongpin** of UNAIDS and civil society representatives—together with the testimony from families affected by HIV/AIDS—clearly demonstrate that our vision of a society free from the threat of HIV/AIDS is achievable. It affirms that Cambodia is moving correctly toward the objectives of the National Policy for Ending AIDS and Sustaining AIDS Program 2023–2028, specifically:

1. Reduce new HIV infections to fewer than 1 case per day, or under 200 per year
2. Reduce AIDS-related deaths to fewer than 200 per year
3. Eliminate discrimination against people living with HIV

According to the 2024 summary report of the National AIDS Authority, Cambodia achieved **92–100–98** toward the 95–95–95 targets set by UNAIDS for 2030. New infections have dropped to 1,200 cases, down from 14,000 in 1997. AIDS-related deaths have decreased to 1,000 cases, down from 4,700 in 2003. PMTCT (Prevention of Mother-to-Child Transmission) coverage increased from 93.2% in 2023 to 97.2% in 2024; mother-to-child transmission dropped from 8.4% to 6.9% in the same period. In the third quarter of 2025, 71,716 people living with HIV were receiving ART at 74 treatment sites across the country. Among them, 53,821 (75%) had received Health Equity Fund cards at health facilities in all 25 provinces.

Stigma and discrimination have declined significantly—a notable achievement.

Yet, the HIV/AIDS situation remains fragile. Cambodia has not yet reached the threshold for ending AIDS (fewer than 200 new infections annually), and resurgences remain possible due to risky behaviors related to alcohol, drug use, group sex, anonymous partners, and limited awareness among sex workers and other key populations.

Therefore, all ministries, institutions, national and sub-national administrations, civil society organizations, networks of people living with HIV, key population networks, and the general public must continue strengthening collaboration with the Royal Government to address emerging risks effectively and promptly to reach the goal of ending AIDS by 2028. Ending AIDS as a public health threat is a priority under the Pentagonal Strategy Phase I, contributing to human capital development, poverty reduction, family and community prosperity, and achieving Cambodia’s vision of becoming an upper-middle-income country by 2030 and a high-income country by 2050.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The path to ending AIDS and ensuring a sustainable, resilient HIV program in Cambodia is challenging, but achievable through strong leadership, management, coordination, and collective commitment—overcoming obstacles such as resource shortages, stigma, service inequity, and gaps between prevention and treatment.

On behalf of **Samdech Prime Minister** and on my own behalf, I declare that the Royal Government of Cambodia continues to treat the HIV/AIDS response as a top priority, as reflected in the Political Platform and the Pentagonal Strategy Phase I of the Royal Government of the Seventh Legislature of the National Assembly. The Government remains firmly committed to ensuring that Cambodia is free from the threat of HIV/AIDS and that the Cambodian people enjoy good health, well-being, and freedom from fear.

To mark World AIDS Day 2025, on behalf of the Prime Minister, I provide the following additional directives:

1. Provincial and municipal governors must guide and support their AIDS Committees, in collaboration with civil society partners and relevant departments (Planning, Tourism, Health) and the National Social Security Fund, to mobilize key populations working in

- tourism and entertainment—especially MSM, TG, and EW—to undergo HIV testing, receive STI treatment, and access HIV prevention services. They must also accelerate the provision of Health Equity Fund cards to these populations.
2. Governors must effectively use the annual HIV budget allocations of 80 million, 60 million, and 40 million riels, maximizing efficiency and strengthening ownership in leading the AIDS response within their jurisdictions.
 3. Governors must instruct city, district, commune, and sangkat administrations to integrate HIV response into their action plans and utilize funds according to Inter-ministerial Circular No. 007 dated April 25, 2025, on the management and allocation of social services and environmental sanitation funds to ensure effectiveness, equitable benefit, and sustainability.
 4. Ministries, institutions, provinces, and municipalities must widely disseminate HIV education through meetings, trainings, and workshops to raise awareness of HIV risks and eliminate stigma, encouraging especially key populations to seek timely testing.
 5. The National AIDS Authority, Ministry of Health, Cambodian Development Cooperation Board of Cambodia, and Ministry of Economy and Finance must continue mobilizing international and private-sector support to strengthen the HIV response sustainably and resiliently.
 6. The National AIDS Authority and Ministry of Health must develop mechanisms and strategies to reduce mother-to-child transmission below 5%, and further reduce treatment drop-out and AIDS-related deaths. They must strengthen collaboration with the National Authority for Combating Drugs to prevent HIV transmission among drug users.
 7. The Ministries of Education, Information, Women’s Affairs, and related institutions must continue promoting HIV education among key populations—MSM, TG, drug users, entertainment workers, and youth—both in and out of school.
 8. The Ministry of Economy and Finance must explore the possibility of providing funding to ministries and sub-national administrations with clear plans and indicators aligned with the National Policy for Ending AIDS 2023–2028
 9. Ministries and sub-national administrations must:
 - Promote 100% condom use to prevent sexual transmission of HIV
 - Ensure condom supply and distribution at necessary locations, especially entertainment venues such as clubs, beer gardens, hotels, and guesthouses. They must not use condom possession as evidence of human trafficking—condoms relate only to sex.
 10. All ministries, institutions, local administrations, international partners, civil society, and the private sector must strengthen collaboration under the **“Dynamics of Stakeholder System”** framework for a resilient, sustainable AIDS response toward ending AIDS in Cambodia.

Furthermore, on behalf of **Samdech Prime Minister**, I call on authorities at all levels, civil society, religious institutions, the private sector, artists, presenters, athletes, and all citizens to join the Royal Government in ending HIV/AIDS in Cambodia. I also call on the international community and development partners to continue providing technical and financial support to help Cambodia achieve the goals of the National Policy for Ending AIDS and Sustaining AIDS Program 2023–2028.

Finally, as the coming New Year 2026, I wish Samdech, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, youth, and all participants the four Buddhist blessings: **Longevity, Beauty, Happiness, and Strength**. I also solemnly declare that Cambodia embraces the theme **“Overcoming disruption, transforming the AIDS response”** as we advance toward ending AIDS as a public health threat.

Thank you.

