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PARLIAMENTARY INSTITUTE OF CAMBODIA

STRENGTHENING PARLIAMENTARY CAPACITY



PIC PARLIAMENTARY REVIEW

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ABOUT

the PIC Parliamentary Review

The PIC Parliamentary Review provides an overall picture of the wide range of activities in which Cambodian Parliamentarians are involved and in which they have had support from the Parliamentary Institute of Cambodia (PIC). PIC was established in 2011 at the request of Members of Parliament from all political parties to contribute to the strengthening of the Cambodian Parliament. Since then, it has contributed to the capacity development of Members of the Cambodian Parliament and parliamentary staff, and shared its experience with the Parliaments of other countries in the region.

For this issue, we focus on events that have taken place in the Cambodian Parliament during the period from January to December 2017.

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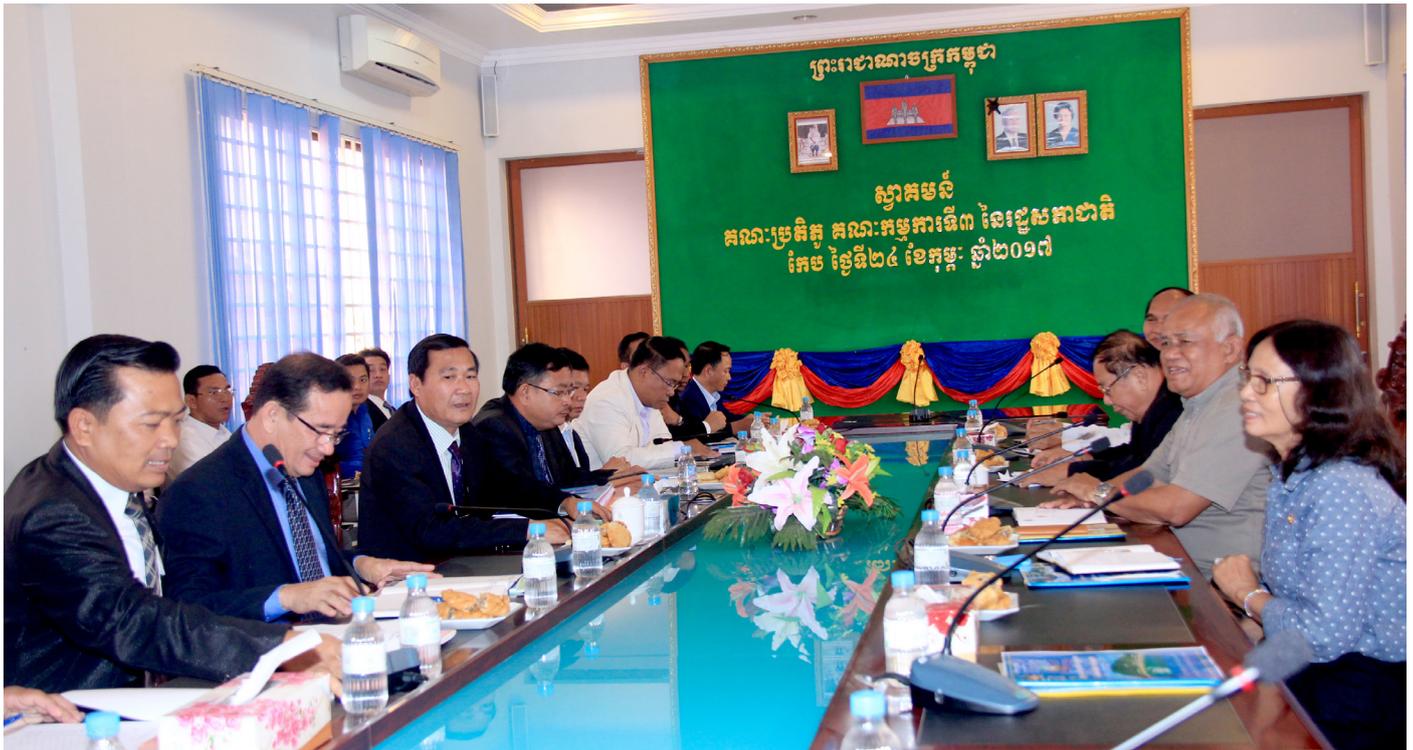
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Members of the National Assembly conduct a field mission to monitor socio-economic, environment and safety issues in Kep, Koh Kong and Preah Sihanouk provinces, from 20 to 25 February 2017



(Photo by: National Assembly)

From 20 to 25 February 2017, Members of the National Assembly Commission on Planning Investment Agriculture Rural Development Environment and Water Resources (Commission 3) conducted a field mission to Koh Kong, Preah Sihanouk and Kep provinces.

The objective of the field mission is to monitor the Socio-economic, environment and safety situation which fall under the jurisdiction of the Commission. Nine members of the National Assembly from Commission 3 (5 from CNRP and 4 from CPP) and a number of support staff from the General Secretariat participated in this field mission.

The Decision of the National Assembly # 003 NA, dated January 09 2014 and the Instruction #384 NA dated 29 May 2105, stipulates the objective and procedure of the field mission of the National Assembly Commissions.

Based on the research findings provided by PIC Research Unit, there are environmental challenges

facing Cambodia's coastal and marine resources such as severe threats from rapid urbanization and industrialization. Wastes and toxic chemicals from factories in Kampot province, gasoline storage, and hotels and restaurants in Preah Sihanouk have not only caused adverse health effects to citizens but also serious damage to coastal water quality, marine ecosystems and fishery habitats. Moreover, massive deforestation, land reclamations and climate change have weighed heavily on the country's fragile marine and coastal ecosystems.

In addition to the above issues in Koh Kong province, National Assembly Commission 3 found that there are other kinds of challenges such as:

- Budgetary resources at the subnational level are limited compared to actual needs of the localities
- Citizen's claim to get State land in protected areas for their private ownership
- Land conflict cases are between private companies and the citizens but most of the cases are already dealt with by provincial authorities.

On the other hand Koh Kong province authority proposed that Commission 3 bring the issues to a higher competent authority to help solve the challenging problems of the province.

In Preah Sihanouk province, the Commission 3 delegation also met with provincial, district and commune councilors to discuss issues of concern with different authorities and Ministries line agencies to examine the challenges they faced in fulfilling their jobs. The delegation has discovered a number of issues including:

- Lack of human resources to perform the tasks related to water resources and meteorology
- Difficulties in collecting the fees from farmers using dams which protect against the flow of salted water into their rice fields
- Inadequate number of civil servants working at the provincial office of rural development due to replacement of the retire civil servants
- The supply of clean water system by the State or private companies is only available in urban areas but the safe water supply does not reach people in rural areas
- Infrastructure development projects rely only on the State budget as the NGOs working in Sihanouk province can only operate with small scale assistance to the people.
- Citizens do not have full understanding about the management of hard and liquid waste.

Citizens and the authority in Preah Sihanouk province asked the Commission to take some issues to a higher authority in order to solve three main challenges:

- Additional staff are needed to fill positions at the provincial department of rural development for the fiscal year 2107

- Increase the level of the subnational budget in order to deliver better results
- Provide a vaccination program to help cope with the different diseases affecting cattle.
- Delays in the approval of administrative and small repair budget particularly budget related to public service procurement bidding.

In Kep province, the delegation of the National Assembly Commission 3 discovered the following challenges:

- Some citizens and tourists lack knowledge relating to protection of the environment and proper waste management
- Some fishermen still use illegal fishing equipment
- Inadequate awareness raising on the laws protecting environment, and natural resources management.
- Inadequate power supply
- A number of hotels and guest houses do not have water treatment tanks
- Inadequate drainage system to manage the rain water
- A number of investors receive licenses from the Royal Government but fail to invest according to the schedule
- Provincial authority does not have enough budget to improve road infrastructure nor the beach water treatment

After listening to the proposals and recommendations from competent authorities and line agencies in the three provinces, the Chairman of National Assembly Commission 3 promised to report to the President of the National Assembly who can forward the requests to the appropriate competent government agencies and ministries to deal the problems.



(Photo by: National Assembly)

Officials from the General Secretariats of the Cambodian Parliament visit the French Parliament to learn about orientation for new MPs, from 11 to 17 March 2017



(Photo by: Cambodian Delegation)

From 11 to 17 March 2017, staff from the Cambodian Parliament, led by the General Director of Legislation Services and Regional Collectivities, conducted a study mission to France to learn from the experiences of their French counterparts in providing orientation for new Parliamentarians.

The Cambodian delegation was composed of staff from the General Secretariats of the Senate and the National Assembly, accompanied by staff from the Parliamentary Institute of Cambodia (PIC).

Specifically, the mission's objective was to study the systems and resources available to support new Parliamentarians. These include the information and communication system to guide new members to achieve effective engagement with their constituents, and financial resources to support them in performing their parliamentary functions. This mission also enabled the Cambodian participants to study the code of ethics of the French Parliament. It is expected that the Cambodian Parliament learned from French experiences and challenges and will be able to apply the best practices in the context of the Cambodian parliament.

The Cambodian delegation learned about the internal systems and procedures for new Parliamentarians in France, as well as internal and external communication policies and processes. The following topics were also discussed:

- The general working structure and elements of the French National Assembly and Senate
- Internal and external communication, including the use of ICT and online data policies
- Public and international relations and protocols
- The code of ethics covering the French Parliament
- The protocols and operations of the Parliament
- Management procedures, budgetary and financial aspects for parliamentary institutions and individual members to fulfill their representation function
- Supervision of media and press relations for parliamentary activities.

The delegation also had the opportunity to deepen their understanding on the information and communication systems at both the French Senate and the National Assembly. These systems are long established and have evolved from classical media to

digital and cyber technology, guided by democratic governance and communication strategies. At the French National Assembly, the information system has three broad areas: 1) multimedia, providing news for radio and television; 2) institutional communication providing public access to parliamentary proceedings; and 3) digital online databases and websites providing information portals relating to parliamentary activities, budget, finance, and profiles of Parliamentarians and their office operations. During discussions, the delegation learned that the goal of the system is to support parliamentary transparency, providing information from the Parliament to the people in order to better engage the public in parliamentary activities.

The delegation learned about the core roles of staff involved in the institutional communication of the French National Assembly. They organize events for open days, fun fairs, art contests and other cultural events for the public with support of print and digital products. The French Senate has similar communication systems and strategies, and organizes similar public visits and cultural events to promote the French Parliament in general. Parliamentarians can even bring their constituents to participate in these events, which provide an opportunity for both Parliamentarians and constituents to build positive relationships. Furthermore, both houses report that constituents who have participated in these events have developed a favorable opinion of their Parliament and its activities.

