

OEC NEWSLETTER AT THE END OF 2012

Historically Cambodia evolves through the collapse of Khmer Empire with abandon of Angkor (802 – 1432). Later, after the complete loss of Cochin China, (Kambujakrom), Cambodia entered then in French protectorate. During that period, the nationalist movements mixed with foreign ideological infiltration, started their struggle, terminated awhile by full independence and peace, resulted from royal crusade (1945 – 1953) and ended the Franco-Indochinese war by Geneva (1954). The communist revolutionary Khmer implementing strategy of going from countryside to capital, supported by foreign communist force (starting from 1925, but active from 1966) caused successive change of political regimes, from royalist to republican (1970), raging a real war of land and air attacks, whereby a great number of dead, injured and disabled people. The victory of Khmer communist Pol Pot (1975) led to great purge, class dislocation, spies elimination and destruction of all cultural, economic, and social morale, aggravated by evacuation of people from their house and village, driving monks out of their monasteries and monkhood. They used children and young boys/girls as efficacious and faithful executors to accomplish proletariat dictatorship, abolishing monarchy for a new society without influence of the past. They practiced a real genocide. The say liberation by Vietnamese force for installing an allied government (1979) created resistance force with internal war of all forms causing dead, injured, orphans and widowers again. From that came Paris Peace agreement (23 Oct 1991) implemented by the United Nations Transitional Authorities in Cambodia (UNTAC) solving armed conflict by democratic way and creation of new government from the universal election (23-28 May 1993). Khmer Rouge resumed fighting, boycotted the election of 1993 sponsored by the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) and, in the following year, rejected its results until their complete surrendering to the government in December 1998.

We noted that Cambodian people lived a long period under ideological, subversive and threatening strategies encouraging passivity, total silence and faithful execution without analytical reasoning. Therefore, from 1993 to present time **2013**, a space of **20** years seems to be not enough for making positive spiritual change.

- Article 3 of Chapter 3 of the Paris Peace Agreement stating that, 1-All person in Cambodia shall enjoy the rights and freedom embodied in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other relevant International Instruments (Convention of the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women; Convention on the Rights of the Child; Convention against Discriminations in Education; Convention on the rights of persons with Disabilities; Convention for the Traffic in Persons and of the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others.....), and practically followed by massive governmental and humanitarian aids;

- Article 31 of Chapter 3 of the Constitution of the Kingdom of Cambodia, amended in 1999 stating that the Kingdom of Cambodia shall recognize and respect human rights as stipulated in the United Nations Charter, the Universal Declaration of Human rights, the covenants and conventions related to human rights, women's and children's rights. Every Khmer citizen shall be equal before the law, enjoying the same rights, freedom and fulfilling the same obligations regardless of race, color, sex, language, religious belief, political tendency, birth origin, social status, wealth or other status...

- The Rectangular Strategies of the Royal Government, Rectangle 4: Capacity Building and Human Resource Development, including: (1) enhanced quality of education; (2) improvement of health services; (3) fostering gender equity, and (4) implementation of population policy, having at the rectangular core “Good Governance”;...

In spite of the above agreement and law ratified and committed by the Royal Government, Cambodia still facing criticism from outside about human rights violation and education not in quality standard, because “Participation, Equity and inclusiveness” remain neglected. “The rule of Law and transparency” have not been well implemented in accordance with article 2 of the UDHR. In fact the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) sets out a list of over two dozen specific human rights that countries should respect and protect. These specific rights can be divided into six or more families: (1) -Security rights that protect people against crimes such as murder, massacre, torture, and rape; (2)-Due process rights that protect against abuses of the legal system such as imprisonment without trial, secret trial, and excessive punishment; (3)-Liberty rights that protect freedoms in areas such as belief, expression, assembly, and movement; (4)-Political rights that protect the liberty to participate in politics through actions such as communicating, assembling, protesting, voting, and serving in public office; (5)-Equality rights that guarantee equal citizenship, equality before the law, and nondiscrimination; and (6)-Social or welfare rights that require provision of education to all children and protection against severe poverty and starvation.

Education is criticized of having school director politically appointed in a hierarchical and politicized system. Teachers work only half time and make about \$25 per month. They all must have other jobs in order to survive. In consequence, they have not available time for preparing their good lesson plan and correcting children’s homework. There is significant overcrowding in the schools and there are not enough schools to accommodate all of the children. There are not enough teachers assigned to go working in remote areas. This results in thousands of children not being able to go to school. In every school, there is a double shift and, in some schools, triple shifts, in order to meet the need.

Recognizing these difficulties, respecting the vision of OEC, stated in the Child’s Rights Policy:

- Cambodian children everywhere, the poor, the vulnerable, the handicapped and the orphans enjoy basic rights with full equality of opportunity and outcome,
- Cambodian children in disadvantaged conditions receive economic, social and cultural empowerment for self-confidence and future free choice of employment,
- Cambodian children of any condition in everywhere live together in the spirit of peace, dignity, tolerance, freedom, equality and solidarity for the well-being of all, and
- with observance of our Code of Ethical Principles and Conduct,

OEC declares solemnly remaining faithful to its mission, which is to build and raise capabilities, and good living condition of disabled children, handicapped people caused by mines, young people and children in areas facing difficulties in Cambodia. For this end, OEC develops primary health care, rehabilitation of working possibilities, reproductive health, education and life skills, through strengthening existing communal structure, and supporting logical initiatives of local people for cooperation.

To this end, OEC frankly and closely cooperates and collaborates with other international and national agencies based on common objectives, information sharing, networking formation and

reduction of duplicating activities. Additionally OEC works in partnership with national, provincial and local authorities and communities to realize:

- Goals and Objectives 3.3.3.2 of the Cambodia Education for All, 2003-2015,
- Educational Duties in Chapter VII of the Educational Law adopted by the National Assembly on 19 October 2007,
- Education in Chapter 6 of the Law on the Protection and the promotion of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, adopted on July 2009,
- National Plan of Actions for Persons with disabilities, including Landmine/ERW Survivors, 2008-2011.

Reconsidering the past lesson learnt from the strategy using ignorant children and young people incorporated in revolutionary Khmer communist forces, OEC feels obligated to expand activities to promote access to quality of education in remote areas. The main purpose is to eliminate discrimination in education, to develop basic rights and equality of opportunity with facilities for economic development to improve standard of living adequate for children's health and well-being. The creation of parents association for child protection and the building of child club for development can liberate children from agricultural forced labor to attend class regularly with improvement of participatory and cooperative learning. In parallel OEC expects to continue empowering largely children and people with disabilities and victims of landmine in the same areas, hoping to join countryside's with towns, eliminating all forms of discrimination for national harmony, peace and better life. Through good parenting sessions, OEC will focus also on Birth spacing and gender equality for safe sex and prevention against HIV/AIDS and against the danger caused by drug abuse.

**Please assist us in Realizing the Rights to Development and
Equal Access to Education.**