

Ministry of Cult and Religion, Kingdom of Cambodia

**The Twenty Second Annual International Law and Religion Symposium “Conference on Religion, Law and Social Stability”**

*Held on October 4-7, 2015 at Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, USA..*

- Distinguished delegates,
- Religious assembly, participants
- Ladies and gentlemen,

I have a great honor and pleasure today to be invited to participate with your Excellencies, ladies and Gentlemen in this year conference on Religion, Law and its Social Stability.

In the name of Ministry of Cult and Religion, I would like to express my high appreciation of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, especially the International Center For Law and Religion Studies at Brigham Young University for inviting me and my colleagues to be in this great conference sharing opinions, experiences, and information toward further fostering religious freedom and overcoming global challenges especially work out for more strong foundation of religious tolerance and understanding among cultural diversities.

Cambodia in its prestige has never been any religious conflict throughout its long history. Not only that Cambodia has played a role as a center of bridging the differences, for example, *Dialogue on Interfaith Cooperation for Peace and Harmony was held on 3-6 April 2008 in Phnom Penh and many more*. Cambodia stands fully committed to giving full religious freedom and it has a rich cultural and ecclesiastic diversity in the society. Meanwhile, the royal government of Cambodia provides full freedom of religion to the people based on concrete foundation of harmony among a different sects and religions, and stands against any kind of discrimination of different religions among people and curbing all activities using religion as means of business which leads to religious crisis, but however, turn the potential of religion to be a force of economic and social development as well as strengthening peace, solidarity in maintaining tradition and uplift the value of morality in society.

Therefore, in parallel with the economic growth, a better social infrastructure, political stability and freedom of religious practices are strongly encouraged. Freedom of religious practices is taken care with assurance of mutual respect in the framework of law. Therefore, we have seen many religious beliefs being practiced in Cambodia such as Buddhism, Christianity, Islam and many more. The freedom

of religious beliefs and religions guaranteed by its constitution in the article 43 which that “ *people of both sex are fully equal rights to belief and guaranteed by the freedom to choose their own religious belief and practice on condition that those beliefs do not harm or violet others’ faith or religion, social order and public security.*” *Buddhism is the state religion.*

*The ministry learns that through religious practice, parents are able to provide patterns in families from the youngest child on up to respect life and the freedoms of others. Religion provides that pattern in a family, which brings stability and harmony to families, to villages, to our providences, and our country.*

On the base of strengthening religious freedom and harmony it has to be the right principle of the government to be implemented and the right role of each religion to build up the knowledge, moral, virtue and its practices in order to take part in the development of the country.

So to make ways for further religious freedom it is strongly recommended that the following factors should be taken into account:

- 1. Should adhere to honest and close cooperation and solidarity based on principle of mutual respect in all circumstances for solidarity and harmony of the nation.*
- 2. We should encourage extensively to contribute and learn the global scientific approach and knowledge among all religious diversities, the societies and nations in order to avoid being extremist in their view point and faith and taking ethics and responsibilities of tolerance and understanding of multi-religions and inter-cultural issues for granted.*
- 3. Respect to the individual’s religious freedom as value of each religion in understanding the right path for happiness of social nation.*
- 4. We should improve the teaching concepts and principles of multi-culture and traditions for all, especially to youth and women who are really in need to a proper guide and arrangement.*

In short, religious freedom is meaningful only with peace and harmony consisting of mutual understanding, co-operation and love. Eternal peace has to be acquired by a sincere and devoted struggle of truthfulness and honest dedication. If one has moderation and extinguishes all hatred in one’s heart, one is the one who brings peace to oneself and to the whole world at large.

Above all, it is strongly hope that there will be an active exchange and sharing of practical ideas, knowledge, experiences, innovations and visions in conference to be a key contributor to realizing the universal plan and principle for further religion, law and its social stability which will lead to achieve the Culture of Peace and Harmony among all the faiths and religions. May Peace and Harmony and religious freedom, be on the earth out of result of this symposium.

*Thank you for attention!*