From the French Senate, the delegation also learned about the code of ethics. The discussion about how and why the code was written and how it is applied in the French political context provided knowledge that could prove useful in the Cambodian context:

the Senate of Cambodia is currently drafting its own version. The delegation learned that the goal of the code of ethics of the French Parliament is to provide a clear guide of what is considered ethically right and wrong in the way Parliamentarians conduct themselves.

Finally, the delegation learned about the preparation involved in the orientation program for new parliamentarians. To welcome new MPs, packages of information are produced and delivered: 1) financial information relating to their office and its operation including staff recruitment, budget and stationary; 2) information about websites and databases relating to the Parliament; 3) procedures and registration processes for new Parliamentarians including a photo session; and 4) guidance about being a member of a Commission and what happens in the first Assembly meeting. The delegation learned that the orientation training is mostly delivered in the form of face-to-face interaction to show new MPs online materials and guide them throughout the processes of registration, planning and implementation. However, in respect of training in financial and budget management, the new Parliamentarians are likely to require guidance throughout their first year. The delegation also heard about procedures to support outgoing MPs who are concluding their parliamentary roles.

The Cambodian delegates thus learned a great deal from their visit and, in order to maximize the benefit of the knowledge gained, they now plan to:

- Share it with relevant parliamentary offices to present new ideas for welcoming new Senators in January 2018 and new Members of the National Assembly in July 2018
- Provide input to the preparation of the code of ethics that is being drafted for the Cambodian Senate



(Photo by: Cambodian Delegation)

Senators from the Senate Commission on Legislation and Justice conduct field mission in Kampong Cham province, from 24 to 29 April 2017



(Photo by: Senate)

From 24 to 29 April 2017, Senators from the Senate Commission (6) on Legislation and Justice conducted a field mission to Kampong Cham province. The mission led by the chair of the Commission, composed four Senators together with officials from the General Secretariat.

The objective of this field mission was to study alternative dispute resolution, implementation of the Penal Code and the Code of Criminal Procedure.

The delegates convened consultations and discussions with representatives from commune councils, commune clerks and villagers to understand how local authorities and subnational administrations handle dispute resolution outside of the court system. More than 60 participants attended.

In order to focus on dispute resolution in the area of land conflicts and the prevention of crime, the delegation also held a meeting with the district governor and cadastral unit, district level committee for land conflict resolution, and the chiefs of relevant agencies. The delegation convened a discussion with the provincial governor, provincial

court and different provincial departments and line agencies. These discussions enabled the delegation to understand clearly how complaints are submitted from the local to provincial levels, and how the details of laws and regulations are disseminated to the public. The findings from the mission were relatively positive:

- Most mediation at the local and community level was handled properly outside of the court system, based on good practice and the negotiation skills of the commune councils and influential local community members
- Citizens and local authority representatives made fruitful contributions and these groups. They participated to good effect in raising public awareness of the benefits of alternative dispute resolution mechanisms, as well as an understanding of the laws and regulations within the jurisdiction of different units
- There are still challenges in respect to the interpretation of laws and regulations. This was the result of a lack of full understanding of the spirit of laws, and biased interpretations related to the differing interests of the parties who are in conflict.

After each meeting the Chairman of the Senate Commission 6 distributed a number of important legal documents to relevant authorities in order to broaden their legal knowledge and update them in respect of the new laws and regulations in force. These included:

- The Penal Code and Code of Criminal Procedure
- The Civil Code and Code of Civil Procedures
- The Statute of Judges and Prosecutors
- The Law on the organization and the functioning of the Supreme Council of Magistracy
- Guidelines for the facilitation of conflict resolution and other relevant legal instruments to improve the operation of the justice system in Cambodia.

Ultimately, the mission discovered that there had been progress in respect of alternative dispute resolution, the implementation of the penal code and criminal procedure, the prevention of crime, and the dissemination of up-to-date information about relevant laws. However, there were still some shortcomings. For instance, the capacity of law enforcement officials is limited especially in respect to an understanding and application of the relevant laws. There is also a lack of means, materials and other tools to implement the laws.

As a result of the mission, the provincial authority pledged to continue its efforts to fully resolve remaining problems based on the best interests of the citizens.



(Photo by: Senate)

Members of the National Assembly commission 8 conduct a field mission to Pailin, Oddar Meanchey and Preah Vihear provinces, from 13 to 19 August 2017



(Photo by: National Assembly)

From 13 to 19 August 2017, the National Assembly Commission (8) on Public Health, Social Work, Veterans, Youth, Rehabilitation, Labor, Vocational Training and Women's Affairs led by its Chair, conducted a field mission to Pailin, Oddar Meanchey and Preah Vihear provinces. The study examined the four sectors that fall within the scope of the Commission's activities. The delegation met various stakeholders including representatives from the Board of Governors, the Provincial Department of Health, the Provincial Department of Social Affairs, Veterans and Rehabilitation, the Provincial Department of Labor and Vocational Training, and the Provincial Department of Women's Affairs to discuss the provision of health services at Provincial Referral Hospitals, social affairs, veterans, youth rehabilitation, labor and vocational training, and women's affairs. After listening to the challenges voiced by different local authority representatives and other stakeholders, the delegation formulated a report in respect of the health sector. The report indicated that medical staff are now knowledgeable and more responsive. However, they should improve the quality of health service provision and expand the health coverage to be closer to the people, build trust between citizens and health staff, and continue to control the supply of fake and illegal

medicines. The delegation also asked the Ministry of Health to send more specialized medical staff to the province to cope with the current challenges.

In terms of social affairs, veterans, and youth rehabilitation it was observed that the management and provision of food for orphans in orphanage centers had improved. Furthermore, the management and the payment of pensions to pensioners and veterans are now easier than before because transactions take place through the banking system. The delegation suggested that more care should be taken of veterans and disabled pensioners.

In respect of labor and vocational training, delegates reported that the three provinces had been working hard and were cooperating effectively with authorities of neighboring countries, particularly Thailand, to share information and working procedures relating to immigrant workers. The delegation suggested reviewing the provision of vocational training in order to respond to market needs. The delegation pledged to submit their progress report on the trip to the permanent committee of the Senate.

Women Senators Group organises a Forum on Women and the Law in Rattanakiri province, on 4 September 2017

A public consultation entitled Women and the Law was organized by the Women Senators Group for members of commune/sangkat councils in Rattanakiri, region 8, on 4 September 2017. Conducted under the presidency of H.E. Mr. Tep Ngorn, 2nd Vice President of the Senate, there were 253 participants including 190 commune councilors, Senators, leadership officials and staff from the General Secretariat, officials from relevant Ministries, from PIC, and from the EU/UNDP ACES (Associations of Councils Enhanced Services) project.

The objective of the forum was to raise awareness and to share experience about marriage, inheritance management, the prevention of domestic violence and the protection of victims.

A common challenge raised during the forum was that victims of violence do not seek help because they do not receive the attention or care from the appropriate authorities in finding solutions to their problems. Furthermore, the lack of legal knowledge and capacity of the women affected can be limited.

Mrs. Touch Soaphorn, gender expert for the EU/UNDP ACES project, reported that local communities were urged to respond to gender-based domestic violence by organizing a scheduled debate among community members. These debates needed to focus on the concept of violence, the issues that have an impact on the process of reporting to the most relevant and nearest local authority in respect of intervention, the actions taken, the compilation of evidence supporting complaints, the encouragement and incentives given to resolve issues, and psychological support and advice for victims.

To fully address this problem, the Vice Chair of Women Senators Group recommended that different types of training or forums to strengthen the capacity of commune/sangkat councilors be conducted. This would enable them to respond more appropriately to domestic conflict. Requests for overseas and domestic study visits to gain new experiences should also be considered, and representatives from municipality and district councils should attend forums, because they are the ones who come into direct contact with the women affected at the village and commune/sangkat level. Uniforms could be requested for village guards and some subvention for them to attend meetings. A further suggestion was that the relevant authorities be urged to cooperate with the courts and the institutions involved in order to provide timely help for victims of domestic violence. The Vice Chair of Women Senators Group also requested financial support for social services at the local level so that Advisory Committees on Women's and Children's Affairs could implement their roles and duties more effectively.

In closing the forum, the Chair of Women Senators Group said that such forums had an important role in strengthening the representation and oversight functions of the Senate. They also showed the heightened respect for human and women's rights, and the determination to address associated issues with transparency and non-discrimination, that underlay the reforms of the legal sector and justice system initiated by the Royal Government of Cambodia. This was a priority in building trust and accountability Cambodian society.



(Photo by: Senate)

Officials from the General Secretariats of the Cambodian Parliament conducted a study visit to Switzerland to learn about public relations and the media, from 14 to 21 October 2017



(Photo by: Cambodian Delegation)

From 14 to 21 October 2017, a delegation of media officials from the Secretariat General of the Cambodian Parliament took part in a study visit to learn from the experiences of the Swiss Parliament. They were specifically interested in public relations and the media, and in particular the organization of Open Day events. With support from the Parliamentary Institute of Cambodia (PIC) and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), the delegation comprised 10 officials including four from the Senate, four from the National Assembly and two from PIC.

The visit was part of the program to build the capacity of Cambodian parliamentary staff as an element of the tripartite cooperation between PIC, SDC and the Swiss Parliament Services (SPS) under the framework of a multi-year Public Relations Project. The study visit included activities such as presentations, discussions, and the exchange of ideas relating to public relations and information.

The delegation learned about the system of government and the Parliament in Switzerland from Mr. Alexandre Füzesséry, Project Manager Parliamentary Technical Cooperation. He explained that Switzerland has an unusual democratic system known as “Semi-Direct Democracy”. This comprises a shared-power system that puts a particular emphasis on compromise and negotiation between minority and majority parties. The Swiss parliament is bicameral: the national council that has 200 members, and the Council of States that has 46. The two houses have the same functions and power with four-year mandates, and members are elected according to direct election by the citizens.

The Cambodian delegation attended presentations on the importance of communication in politics as viewed by the Swiss Parliament. They also learned on the importance placed on transparency in the sharing of information and in parliamentary communications in general. The roles of the Swiss

Parliament in ensuring that Swiss citizens have a clear idea of the goals and functions of their Parliament were also covered. The delegation examined the roles of staff within the information department of the Swiss Parliament in linking citizens with parliamentary institutions, the participation of media in parliamentary communications, and the evolution of the parliamentary communications process from traditional media to the current electronic and web-based forms.

Another highlight of the visit was a guided tour of the Swiss Parliament conducted by Mr. Andreas Schilter, who is in charge of visits and events relating to the Swiss Parliament. He spoke about the types of visitors, and procedures needed for, guided tours and other visits to the Parliament buildings.

