

H.E. SUN CHANTHOL MINISTER OF COMMERCE

Kingdom of Cambodia

Sun Chanthol represents a modern generation of Cambodian politicians, having been brought up and educated in the United States, where he received advanced degrees from Wharton and Harvard. He gained extensive corporate private sector experience and served as a board member and chairman of Wharton Asia. Sun Chanthol was elected as a "Global Leader of Tomorrow" at the World Economic Forum in 1995.



Chanthol left Cambodia as a young man in 1973 as the country was descending into an era of catastrophic civil war and devastation.

With \$50 in his pocket and no English language skills, Chanthol spent his early years in Maryland in the US, studying English while financing his studies by washing dishes in a restaurant by night.

Realising the 'American Dream', Chanthol secured a scholarship and subsequently joined the General Electric Financial Management Program, where over the following 16 years he worked his way up in positions in the US and France, culminating in his appointment to the position of country manager for G.E. in Thailand.

Following the genocide of the Khmer Rouge era, Cambodia in 1993 was in desperate need of experts from all areas to rebuild its economy and society. Chanthol was asked by the Prime Minister to return to help rebuild the country in 1994 and to set up the Council for the Development of Cambodia (CDC), a one-stop foreign direct investment institution, where he served as secretary general from 1994 until 1997. During this period he also served as Secretary of State for Economy and Finance.

Upon completing these tasks he returned to the private sector, attending the Advanced Management Program at Wharton, University of Pennsylvania in 1997 and earning a master's degree in public administration from Harvard University in 1999. He returned again to Cambodia and set up his own trading and investment company in 1999.

From 1999 until 2003, Chanthol was an economic and finance advisor to the president of the National Assembly, and in 2003 was elected as a member of Cambodia's parliament. On a ministerial level, Chanthol successively served as Minister of Public Works and Transport (2004-2008) and as Senior Minister and Vice-Chairman of the CDC (2008-2013).

In September 2013, Chanthol was appointed as Minister of

Commerce with a clear mandate: to reform the ministry, improve trade facilitation processes within the administration, support the development of the private sector via increased transparency and efficiency within the ministry, and to attract more foreign direct investment to the country. Chanthol continues to serve as Vice-Chairman of the CDC.

Within his first eight months at the Ministry of Commerce (MoC), Chanthol has been able to launch significant reforms designed to speedily improve the business environment of the Kingdom. Essential reforms to restructure the organisation of the MoC itself have been implemented, including the introduction of transparent human resources and organisational processes. Automating the Company Registration and Certificate of Origin registrations has significantly reduced the payment of informal fees too.

The MoC has also initiated a new and open dialogue with the public, reaching out to a new generation of informed citizens on social media. A Facebook page (www.facebook.com/moc.gov.kh) and a YouTube channel are constantly being updated with the latest activities at the Ministry of Commerce, offering public access to progresses made towards more transparency and inclusiveness. The Ministry of Commerce Facebook page has proven to be incredibly popular, in particular with students studying business and economics. Within a short period of time this social media platform has grown to become one of the most popular government Facebook page's in Cambodia. This is a first step towards a modern, global communications strategy for Cambodia's political institutions.

Recognising the importance of better information and education to move the nation forward, Chanthol has initiated a series of commerce-orientated seminars and educational events. These seminars outline policies and give informed market insights as well as provide updates on the MoC's progresses to an audience hungry for reforms. International and local experts lecture on a variety of relevant subjects.

“As a government official, as a Minister, I work to improve the standard of living for my shareholders that I see every day on the street: men, women, children. Cambodians are now my shareholders. I work for them.”



U.S. Education

- B.S in Business Administration from American University – 1978
- Advanced Management Program from Wharton, University of Pennsylvania – 1997
- Masters in Public Administration from Harvard University – 1999

Professional background

- Worked for General Electric Company for 16 years in various senior executive positions
 - » General Management and Finance (in the US, France and in Thailand)
 - » Corporate Auditor of GE
- Established his own trading and investment company – 1999

Political responsibilities

- Returned to Cambodia in 1994 to help set up the Council for the Development of Cambodia (CDC) and to create Investment Law
- Served as Secretary of State for Economy and Finance and Secretary General of the CDC from 1994 to 1997
- Served as Economic and Finance Advisor to the President of the National Assembly from 1999 to 2003
- Served as the Minister of Public Works and Transport from 2004 to 2008
- Appointed as Senior Minister and Vice Chairman of the CDC from 2008 to 2013
- Appointed as Senior Minister of Commerce and Vice Chairman of the CDC in September 2013.

Other professional activities

- Elected as a Global Leader of Tomorrow of the World Economic Forum in 1995
- Member of the Executive Board of Wharton Asia since 2002
- Chairman of the Executive Board of Wharton Asia from 2009 - 2013
- President of the Khmer Swimming Federation

The Minister's challenges

- To reform and eliminate corruption within the Ministry
- To improve trade facilitation
- To support the private sector
- To integrate and make Cambodia more competitive
- To increase FDI

Completed 1st year reforms

Certificate of origin

- Eliminated for exports to countries that don't require it
- Allowed exporters to prepare the certificate themselves
- Automating the certificate of origin

GSP exporter registration

- From now on, the registration just has to be done once and will soon be online, eliminating approval time and processes

Company registration

- One-window policy created, combining the intellectual property rights department and the company registration department
- In the process of automating the company registration

Camcontrol

- Rotated Camcontrol staffs through lottery drawing to avoid staff from buying the position for certain location
- Eliminated the 100% inspection of exports and replaced it with risk management concept

Decentralization

- Decentralized certain tasks to the provincial department of commerce

Compensation

- Consolidated all fees allowed and agreed by the Ministry of Economy and Finance and Anti-Corruption Unit to distributed to all staffs of MoC through a transparent calculation method

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:
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