

The Office of the Council of Ministers' Press and Quick Reaction Unit has issued a statement as follow:



English Translation

Statement

The Department of the Press and Quick Reaction Unit of the Office of the Council of Ministers wishes to report categorically the remarks made by Prime Minister Abhisit Vejjajiva, who has not only ignored but also insulted Cambodia and its people through his remarks, made during his visit to Cambodia on 25 June 2011, to the effect that Cambodia has been a world heritage site.

1. It has to be noted that Cambodia is a member of the World Heritage Committee and its members will be the 197 members of the World Heritage Committee that is being held in Paris, France in the last few days of the World Heritage Committee.

On 25 June 2011, the Bangkok Post quoted Mr. Sarav Khuntia, the Thai Minister of Culture, Heritage and Sports, as saying that "he believed Mr. Abhisit Vejjajiva, Prime Minister of Thailand, was not a member of the World Heritage Committee and that he was not a member of the World Heritage Committee."

2. National and international opinion will remember that the issue is whether Thailand's membership from the World Heritage Committee was made by the Thai government or the government of Siam. When, in the 1970s, the Thai government was in power, the World Heritage Committee was not a member of the World Heritage Committee.

3. The Press and Quick Reaction Unit of the Office of the Council of Ministers wishes to inform national and international opinion that Cambodia has been a member of the World Heritage Committee since 1979.

4. Endowed with great civilization and culture, Cambodia has thousands of temples that need the international community's support for protection, conservation and restoration. Since it became a member of the 1972 Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage and the 1964 Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict, Cambodia has received strong support for the conservation and protection of cultural heritage through the International Coordinating Committee for the Safeguarding and Development of the Historic Site of Angkor (ICC-Angkor), making possible sustainable development and mitigating negative impacts on heritage sites.

5. In the current difficult situation that Cambodia faces from acts of aggression by the Thai military against Cambodia's sovereignty, especially the shelling that has damaged the Temple of Preah Vihear, which is a World Heritage Site, Cambodia needs international support, particularly from UNESCO, to protect and conserve the site, as stipulated in the 1954 Hague Convention.

In conclusion, Cambodia deeply regrets the negative attitude, the continued lies and fabrications by disreputable and untrustworthy public opinion by Prime Minister Abhisit Vejjajiva. The Department of the Press and Quick Reaction Unit of the Office of the Council of Ministers is of the view that Mr. Abhisit Vejjajiva should further his media in order to serve as prime minister.

Phnom Penh, 25 June 2011