Ms. Karin Burkhalter, Deputy Head of the Information Department, outlined the media system in Swiss society, the factors that define the value of the media, the work of the media, the methods used to write news releases, the organization of media conferences, and the preparation of media material for Open Day events. The delegation also heard the views of Swiss journalists from radio, television, and leading newspapers in Switzerland, their roles and experiences in publishing information about the Parliament and how journalists work with the Parliament's media staff. The Cambodian delegation also had a discussion about the preparation of a clear plan to communicate with journalists. The Cambodian delegation received guidance on

coordination between the working groups of Senate and the National Assembly including program coordination for the Open Day, the preparation of associated press conferences, the training of tour guide staff, the production of short videos about the Parliament, as well as leaflets and photographs of important places in the two houses.

At the end of the visit, the Cambodian delegation conducted a debriefing session, giving an evaluation and providing feedback on the program of the visit and the knowledge they had gained. Discussion also focused on the next steps in implementing the program for a parliamentary Open Day in Cambodia.

Overall, the visit was deemed a great success and had fully met all the expectations of the Cambodian delegates. They enjoyed the opportunity to learn from their Swiss counterparts and to draw out important points that could be applied in the Cambodian context.

Open Days are important events for democratic Parliaments in linking citizens and MPs and building the trust of citizens in their parliamentary representatives. Allowing citizens to visit the Parliament, to learn about its roles and functions, and to appreciate that the Parliament is an open place for the public to visit, is an important factor in nurturing the participation of citizens in the democratic processes, and in promoting the rule of law in Cambodia.



(Photo by: Swiss Parliament: 1 August 2017 Open Day)

Legislation dealt with by the Cambodian Parliament from January to December 2017

1. Amendment to Chapter 12 New, Article 48 New (three) of the Internal Regulations of the NA of the Royal Kingdom of Cambodia, adopted on 31 January 2017
2. Law on the Amendment to the Law on Political Parties, adopted on 20 February 2017
3. Law on the Amendment to the Law on Statute Civil Servant of Legislative Group, adopted on 7 April 2017
4. Law on the Adoption of Protocol 3, Amendment to the Agreement on Trade in Goods under the Framework Agreement on Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Among the Governments of the Member Countries of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and the Republic of Korea, adopted on 7 April 2017
5. Law on the Election of Members of the Senate, adopted on 20 June 2017
6. Law on the Amendment of the Law on Political Parties and Law on the Amendment of the Law on Political Parties, adopted on 10 July 2017
7. Law on the Approval of the Royal Government of Cambodia's Guaranteed Payment for Cambodia's Energy Company II Co. Ltd., adopted on 10 July 2017
8. Law on the Approval of the Royal Government of Cambodia's Guaranteed Payment for Alex Cooperation Co. Ltd., adopted on 10 July 2017
9. Law on Trade Remedies, adopted on 12 October 2017
10. Discussion and Adoption of Draft Law on the Approval of the Protocol to Amend the Framework Agreement on the Comprehensive Economic Co-operation and some other Agreements under this Framework Agreement between the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and The People's Republic of China, adopted on 12 October 2017
11. Law on the Amendment to the Law on the Election of Members of the National Assembly, adopted on 12 October 2017
12. Law on the Amendment to the Law on the Election of Members of the Senate, adopted on 16 October 2017
13. Law on the Amendment to the Law on the Election of Commune/Sangkat Councils, adopted on 16 October 2017
14. Law on the Amendment to the Law on the Election of Municipal, Provincial and District/Khan Councils, adopted on 16 October 2017
15. Law on the Approval of the Agreement on the Recognition of the Validity of European Patents between the Royal Government of the Kingdom of Cambodia and the European Patents Institution, adopted on 16 October 2017
16. Law on the Amendments to the Articles 37, 38, 109, and 136 of the Law on Patents, Useful Model Certificates, and Industrial Designs, promulgated by the Royal Kram No. ស្រ/រក្សា ០១០៣/០០៥ dated 22 January 2003, adopted on 16 October 2017
17. Law on the Amendments to Articles 6, 41, 42, 43, and 95 of the Law on Fisheries, promulgated by the Royal Kram No. ស្រ/រក្សា ០៥០៦/០១១ dated on 21 May 2006, adopted on 16 October 2017
18. Law on Financial Management for the year 2018, adopted on 17 November 2017
19. Law on the General Budget Settlement for the year 2016, adopted on 17 November 2017
20. Law on the Approval of the Charter of the Asian Disaster Preparedness Center , adopted on 17 November 2017
21. Adopted on 17 November 2017, Law on the Approval of:
 - a. The agreement between the Government of the Kingdom of Cambodia and the Government of the Republic of Singapore on avoiding overlapping taxation, and the prevention of tax fraud and embezzlement related to income tax
 - b. Agreement between the Government of the Kingdom of Cambodia and the Government of the People's Republic of China on how to avoid overlapping taxation, and the prevention of tax fraud and embezzlement related to income tax
 - c. Agreement between the Government of the Kingdom of Cambodia and the Government of the Sultan and Yang Di Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam on avoiding overlapping taxation, and the prevention of tax fraud and embezzlement in relation to income tax.
 - d. Agreement between the Government of the Kingdom of Cambodia and the Royal Government of the Kingdom of Thailand on the avoidance of double taxation and the prevention of tax breaks in relation to income tax.

Research papers produced as part of PIC's capacity development program by parliamentary researchers from January to December 2017

1. Education Reform in Cambodia: Progress and Challenges in Basic Education (for the Regional Seminar February 2017), January 2017
2. Education Reform in Malaysia: An Overview and Analysis of Sustainability towards Achieving the Status of Developed Nation (for the Regional Seminar February 2017), January 2017
3. Reform of the Education System: Case Study of Myanmar (for the Regional Seminar February 2017), January 2017
4. Education Reform in Thailand: Basic Education Quality Improvement for Raising the National Competitiveness (for the Regional Seminar February 2017), January 2017
5. Roles and Duties of Cambodian Lawyers, Commission 6 of the Senate, February 2017
6. Benefits of Environmental Protection in the Coastal Areas and Islands of Cambodia (Coastal and Marine Protection and Management), Commission 3 of the National Assembly, February 2017
7. History of Ses Slab Primary School (Kampong Chhnang): Historical Cultural Sites of Yeay Yat and O Tavao, Commission 7 of the National Assembly, February 2017
8. Financial Inclusion of Women as a Driver of Development for Sustainable Development Goals: Review of Obstacles faced by Women in Cambodia, Commission 8 of the Senate, March 2017
9. Anti-corruption and Decentralization and De-concentration in Countries in the Region (China/Australia), Commission 10 of the Senate, March 2017
10. Education and Information and Communication Technology in Cambodia, Commission 7 of the Senate, March 2017
11. The Nature and Functions of Cambodia's Parliament and Government: Examined in an International Context, Secretary General of the Senate, May, 2017
12. Security of Parliamentarians, Secretary General of the Senate, June 2017
13. Code of Ethics for Senators, Commission 2 of the Senate, June 2017
14. Improving Women's Health Outcomes in the Philippines (for the Regional Seminar), June 2017
15. The Situation of Maternal Health in Myanmar (for the Regional Seminar), June 2017
16. Health Care Insurance of the Government Sector: Case study of Thailand, Laos and Cambodia (for the Regional Seminar), June 2017
17. Disparity in the Recognition of Women's Right to Health between Malaysia and Cambodia: A Legal Perspective (for the Regional Seminar), June 2017
18. Health and Gender: Infrastructure (for the Regional Seminar), June 2017
19. The Health Workforce in Rural Areas of Myanmar (for the Regional Seminar), June 2017
20. Review of Health Equity Funds in Cambodia (for the Regional Seminar), June 2017
21. The Benefits of Contract Farming in Laos and Thailand (for the Regional Seminar), June 2017
22. Challenges in Basic Education in Oddar Meanchey, Preah Vihear and Banteay Meanchey, Commission 7 of the National Assembly, July 2017
23. Implementation of the Thai immigration law and challenges faced by migrant workers in Thailand, The Bilateral Friendship Group of the Senate of Cambodia with the Legislative Assembly of Thailand, July 2017
24. Migration, Human Trafficking Prevention and Sexual Exploitation, Commission 8 of the Senate, July 2017

25. Information and Public Relations of Parliaments: Case Studies of the Parliaments of the Republic of Korea, Australia and Sweden, Department of Information of the Senate of Cambodia, July 2017
26. The Promotion of Cultural Tourism: Progress, Development Plan and Challenges of Cultural Tourism at Kompong Thom and Preah Vihear Provinces, Commission 7 of the National Assembly, July 2017
27. Immigration Right and Forced Eviction, Commission 1 of the National Assembly, July 2017
28. A Brief Review on the Progress of the Education Sector in Cambodia and Singapore, Commission 7 of the Senate, July 2017
29. Overview of Healthcare for Cambodian Migrant Workers in Thailand, Commission 8 of the National Assembly, August 2017
30. Situation of Marine Fisheries and the Establishment of Fishing Communities, Commission 1 of the Senate, August 2017
31. Relationship between the Ministry of Justice and the Judicial System in Thailand, Commission 6 of the Senate, August 2017
32. Commune/Sangkat Administration in Pailin Province: Local Public Services, Communication, and Development Planning , Region 4 of the Senate, September 2017
33. Participatory Natural Resources Management: Case Studies of Community Forestry, Community Fisheries and Community Protected Areas in Cambodia, Commission 3 of the National Assembly, August 2017
34. Basic Information of Junior College in Singapore, Commission 7 of the Senate, September 2017
35. Networking with Civil Society Organizations for Member of ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly, Commission 9 of the National Assembly, September 2017
36. Lessons learned from Cambodian Women Migrants' Experiences for Promoting the Health of Women Migrant Workers, Commission 9 of the National Assembly, September 2017
37. Economic development and service delivery of sub-national level at Urdormeanchey, Commission 2 of the Senate, September 2017
38. Combat the Drug Menace, Commission 9 of the National Assembly, September 2017
39. Measuring the progress of women in participating in the labour market and accessing finance for sustainable development, Commission 8 of the Senate, September 2017
40. Technology be at the service of democracy and gender equality, Commission 8 of the Senate, October 2017
41. Employment sector and labor' job outside the system, Commission 8 of the Senate, October 2017
42. Policy , and National and International Law related to the rights of Indigenous peoples, Commission 6 of the National Assembly, October 2017
43. Current status of the legal and judicial Reforms on Legal and Judicial System of in Cambodia, Commission 6 of the National Assembly, October 2017
44. A review of Vietnam and Cambodia Foreign Policy and Roles of Parliament on Foreign Affairs, Commission 5 of the Senate, September 2017
45. Legal framework on migration in Cambodia and Vietnam, Commission 5 of the Senate, November 2017
46. Media Management: Differences of Cambodia and Vietnam Mechanism Management of Social Media, Advertising and Code of Ethics for Journalists, Commission 5 of the Senate, November 2017

Parliamentary activities supported by the Parliamentary Institute of Cambodia (PIC) from January to December 2017

Parliamentary outreach activity is a systemic operation which supports capacity building of parliamentary staff and by parliamentary research training outputs (PRTO). The operation is systematically designed to take advantage of PRTO. In which process, the trainees (fellows - parliamentary staff from the ASEAN region and interns - parliamentary staff from the Senate and National Assembly of Cambodia) are encouraged to do the research by using the request topics received from partners of both houses to write a briefing note or research paper. This PRTO (briefing note and paper) provides updated information to support the PIC outreach activities.

(1) Mission of the National Assembly Commission 8 to three provinces – Svay Rieng, Prey Veng, and Tbaung Khmum, from 9 to 14 January 2017

From 9 to 14 January 2017, the Commission on Public Health, Social Work, Veterans, Youth, Rehabilitation, Labor Vocational Training and Women's Affairs (Commission 8) of the National Assembly, led by acting Chair of the Commission, accompanied by 8 Commission members (4 from CPP, 4 from CNRP) conducted a field mission to Svay Rieng, Prey Veng, and Tbaung Khmum provinces.

The objective of the mission was to study issues relating to the Commission's areas of competence - public health, social work, the situation of veterans and youths, rehabilitation, labor vocational training and women's affairs. As a result, the mission team discovered progress, but also some challenges that needed to be resolved.

For example, the Commission learned that local citizens in the three provinces face similar challenges in receiving medical care from public and private health care providers. This is because there are insufficient specialized medical personnel and a shortage of health centers in remote areas because the sparse populations do not meet the criteria for opening these facilities.

With regard to labor issues and vocational training, although there is a lot of attention on promoting labor condition, the problem of migration still persists. This is often the result of misleading information delivered by friends, middle persons/private agents, and high labor fees. There is a shortage of officials working on women's affairs in some remote districts due to lack of transport.

Following requests from citizens in respect of the above challenges, Commission 8 will submitted a field report to the President of the National Assembly for intervention. The field report will also be submitted to different government Ministries for future action including focus on health, employment and vocational training, social affairs, veterans and women.

As a potential planned follow up, the Commission 8 delegation pledged to intervene with the Ministry of Women's Affairs to speed up the process of assigning women to be in charge of provincial women's affairs in Tbaung Khmum province. The Commission C8 also pledged to work with the Ministry of Public Health to speed the process of building a hospital in Tbaung Khmum.

(2) Participation by the Secretary General in a meeting of the Permanent Committee of the Association of Secretaries General of Francophone Parliaments (ASGPF) in Paris, France, from 12 to 13 January 2017

At the meeting of the Permanent Committee of ASGPF, attended by representatives from eight different countries including Cambodia, the Secretariat of ASGPF expressed an intention for cooperation with PIC, to be formalized at the following annual meeting of the Association of the Secretaries General of APF. The objective is to train staff members from the Cambodian Parliament in respect of parliamentary affairs and research using expertise of their counterparts from other Francophone Parliament or specialized francophone universities.

Secretary General of Senate commented that it was an honor for the Cambodian Parliament that PIC had become a regional center receiving officials from other Parliaments in the Southeast Asia region to provide them with training in parliamentary research and parliamentary affairs. Moreover, the Secretary General confirmed that the General Secretariat of AIPA had already signed an agreement relating to cooperation with PIC. The agreement was confirmed by the AIPA resolution dated 3 October 2016, through which AIPA had offered PIC a role in training parliamentary officials. (Resolution on the Capacity Development Program for Staff of ASEAN AIPA Member Parliaments with the Parliamentary Institute of Cambodia.)

(3) Mission of the Department of Information Technology to attend the Conference on E-Parliamentary Strategy and Solutions to Risks to the E-resources of Parliaments Bangkok, Thailand, from 17 to 18 January 2017,

With support from PIC and the General Secretariat of the Senate, the Chief and Deputy Chief from the Department of Information Technology attended the Conference on E-Parliamentary Strategy and Solutions to Risks to the E-resources of Parliaments. The main objectives of the conference were to:

- Discuss in detail parliamentary provisions to promote transparency and openness of the Parliaments;
- Strengthen and develop the relationships and cooperation among parliamentary stakeholders to share knowledge about the risks inherent in the implementation and development of strategies to integrate IT into parliamentary work.

The ultimate goal was to strengthen the capacity of participants to carry out the roles of Parliament through the use of IT, and particularly to help them in the implementation of the three functions of the Parliament. This conference has provided the IT Department of the Senate with:

- New initiatives for future actions to develop and update the strategic framework in the development of the ICT Department for 2018-2024, which took place in 2017;
- Good ideas to strengthen the legislative and oversight roles with appropriate standards for ICT in E-Parliaments, E-Libraries, E-Archives and Research Wiki which are beneficial to the Legal Services and the Regional Collectivity Departments of the Senate.

(4) Study visit of Commission 10 of the National Assembly to Malaysia, from 22 to 25 January 2017

From 22 to 25 January 2017, with the support of PIC, the Commission on Anti-Corruption and Investigation (Commission 10) of the National Assembly, led by the Commission Chair accompanied by the 8 other members of the Commission (4 CPP+4 CNRP), conducted a study visit to Malaysia to learn about that country's experiences in fighting corruption. The objectives of the study visit were:

- To study the legal framework, organizational structure, mechanisms and authority of the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC);
- To see if Malaysia's experience could be adapted to the Cambodian context in the area of combating corruption.

The delegation learned that Malaysian anti-corruption institutions have evolved from 1957 to be fully recognized as MACC with legal power and independence granted by the Prime Minister and the King. Malaysia has been guided in this field by studying the experiences of Hong Kong and Singapore.

The head of the delegation expressed satisfaction that much had been learned from the experiences of MACC. He stressed that these experiences could be used as a starting point for his Commission to further their study in order to combat corruption in Cambodia.

(5) Field Mission of Commission 1 of the Senate to Pursat and Pailin provinces, from 1 to 4 February 2017

With support from PIC, the Chair of Senate Commission 1, conducted a field mission to Pursat and Pailin provinces from 1 to 4 February with the participation of other Commission members (2CPP+2CNRP), accompanied by support staff. The objectives of the field mission were:

- To study the general situation in respect of human rights and the status of land dispute resolution at sub-national levels in Pursat and Pailin provinces;
- To investigate complaints about human rights violations that Senate Commission 1 had received directly from citizens; and
- To listen to the concerns of commune/sangkat councils and authorities at the district and provincial levels.

The mission team received good cooperation from provincial and sub-national officials who provided all the information needed for the investigation. At the same time the team identified some challenges faced in the two provinces:

- Four of the seven commune councils have no appropriate offices or places for keeping documents;
- The provision of civil registration materials from the municipality and province is slow;
- The procedure for correcting data in civil registration documents is complicated and expensive, and people seem to be afraid of the court;
- The physical infrastructure is still not good, and this leads to obstructions in sewage and other pipes, and floods.
- Commune/sangkat funds do not meet the needs of communes/sangkats;
- The price of agricultural products is low and not proportionate to the production costs.

In response to these challenges, Commission pledged to bring the issues to the government at national level in order to help with the construction of new office buildings. As for the low price of agricultural products, the delegation of Commission 10 agreed to bring this issue to the central government to identify measures to tackle this problem. This would enable them to complete the tasks delegated by the central level, especially in terms of the provision of adequate human and financial resources to the sub-national administration.

(6) Field mission of the National Assembly Commission 7 to Kampong Chhnang and Pailin provinces, from 20 to 23 February 2017

Commission 7 on Education, Youth, Sports, Religious Affairs, Culture and Tourism conducted a field mission to Kampong Chhnang and Pailin provinces from 20 to 23 February 2017. The field mission was led by the Chair of the Commission, accompanied by Commission members from both parties (4CPP+4CNRP), and

representatives from the Ministry of National Assembly-Senate Relations and Inspection. The objectives of the field mission were:

- To hear about the general situation in the two provinces and to see how relevant line agencies under the jurisdiction of Commission 7 perform their duties;
- To understand the progress and challenges in the implementation of policies regarding education in order to seek further positive solutions and make recommendations to the executive branch.

The head of the delegation stressed that in order to boost the quality of education there is a need to improve: teacher quality; student quality; curriculum quality; the quality of facilities; and the social-environmental context. In this respect, his Commission was urging the government to increase the national budget for education. During the field mission the Commission discovered that there were challenges in the two provinces:

- Law enforcement is still compromised by the limited knowledge of citizens;
- There is a lack of comprehensive legal provisions to fully implement the law;
- The delegation of power and responsibility to the sub-national level is still slow;
- There is a shortage of skilled professionals to provide support in the fields of education, religion, culture and tourism.

In response to these challenges, the Commission agreed to bring the issues to the government at national level in order to help to improve the situation in the provinces. This would enable them to complete the tasks delegated by the central level, especially in terms of the provision of adequate human and financial resources for sub-national administration.

(7) Field mission to monitor socio-economic, environment and safety issues in the provinces of Kep, Koh Kong and Preah Sihanouk from 20 to 25 February 2017 (Please refer to page 1 for details)

(8) Field mission to follow-up the Forum held by Senator Group Region 2 in Prey Chhor district, Kampong Cham province, from 7 to 10 March 2017

The Chair of Senator Group Region 2, with 12 participants from other relevant institutions, attended a field mission to Kampong Cham province from 7 to 10 March. The objectives of the field mission were:

- To learn about progress and the resolution of issues achieved by authorities at district and provincial level, by relevant departments, and at the commune/sangkat level; and
- To understand the progress of unresolved problems remaining from the previous forum.

As a result, after meetings with relevant officials from the province and from the 15 communes/sangkats, the mission group identified some problems that still

needed resolution. Those included lack of electricity, lack of books for family registration and paper forms for ID cards, lack of human resources and materials for use at commune police stations, land disputes, tardiness in the allocation/transferring of commune development funds, the quality of local roads, citizens' debts to microfinance institutions, and high fees for some public services.

Electricity issues: The district governor reported that he had contacted the service provider (Smart Mekong Power) who reported that out of 176 villages only 65 had not been connected to the power grid. However, the company would make contingency plans to finish the remaining connections in two stages: 45 villages in 2017 and 20 villages in 2018.

Lack of paper forms for civil registration: The chief of the District Police stated that although there were enough papers for registration, there was a delay in delivering them. This could be resolved through timely reporting of the use of papers at the commune and district levels.

Lack of resources at police stations: This case is the result of inadequate provision from the central level of new recruits to replace deceased personnel and to cover job transfers. The provincial police department requested Regional Senator Group 2 to pursue the issue with the government at the national level.

Land disputes: Land disputes had involved 2,000 families conducting dry season rice farming in four lake areas. As there had been insufficient rain water during the past two years, the cultivation area had been reduced. However, sufficient rain in 2017 had solved the problem.

Delay in the transfer of commune development funds: The disbursement of funds had been held up because of complicated procedures. This had led to a delay in the progress of development projects and the late completion of projects that had been interrupted as a result of the rainy season. The provincial department of planning urged all commune councils to create a better timeframe for project implementation in order to avoid delays.

Bad quality of local roads: Poor local roads are the result of their use by large trucks transporting agricultural produce. The provincial department of planning has urged local farmers to use smaller trucks and to conduct better maintenance of roads after harvesting agricultural products.

Citizens' debts to microfinance institutions: Some of the families in the province cannot afford to pay their debts and their property has been seized. This leads to labor migration. The provincial Governor has requested the Senator Groups to encourage the government to establish a public concession loan policy for farmers.

High fees for some public services: The main cause of high costs is the registration of land titles and construction licenses. To improve the process, a One Window Service office has been opened to enhance transparency and to reduce the intervention of middlemen.

(9) Study visit of officials from the General Secretariats of the Cambodian Parliament to the French Parliament, from 11 to 17 March 2017 (Please refer to page 3 for details)

The study visit was led by the General Director of Legislation Services and Regional Collectivities, accompanied by six officials from the General Secretariats of the Senate and the National Assembly and three staff from PIC. The objective of the mission was to learn about the experiences of French counterparts in providing orientation to new Parliamentarians.

The delegation learned that, to welcome new MPs, packages of information are produced and delivered: 1) financial information relating to their office and its operation; 2) information about websites and databases relating to the Parliament; 3) procedures and registration processes for new Parliamentarians; and 4) guidance about being a member of a Commission and what happens in the first Assembly meeting.

Upon their return, the delegates first presented ideas for welcoming new Senators in early 2018 and new Members of the National Assembly in late 2018. Second, they provided input to the preparation of the Code of Ethics that is being drafted for the Cambodian Senate.

(10) Field Mission of Commission 6 of the Senate to Kratie and Tbaung Khmum provinces, from 12 to 24 March 2017

This field mission was led by the Chair of the Commission on Legislation and Justice, accompanied by five Commissioners and 11 officials from the General Secretariat of the Senate. They travelled to Kratie and Tbaung Khmum to study alternative dispute resolution and the implementation of the penal code and criminal procedure, the prevention of crime, and the dissemination of information about the law and legislation at commune/sangkat level. The mission found that there had been progress in respect of processes relating to alternative dispute resolution, the implementation of the penal code and criminal procedure, prevention of crime, and the dissemination of laws. However, there were still some shortcomings. For instance, the capacity of law enforcement officials is limited especially in respect of an understanding and an application of the relevant laws. There is also a lack of materials and other tools to implement the laws.

11) Mission of the IPU Cambodian Section to attend the 136th IPU General Assembly in Dhaka, Bangladesh, from 1 to 5 April 2017

This mission was led by the Vice-Chair of the Senator Group for the Inter-Parliamentary Union and Vice-Chair of the Commission on Human Rights, Reception of Complaints, Investigation and National Assembly-Senate Relations. Delegates also included Senators and members of the National Assembly, and the Secretary General of the Senate, Deputy Secretary General of the National Assembly, staff from the International Relations Departments of the Senate and the National Assembly and one PIC staff member. During the Assembly, three resolutions were issued relating to: 1) the role of Parliament in respecting the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of States; 2) the promotion of enhanced international cooperation on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), in particular on the SDG relating to the financial inclusion of women as a driver of development; and 3) the need for urgent international action to save millions of people from famine and drought in parts of Africa and Yemen.

During the Assembly the Cambodian delegation had the opportunity to chair a meeting on ASEAN+3 and the meeting of the Third Permanent Committee: Democracy and Human Rights. Following an invitation from the IPU Human Rights Committee, the Cambodian delegation convened a direct discussion on a number of complaints being considered by the IPU HR Committee. The Cambodian delegation fully rejected the allegation of human rights abuses in Cambodia by the Committee because it had received information from only one side. The Cambodian delegation asked the whole meeting not to adopt the decision of the Committee and suggested that the IPU President or its Secretary General visit Cambodia to understand the actual situation in this country.

(12) Study mission of the Department of General Research of the General Department of Legal Services and Regional Collectivity of the General Secretariat of the Senate to attend the 11th Conference of the Association of Parliamentary Librarians of Asia and the Pacific in Seoul, Republic of Korea, from 24 to 28 April 2017

The mission participants included the Head of the Department of General Research of the Department of Legal Services and Regional Collectivities, the Chief of the Library of the General Secretariat of the Senate and staff from PIC. The objective of the conference, entitled Moving Towards the Big Data Era: The Role of Parliamentary Libraries and Research Services, was to: 1) deepen understanding about the working environment with a focus on trends in information technology; 2) improve the service given with a focus on the needs of clients; and 3) improve performance through the implementation of Big Data and through looking at the 'real issues'.

Through participation in the Conference, the Cambodian participants have learned a great deal about the importance of the development of research, archives and information services in promoting and encouraging MPs capacity in fulfilling their main parliamentary functions—legislation and oversight functions. They are committed to keep pace with the other countries in providing legislative support services to members of the Senate.

(13) Mission of the Senate Group, Region 2, to Strung Trang district, Kampong Cham province, from 2 to 5 May 2017

This mission was led by the Chair of Senate Group Region 2, accompanied by PIC representatives and officials from the General Secretariat of the Senate including other members of Senate Group Region 2. The delegation discovered:

- A shortage of schools due an increase in the birthrate;
- The encroachment on, and clearing of, government land in some areas (land in Tomnup Khnach Krom);
- A lack of materials for issuing birth certificates;
- Some people had not registered for marriage certificates;
- Some people in almost every commune had not received ID cards due to the duplication of fingerprints; and
- A lack of land for agriculture because the land that had previously been used for cultivation had now subsided into the river.

The mission team held discussions with district and commune authorities including commune clerks, heads of commune police forces and villagers' representatives in order to identify challenges, solutions to problems, and suggestions made by the 12 commune councils. These related to: 1) the implementation of village and commune/sangkat Safety Policy Guidelines; 2) the provision of local public services; and 3) work relating to the election that was coming in June.

(14) Field mission of the Senate Commission 6 to Kampong Cham province, from 24 to 29 April 2017 (Please refer to page 5 for details)

The field mission was led by the Chair of the Commission on Legislation and Justice, accompanied by five Commissioners and officials from the General Secretariat of the Senate. They travelled to Kampong Cham province to study alternatives to dispute resolution and the implementation of the penal code and criminal procedure, the prevention of crime, and the dissemination of information about the law and legislation at commune/sangkat level. Findings in respect of the progress of alternative dispute resolution in Kampong Cham were similar to those of the previous field mission to Kratie and Tbaung Khmum provinces in March.

(15) Seminar on the Nature and Function of the Cambodian Parliament at the Senate, 16 May 2017

The seminar on the Nature and Function of the Cambodian Parliament, jointly organized by the General Secretariat of the Cambodian Senate and PIC, was attended by 150 participants including Chiefs of Office of the General Secretariat, staff and regional fellows from the Philippines, Malaysia, Lao, Myanmar and Thailand. The objective of this seminar was to strengthen the knowledge of officials from the General Secretariat about parliamentary work and to enhance services provided by officials and staff of the General Secretariat and Senate members. It had a particular focus on helping participants to understand their roles and functions, as well as to familiarize them with the operation of the Senate in general. In addition, the seminar enabled participants to compare the nature and function of Cambodia's Parliament and government with international counterparts.

(16) Regional parliamentary research capacity building, from January to June 2017

The PIC hosted 11 Regional Parliamentary Staff as Parliamentary Research Fellows from Laos, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines and Thailand who spent 6 months with the PIC learning to provide parliamentary research for parliamentarians.

(17) Study mission by Cambodian Senators to the French Senate to study the Parliamentary Code of Ethics for French Senators, from 1 to 7 July 2017

Following the invitation of the French Senate, the Chair of the Cambodian Senate Commission on Finance, Banking and Audit, led a delegation of Cambodian Senators on a study mission to the French Senate to learn about Professional Ethics and the Code of Ethics of francophone Parliaments.

The delegation met M. Michel Leflandre, Senior Advisor of the Standing Committee Secretariat of the French Senate, who is in charge of protocol and international relations. He gave a presentation about the parliamentary Code of Ethics for French Senators. The Commission for Drafting the Parliamentary Code of Ethics for the Cambodian Senate has already included some principles taken from the Code of Ethics of the French Senate into their draft. Those principles include: general interest; independence; accountability; strictness; exemplarity; integrity; and honesty.

The delegation also met the Director of Administration of the Department of Training and Human Resource Development, M. Jonathan Papillon, who gave a presentation about the Code of Ethics that guides officials of the French Senate focusing on official staff and rules of professional ethics, and the Code of Ethics that is being used for official/staff of the French

Senate. Such study visits are valued for the following reasons:

- They promote real unity between the Cambodian Senate and those of other countries such as the French Senate, the Parliament of The Federation Wallonia-Brussels, and other Parliaments in the francophone countries;
- They increase the internal legal knowledge of legal staff of the Cambodian Senate;
- They provide experience of international laws which can often be adapted to the Cambodian context.

The data collected gave the Cambodian Senate enough guidance to draft a proposed law or proposed amendment to the internal regulations of the Senate.

(18) PIC supported the Secretary General of the Cambodian Senate to participate in the General Assembly of the Association of Secretaries General of Francophone Parliaments (ASGPF), in Luxembourg, from 6 to 10 July 2017

On behalf of the Deputy Head of ASGPF, the Secretary General of the Cambodian Senate, participated in the Annual General Assembly of the Association in Luxembourg from 6 to 10 July 2017. The main topic was Multi-Sector Parliamentary Security including: 1) The necessity to ensure the security of the Parliament; 2) The roles and responsibilities of parliamentary administrations; 3) Security of physical assets inside the Parliament; 4) Security of information technology; and 5) Training in security for Parliamentarians and parliamentary staff.

At the end of the General Assembly, the Secretary General summarized by commenting that the topic of security is important for Parliaments to share so that they are ready to react when, for instance, terrorism or cyber attacks occur. According the Secretary General, each Parliament needs its own security measures in accordance with the context of each individual country. In addition, Parliaments need to invest in physical and IT infrastructure development.

As the result of their participation in the General Assembly of ASGPF, three members of the Cambodian parliamentary staff were allowed to participate in an online training course organized by APF and the University of Senghor.

It was agreed that the General Secretariat of APF and the University of Senghor would cooperate with PIC to jointly organize a training course at the Senate of Cambodia in October 2017. This would be aimed at officials from the Cambodian Senate and the National Assembly, and from the Parliaments of Vietnam and Lao PDR. This has enhanced the capacity of Cambodian parliamentary staff, and Cambodia will play a role as a training center for parliamentary staff in the region.

(19) Field mission of the National Assembly Commission 7 on Education, Youth, Sports, Religious Affairs, Culture, Fine Arts, and Tourism to Oddar Meanchey and Banteay Meanchey provinces, from 20 to 21 July 2017

A delegation of seven commissioners, led by the Chair of Commission 7, conducted this field mission to Oddar Meanchey and Banteay Meanchey provinces to study the general situation in the provinces and the specialized provincial departments that are under the scope of the Commission's areas of responsibility. They discovered the following challenges faced by citizens:

- Lack of teachers at all grades;
- Dropout rate of students is high, especially at secondary schools, because families lack the means to continue supporting their children to go to school;
- Students get married;
- Students' parents change their residency location, or emigrate to Thailand and take their children with them;
- Low rate of student registration at kindergarten and secondary school;
- Lack of guesthouses for teacher accommodation;
- Lack classrooms and educational materials in kindergartens;
- A lack of school buildings, libraries, latrines, clean water, and teaching materials for laboratories, etc.

The delegation noted that the provinces had made remarkable progress. However, they urged even greater efforts to ensure sustainable development and to maintain security and public order. Delegate members agreed to report problems to relevant Ministries when they returned from the mission.

(20) Training Workshop on Parliamentary Commission Affairs and IT in London, from 15 to 24 July 2017

PIC supported two senior staff members (the Head and Deputy Head of the Department of Information and Technology of the General Department of Information and Public Relations of the General Secretariat of the Senate) to attend a Training Workshop on Parliamentary Commission Affairs and IT in London from 15 to 24 July 2017. The objectives of this training were to:

- Share experiences in terms of procedures and practices adopted by parliamentary commissions, particularly in respect of legislative power, setting up enquiries, the roles and responsibilities of chairmen, working with the media, methods of impact assessment, the use of IT, etc.;
- Expand knowledge about the use parliamentary commissions make of IT, especially in response to requirements in respect of accountability, transparency, openness, and effectiveness, and in fulfilling the three core functions of legislation, representation, and oversight;

- Build relationships and friendship between experts in parliamentary affairs from different countries.

This training workshop was beneficial in enabling participants to:

- Obtain knowledge relating to parliamentary practices and parliamentary mechanisms that will constitute a foundation for setting up an Electronic Tracking System for law making in accordance with the strategic plan for institutional development of the General Secretariat of the senate;
- Provide knowledge related to parliamentary commissions that can be used as a roadmap for the IT Department to develop the main content for the homepage of each specialized commission while the department is writing new procedures for the new mandate of the Senate.
- Learn new methods for setting up technical equipment for the studio of the plenary session hall and the commissions' meeting room.
- Build connections with other Parliaments, especially officials who are working in the parliamentary commissions and IT departments, and who have experience of working for commissions and of setting up IT programs for Parliament.

As follow-up activities to the workshop:

- Primary work: the department will choose the most relevant points and guidance from the British parliamentary commissions and those from other Parliaments for the preparation of news content for the homepage of the 10 commissions of the Senate.
- The department will continue studying and learning from this training workshop and from other Parliaments that participated in it to guide the preparation of ITC Masterplan, 2018-2024.
- To strengthen the three core functions of the commissions by using an electronic tracking system for law making and the Cloud computing program to compile documents and other legal instruments for the 10 commissions of the Senate.
- To strengthen and expand the relationships and cooperation with stakeholders, particularly the International Centre for Parliamentary Studies.

(21) Delegation of officials from the General Secretariat of the Senate participated in the 13th Workshop of Parliamentary Scholars and Parliamentarians, UK, from 29 to 30 July 2017

From 29 to 30 July 2017, PIC supported two senior officials from the General Secretariat of the Senate to participate in the 13th Workshop of Parliamentary Scholars and Parliamentarians organized by IPU and the Centre for Legislative Studies, University of Hull, which took place in Wroxton College, Fairleigh Dickinson University.

The workshop addressed nine topics: 1) strengthening the executive body; 2) Parliament and public relations; 3) combatting corruption in the executive body; 4) the legislative process in China; 5) parliamentary structure and power; 6) Parliament during a period of evolution; 7) strengthening the roles and function of Parliament; 8) capacity building of Parliament; and 9) Parliament and communication. Among those, the topics relating to the oversight function and combating corruption were the most interesting for the Cambodian participants.

Lessons learned: The workshop delegates noted that both researchers and Parliamentarians acknowledged that their oversight activities had not, as yet, been effective. Therefore, Parliamentarians need a strategy to improve the operation of Parliaments' oversight function and measures to combat corruption.

(22) Field mission by Commission 8 of the National Assembly to Tbaung Khmum, Prey Veng and Svay Rieng provinces, from 31 July to 4 August 2017

With support from PIC, the Commission 8 on Public Health, Social Affairs, Veterans, Youth, Rehabilitation, Labor, Vocational Training and Women's Affairs of the Senate, led by the Chair of the Commission, conducted a field mission to Tbaung Khmum, Prey Veng, and Svay Rieng provinces. The objective was to learn about law enforcement in respect of immigration and the prevention of human trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation.

The delegates listened to brief reports from the Provincial Governor, members of the Provincial Board of Governors, representatives from the Provincial Department of Health, the Provincial Department of Labor and Vocational Training, the Provincial Department of Social Affairs, Veterans, Youths and Rehabilitation, and the Provincial Department of Women's Affairs. After hearing the brief report, the Chair of the Commission expressed her appreciation to the leadership of the three provinces and relevant NGOs for their efforts to develop the provinces and for their achievements in the implementation of the Government's Rectangular Strategy. The achievements related, in particular, to immigration and the prevention of human trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation. The delegation also collected information about challenges as well as suggestions from citizens and specialist officials in order to find proper solutions to improve local governance.

(23) Field mission of National Assembly Commission 8 to Pailin, Oddar Meanchey and Preah Vihear provinces, from 13 to 19 August 2017 (Please refer to page 7 for details)

(24) Public consultation on Women and the Law organized by the Women Senators Group for members of commune/sangkat councils in Rattanakiri, on 4 September 2017 (Please refer to page 8 for details)

(25) Field mission of Senate Commission 1, to Kep, Kampot, Koh Kong, and Preah Sihanouk provinces, from 4 to 9 September 2017

PIC supported a field mission undertaken by the Senate Commission 1 on Human Rights, Complaint Reception and Investigation to Kep, Kampot, Koh Kong, and Preah Sihanouk provinces. The objective was learn about the practice of human rights (the rights to fish in the sea and the creation of fishery communities) and complaint resolution by the authorities at the sub-national level.

In order to gain a clear understanding about areas of conflict and the rights of the fishermen, the delegation met relevant stakeholders including Civil Society Organizations, representatives from fishery communities, commune/sangkat councilors, members from the boards of provincial governors, from provincial councils, and from other institutions. The aim was to collect and analyze data, which will be forwarded to the Permanent Committee of the Senate so that they can, in turn, forward recommendations to the relevant Ministries or institutions to find solutions.

The delegation discovered that, in general, processes relating to human rights and the special rights of fishermen to fish in the high seas, and the process of creating fishery communities at the local and provincial level have been working relatively well. On the issues of land conflict, the four provincial authorities have been working to resolve problems step-by-step, based on compliance with the law and respect for human rights.

However, fishery stakeholders in the four provinces made the following suggestions through the delegation:

- Relevant Ministries should identify public assets and sub-national assets, particularly in respect of land, so that commune/sangkat councils can use it to meet actual need for residency and land reserves to accommodate the increase in the population, and the consequent need for public schools, hospitals and so on;
- The Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries should seek the means to provide support for provincial fisheries administrations so that they can fulfill their work commitments and combat illegal fishing.

(26) Forum in Region 1 on service delivery and participation in local development, Phnom Penh, on 5 September 2017

The forum was organized by Senator Group to Region 1 in the Conference Hall of Khan Por Sen Chey, Phnom Penh Municipality. It was presided over by its Chair, and attracted 204 participants including Senators, commune councilors, district authority representatives from Phnom Penh, and officials from the General Secretariat of the Senate.

The Governor of Khan Por Sen Chey reported that, in the provision of public service in his locality, a One Window Service office had been operating since 2014. During the three-year period, 2014-2016, the One Window Service office had worked hard to provide public services to 87,687 people and had achieved a total income of 6,886,429,200.00 riels. As a result, the khan was ranked in top place, countrywide, for three consecutive years during the Annual Workshop of the One Window Service. In February 2017, this khan was also ranked first in respect of the Three Smiles on the Reception of Public Services.

Geographically, Phnom Penh expanded from 290 Km² in 1979 to 692 Km² in 2017; the population also increased to more than 3 million in 2017, which is a 10-fold increase compared with the figure for 1979. Consequently, the supply of clean water had not been able to respond to the fast-growing needs of the population. However, City Hall and the local administration were working hard to resolve the problem. For instance, in Sangkat Pleung Chhes Rotes there were now 284 pumping-wells, 11 dig-wells with safeguards, 11 dig-wells without safeguards, and seven ponds.

In response to suggestions from citizens who are now facing water supply shortages, Senator Group Region 1, with the contribution of H.E. Dr. Mong Rithy and the Mekong Dialogue Institute (MDI), have jointly and immediately addressed the citizens' concerns by creating one clean-well at Chunlong Mlou Hen Sen Secondary School. They have also excavated a large pond 82 meters in length, 57 meters in width, and 4 meters in depth, equal to 18,696 m³ (square meters), to serve 376 families or 1,650 people. The forum ended on a happy note as a result of this solution to the shortage of water (the pond) and to the clarification given by Phnom Penh Water Supply Authority about the supply of clean water to citizens in Phnom Penh, particularly in Khan Por Sen Chey.

Senator Group Region 1 welcomed the feedback produced by this forum and will follow up the remaining issues, and make more suggestions, to effectively uphold the policy of the government, and to build more trust among citizens.

(27) Field mission of the National Assembly Commission 6 to Kampot and Preah Sihanouk provinces, from 12 to 15 September 2017

From 12 to 15 September 2017, a delegation from the National Assembly Commission 6 on Legislation and Justice led by his Chairman conducted a field mission to Preah Sihanouk and Kampot provinces. The delegation of Commission 6 accompanied by seven other members (4CPP+3CNRP) and officials of the Secretariat General of the Senate. The objective was to study how laws are implemented, and the status of the justice system in the two provinces. In meetings with different public and private stakeholders and citizens, the Commission: 1) shared information with sub-

national level staff about the important work of the National Assembly; 2) learned about the leadership and governance of the local authorities; and 3) identified shortcomings, difficulties and suggestions.

The delegation met separately with authority and court officials in Preah Sihanouk and Kampot provinces to discuss various topics such as transportation, industry, law implementation, people's concerns and suggestions. Through the discussions, the delegation reached the following conclusions:

- There is good information-sharing between national and sub-national administration representatives about the efforts of the National Assembly to fulfill its three main functions - legislation, oversight and representation - as well as to implement laws and solve problems in response to people's suggestions;
- There is a lack of means and materials for use in the judicial sector at the local level;
- The legal knowledge of the people and law enforcement officials is limited. There is a shortage of judges, judicial clerks and administrative officials;
- Good cooperation among specialized institutions, authorities and judicial institutions is necessary;
- Legal training for law enforcement officials, local authorities and representatives from the Ministry of Justice is needed.

The delegation of the National Assembly Commission 6 distributed hundreds copies of Laws and regulations to local authorities and representatives of villagers for expanding their legal knowledge.

(28) Forum on Capacity Strengthening in Local Development Planning in Pailin province, from 14 to 15 September 2017

On 14 and 15 September the Senator Group to Region 4 organized a forum in Pailin province on Capacity Strengthening in Local Development Planning. It was presided over by H.E. Tep Ngorn, 2nd Vice-President of the Senate, and drew 150 participants who were Senators, representatives from the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Planning, and the Ministry of Economics and Finance, commune council members, the Provincial Governor, leaders of other institutions and authorities in Pailin province, and PIC representatives.

The objective of the forum was to strengthen the capacity of the commune/sangkat councilors who were recently elected for the fourth mandate. Presentation sessions covered the roles and responsibilities of commune/sangkat councils and their chiefs in public service delivery and the development of local development plans.

Speaking at the opening of the forum, H.E. Mr. Tep Ngorn emphasized that sub-national decentralization and de-concentration is a complicated reform process. It requires participation from the national and sub-national level, development partners, civil society and NGOs. He urged the incumbent and the newly-elected commune councilors to work together to promote good cooperation, good solidarity and mutual respect.

The main challenges identified by Senator Group to Region 4 and solutions offered by different authorities in Table 1.

No.	Description of issues	Current status of resolution
1	Lack of office buildings	The MoEF partially disbursed funds for building 101 office buildings in 2017
2	Funding sources for communes/sangkats are still limited	The MoEF has deducted 1 percent of fiscal income at municipal and provincial level and transferred it into commune/sangkat funds. As national revenue increases every year, the rate of commune/sangkat funds also increases
3	Commune clerks have charge of too many tasks	The MoEF has worked with the Mol and other development partners to create the new position of Clerk Assistant with the appropriate salary
4	The change in the economic classification of commune/sangkat fund categories has led to difficulties in budget implementation	Officials from the provincial treasury have gradually provided training on this topic
5	Supporting documents required to clear administration expenses are too complicated for budget implementation	The MoEF and the Mol are discussing this matter which will provide a swift resolution
6	There is a delay in approving commune/sangkat funds	The MoEF has sent a letter to provincial and municipal authorities to provide a simplified budget template for communes/sangkats

As the forum concluded, the Chair of Senator Group to Region 4, expressed his appreciation for the results. These had been very satisfactory, and there had been full participation, discussion, and fruitful contributions from those attending, he said. The participants, in particular the commune/sangkat councilors, now had a clearer understanding of government policies, programs, and plans. In particular, they now understood how the relevant Ministries had responded to the challenges and problems that had been raised by the councilors in previous forums.

Moreover, this forum had reflected more clearly on the history of the Senate, its roles and responsibilities, and the differences between the Senate and the National Assembly in fulfilling their representative roles. The forum had also helped to promote the rights and interests of the commune/sangkat councils and the practice of democracy at the sub-national level through the implementation of policies related to decentralization and de-concentration.

(29) Workshop on the dissemination of research findings on the legislative process, Comparative Study: Cambodia and Thailand, at the Cambodian Senate, Phnom Penh, on 28 September 2017

The workshop on Legislative Processes was jointly organized by PIC and KPI (King Prajadhipok's Institute) of Thailand on 28 September 2017, under the presidency of the Secretary General of the Cambodian Senate, and H.E. Prof. Woothisarn Tanchai, Secretary General of KPI. There were 78 participants including officials from the General Secretariat of the Cambodian Senate, the General Secretariat of the Cambodian National Assembly, the General Secretariat of the Constitutional Council of Cambodia, and PIC.

The objective of the workshop was to share the research findings of the comparative study on legislative processes between Cambodia and Thailand. The content of the presentations included: 1) the general aspects of the research project; 2) a comparative study of legislative processes in Cambodia and Thailand; 3) the development of an indicator framework; and 4) research findings and recommendations. The findings of the research produced the following recommendations:

- To increase transparency, neutrality and trust among the public, legislative bodies of both countries may consider inviting third parties to participate in the evaluation of their work performance;
- To promote transparency and accountability of legislative bodies, indicator criteria and these findings should be published in electronic homepages and the media;
- Assessment criteria and indicators that are identified in the research should be reviewed in case there are amendments to related laws. e.g. when there is amendment to the Constitution, to parliamentary procedures, and so on. This would ensure the sustainability of formal indicators in assessing the value of legislation;

- KPI should cooperate with the National Assembly and the Senate of Thailand to organize training courses on data collection for the officials of the General Secretariat of the Thai National Assembly and the Senate.

(30) Study Mission to Thailand on the Legislative Role of the National Assembly and the Justice System, from 25 to 28 September 2017

From 25 to 28 September 2017, a delegation from Commission 6 consisting of five Senators, accompanied by officials from the General Secretariat of the Senate, led by Chair of commission 6, conducted a study mission to Thailand. Their aim was to learn about the legislative role of the National Assembly in Thailand and the justice system.

The delegation met separately with the management team of the National Assembly of Thailand, the Permanent Commission on the National Assembly in charge of legal services, court procedures, and security issues, and representatives from the Ministry of Justice.

As a result, the study visit has strengthened the friendship and cooperation between the countries, especially the respective National Assemblies. Moreover, the delegation gained interesting knowledge about legislation, the court system, alternative dispute resolution, and the promotion of human rights in Thailand.

Through meetings and discussions with different judicial institutions in Thailand, the Cambodian delegation of Senate Commission 6 has learned a great deal of the judicial system in Thailand and the relationship between the Ministry of Justice and the Judicial independence system in Thailand as well as the basic principles of Judicial independence, the concept of institutional independence and the independence of individual judge which are guaranteed by the Thai Constitution and laws.

(31) Study mission of the Senate Commission 7 to Singapore, from 25 to 29 September 2017

From 25 to 29 September 2017, a delegation of Senators, led by the Chairman of Senate Commission 7 conducted a study mission to Singapore. They were accompanied by staff members of Senate Commission 7 from the General Secretariat. The objectives were to:

- Strengthen and expand cooperation between the Cambodian Senate and the Parliament of the Republic of Singapore;
- Study the procedures involved in the implementation of laws, and parliamentary policies in respect of the education sector;
- Build relationships, unity, and harmony between the Cambodian Senate and the Parliament of Singapore, and with other countries in the ASEAN community.

The delegation made a courtesy call to Ms. Liew Wei Li, Deputy General Director of the Department of Education of Singapore, and were warmly welcomed. Ms Liew Wei Li gave a presentation on the Singaporean education sector, covering:

- The policy in respect of general education;
- The management of schools in Singapore.

She explained that education in her country is not a one-time training. Instead it is a lifelong and on-going activity which enables students to keep up with modern technology.

The delegation also met H.E. Mr. Zainal Bin Sapari, a Singaporean Parliamentarian. He welcomed the delegates and told them about the education sector in Singapore which is the main national priority after national defense. The government of Singapore supports any family who is not able to send their children to school with clothes, books and other necessities.

In a further meeting with H.E. Mrs. Denise Chua, a member of the Parliamentary Education Commission, the Cambodian delegates heard about the process of continuous reform of the education sector in Singapore, which has been prioritized with great success: the country is small and lacks natural resources, which makes human resource development all the more essential.

The study visit achieved its aims, contributing substantially to the strengthening and expanding of cooperation, and the building of friendship and unity between the two countries, especially between the Senate of Cambodia and its Singaporean counterpart.

(32) Field mission of Senate Commission 2 to Oddar Meanchey province, from 8 to 11 October 2017

From 8 to 11 October 2017, Commission 2 on Economics, Finance, Banking and Auditing of the Senate conducted a field mission to Oddar Meanchey province to study economic development and the provision of public services at sub-national level. It was led by the Commission Chair, who was accompanied by officials from the General Secretariat of the Senate.

The main objective was to study in greater depth issues such as the monitoring of the implementation of the budget at the sub-national level, the planning of commune/sangkat development, auditing, public procurement, the implementation of village, commune and sangkat safety guidelines, and the provision of public services. Delegates were also keen to assess the raising of living standards among the people through the collection of revenue for local development, and poverty reduction in cities and provinces. Among the challenges the delegates identified:

- The sangkat/commune office buildings are dilapidated and cannot provide public services on time;

- The development of budget plans, public revenue reports and the calculation of bonuses for skilled officials is slow (hampered by the rainy season and the pressures of voter registration);
- A lack of human resources and a limitation in the capacity of skilled officials;
- A shortage of computers, and a need for two motorbikes for commune clerks to enable them to go to the field;
- The implementation of procurement projects is slow, and the implementation of the budget settlement had been carried-over to the next year;
- Business activity at the sides of road may cause traffic accidents;
- Companies have not declared tax on time, have not submitted their tax papers, and have not updated official details;
- The transfer of land titles has not been registered and has not been fully implemented in accordance with the government circular;
- The report on public revenue and the settlement of bonuses for skilled officials and sub-national administration officers have been delayed.

Suggestions included:

- A commune office building to be constructed in Chong Kal district,
- Computers and two motorbikes to be provided for commune councilors and commune clerks;
- A budget increase to be agreed so that officials can fulfil their functions and undertake missions to remote areas;
- An IT system should be set up so that public services can be provided on time;
- There should be training courses in budget planning for commune councilors;
- The procurement process should be speeded up.

The head of the delegation agreed with the points made in the discussions, and the recommendations, and promised to convey the messages about the increase in the budget to the government, and to relevant Ministries and institutions. Recommendations were that:

- Support from the government and development partner organizations should continue based on the need at sub-national level, and improvements to the infrastructure system;
- Function and mission budgets for commune councilors and clerks should be increased. The focus should be on costs in the production chain of marketing products, and on creating community markets in other provinces;
- Training courses to improve the capacity of the commune councilors and clerks should be conducted.

(33) Field mission of Senate Commission on Health, Social Affairs, Veterans, Youth Rehabilitation, Vocational Training, and Women's Affairs to Kampong Thom province, from 12 to 14 October 2017

From 12 to 14 October 2017, the Commission on Health, Social Affairs, Veterans, Youth Rehabilitation, Vocational Training, and Women's Affairs of the Senate conducted a field mission to Kampong Thom province. The objective was to study law implementation in respect of the areas covered by the Commission, focusing particularly on labor and the experiences of informal workers. The mission was led by the Commission Chair and members of Commission 7. The specific aims were to:

- Enhance the relationship and cooperation between the Senate, and the sub-national authorities and local citizens;
- Understand how laws and policies were being implemented at local level;
- Collect information relating to challenges, concerns, and suggestions from informal workers who work on rubber plantations;
- Report findings to the Permanent Committee and the Senate.

At the provincial hall in Kampong Thom province, the delegation met representatives from the provincial council and the Board of the Provincial Governor, and other departments. During the discussions, the provincial governor of Kampong Thom province, gave a report about administrative work in the province, the geography, demographical issues, public services at sub-national level, the implementation of the deep reform policies of the government, challenges, and suggestions for making further progress.

The Chair of Commission 7 thanked the provincial leaders for their hard work in supporting the development of the province. The questions raised by the mission delegates related to:

- Whether births were still supervised by traditional birth attendants; And whether maternal and child mortality rates had increased or decreased;
- How health professional were managed;
- How people in remote areas were receiving health care;
- In the province there were three referral hospitals and eight districts: in this context, how the provincial health department arranged the operational districts;
- How the provincial health department implemented the equity fund;
- In relation to recent news stories, how many people had died after eating wild animals;
- Whether there were any cases of human organ trafficking in Kampong Thom province;
- What measures there were to treat and prevent malaria;
- How health professionals behaved towards patients;
- Whether there were any Chinese criminals working in the gold mines.

Challenges identified in the province:

- There is still violence in communities. Public awareness-raising events to respect the Law are mostly attended by women;
- There is a lack of skilled staff at the health centers and referral hospitals;
- People's knowledge about personal health care and disease prevention is limited;
- Some structures of health care buildings are very old;
- Agricultural products fetch only a low price at the market;
- There is still drug use and drug trafficking in the province;
- There is still an increase in traffic accidents;
- The issuance of land titles for citizens is slow.

Suggestions to resolve some of the problems:

- Capacity building for those involved in the welfare of women and children at commune/sangkat level should be introduced;
- A road leading to the rubber plantation should be constructed;
- There should be better health equipment and more staff for Baray-Santok referral hospital.

The Commission delegates noted that the provincial leadership and specialized departments had worked hard to fulfill their roles and duties. Moreover, the leadership of the province had done well in implementing the government's Rectangular Strategy, (5th mandate of the National Assembly), by conducting deep reforms in different sectors. The leadership, in particular, had also been effective in disseminating information about the Law.

(34) Study visit of the Senate Commission on Finance, Banking and Audit to Stockholm, Sweden, from 14 to 20 October 2017

The delegation comprised Cambodian Senators, officials from the National Audit Authority (NAA), the General Secretariat of the Commission on Economics, Finance, Banking and Audit, and PIC Executive Director and two of his staff, as well as representatives from Embassy of Sweden to Cambodia. The main objectives of the study visit were to: 1) learn about how the Riksdag (Parliament of Sweden) and the Swedish National Audit Office (SNAO) work together; and 2) strengthen the relationship between the Cambodian Parliament and the National Audit Authority through improving mutual understanding about their individual roles and mandates.

During the study visit the delegation participated in presentations on topics including:

- The infrastructure of the public sector in Sweden focusing on work management with accountability and transparency, checks, and the budget process, presented by Dr. Gunnar Fors, Director of the Research Unit of the Riksdag;

- The vision of the Ministry of Finance and the relationship between the Riksdag and the SNAO, presented by Dr. Magnus Allgulin, Director of the Department of Budget of the Ministry of Finance;
- The relationship between the Riksdag and the SNAO focusing on the legal framework, presented by Mr. Gad Levin Sparr, International Senior Advisor of SNAO; and
- The audit of financial reports, the audit of operations, and the audit of conformity with the rules.

The Senator group discussed the topic of the Benefits of a Parliamentary Budget Office (PBO) presented by H.E. Dr. Carl B Hamilton, a former MP, and Dr. Gunnar Fors. The NAA group held deeper discussions about the working relationship between the SNAO, Parliament, and the government. The NAA also discussed how to conduct audits on budget settlements that include annual reports and financial reports from the Swedish government. Overall, the study visit produced the following results:

- Lessons were learned and some best practices were shared in the process of preparation, implementation, and budget audits in Sweden which provided primary data for research;
- Useful knowledge was shared relating to cooperation in political and technical management of institutions that have similar characteristics in both countries - Cambodia and Sweden. In particular, much was gained from observing the working process of the Riksdag and the SNAO;
- Strengthened cooperation and mutual understanding between the Cambodian Senate and the Cambodian NAA in order to enhance the management of fiscal matters so that they are more transparent and accountable.

(35) Participation in the Meeting of the Association of Secretaries General of Parliaments under the Framework of the 137th IPU Assembly in Saint Petersburg, from 14 to 19 October 2017

The meeting of the Association of Secretaries General of Parliaments was held under the leadership of Mr. Geert Jan A. Hamilton, Secretary General of the Senate of Holland, who is the Acting Head of the Association. Mr. Philippe Schwab, Secretary General of the Swiss Federal Assembly and Mr. Najip El Khadi, Secretary General of the National Assembly of Morocco, were elected as the Head and Deputy Head of the Association, respectively.

The Secretary General of the Cambodian Senate met separately with some members of the Association with the following results:

- The Secretary General of the Thai Parliament agreed to accept seven IT officials from the Cambodian Senate to exchange experiences at the Thai National Assembly in November 2017;

- The Secretary General of the Senate of India agreed to continue cooperation according to the existing Memorandum of Understanding and agreed to provide experts to conduct a needs assessment in respect of research for the Cambodian Senate, and to provide research training for the Cambodian Senate;
- The Secretary General of the Swiss Federal Assembly agreed to continue cooperation in technical fields and in helping the media and broadcasting sector;
- The Secretary General of the French National Assembly agreed to continue cooperating under the framework of APF to support training in parliamentary affairs, as necessary.

In conclusion, participating in the Meeting of the Association of Secretaries General of Parliament proved to be a good opportunity to learn about parliamentary management from representatives in other parts of the world, and to share experiences, exchange ideas, and to seek support and technical cooperation from other Parliaments.

(36) Study visit of Officials from the Secretariat General of Cambodia Parliament to Switzerland, from 14 to 21 October 2017 (Please refer to page 9 for details)

(37) Study visit of officials from the General Secretariat of the Senate of Cambodia to French Senate, Paris, from 21 to 28 October 2017

A delegation led by the General Director of the General Department of Legal Services and Regional Collectivities, conducted a study visit to the French Senate from 21 to 28 October 2017. The focus was on: 1) the structure, roles and responsibilities of the secretariat of specialized commissions; and 2) the area of work covered by the Ethics Commission.

The content of the discussions covered:

- The State Council in the legislative function and relationship with the executive body;
- The tasks of specialized commissions and the legislative services unit and controls/checks;
- The functioning of the Commission of Ethics.

The French Senate does not require its members to sign an attendance sheet in plenary sessions and use a face recognition method instead. This is in keeping with the traditional culture of the French Senate. It was noted that there has always been good cooperation between the French and Cambodian Senates, and the former has always been ready to support its Cambodian counterpart in terms of capacity building and technical assistance, in the exchange of experiences and in study visits.

At the conclusion of the mission, the Cambodian delegates were able to:

- Understand the structure, roles, and duties of the State Council (i.e. the Supreme Administrative Court);
- Understand the structure, roles, and duties of specialized commissions and commission secretariats;
- Understand the roles and scope of the Commission on Ethics and the Standing Committee on Ethics, and the work undertaken by these bodies;
- Understand the framework and hierarchy of officials of the General Secretariat of the French Senate.

For their part, the French hosts accepted the proposal to train officials of the General Secretariat of the Cambodian Senate.

(38) Three Researchers from Senate General Secretariat, attended the 19th Annual Conference of KPI (King Prajadhipok's Institute) in Bangkok, from 9 to 14 November 2017.

The objective of the conference was to discuss a joint research protocol. Many professors and scholars have expressed different opinions about topics including sustainable democracy, an international vision in respect of strong/solid democracy, how to participate in politics, and the test of a new Constitution towards a desired degree of democracy. The Cambodian delegation and KPI researchers also discussed the results of the workshop that was conducted in Phnom Penh last August. After the four days of meetings in Thailand:

- The delegation learned different theories and practices of democracy that have been applied in other countries in the world. They also heard about harmonization in Thai society through the new Constitution and some laws that complement the National Development Strategic Plan;
- The KPI research team decided to set a date of 27 December 2017 to conduct a workshop to disseminate the results of a joint research project in Bangkok, and to require all members of the KPI working group and representatives from the Cambodian Senate and the Secretaries General of both Houses to attend.

(39) Officials from the General Department of Information Technology and Public Relations of the Senate to the National Assembly and the Senate conduct a study visit to Thailand, from 12 to 17 November 2017

The objective of the study visit was to: 1) study the process and function of the Thai National Assembly, especially focusing on the use of Information Technology to support the process of law making and the core functions of the Thai Parliament; 2) study and exchange knowledge and experience in respect to the preparation of daily administrative tasks through the use of IT in the Thai Parliament; and 3) strengthen and expand cooperation between both specialized departments to develop an ASEAN legal database, and study the preparations made by the Parliaments for ASEAN integration.

During the study visit, the delegation met the Senate and National Assembly leadership, representatives from the General Secretariat of the Senate and the National Assembly, and the General Director of Legislation, Department of International Cooperation and Information and Technology, to discuss topics including legislative processes and updates relating to the IT infrastructure of the Senates of both countries

As a result of the study visit, the delegation gained knowledge about:

- The programs for IT administrative work, E-Office and E-Post;
- The use of E-Knowledge for aide-memoires for Senators and other MPs in different fields prior to every parliamentary plenary session;
- The use of E-Conference facilities;
- The use and development of E-Library systems;
- The creation of legal homepages for all 10 ASEAN countries;
- Practical work required in the management and organization of a studio room using a high standard of equipment;
- The preparation and use of technology such as camera systems, electoral systems and sound management in the plenary session hall.

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