



President's Report – Kampuchea House (Australia) Inc. - 2018 AGM

During the recently completed financial year, and beyond, we have sought to keep our stakeholders informed about the ongoing challenges in Cambodia and their impact on Kampuchea House, our educational residence in Siem Reap.

Development and education are inextricably linked, with education helping to mitigate many obstacles that curb development.

Our mission is to provide the children and young adults in our care with a high quality family environment that enhances their personal and educational wellbeing, and to continue to do so until they are able to attain their own independence. Thereafter, they will be in a better position to lead fulfilling lives for their own benefit, as well as their families and the community as a whole.

As you know, we continue to operate under a regulatory environment that does not enable us to take in more children. Reflecting this reality, we continue to plan for an orderly wind down of our operations, whilst being mindful of the needs of all those in our care. At the end of October, we have 17 children and young adults in our care.

This total includes three young adults pursuing post-secondary studies who we continue to support with the assistance of their dedicated sponsors.

In late 2018, another five of our charges completed Year 12 high school. Some of these may move beyond our care in 2019 depending on a number of factors. However, we expect at least four of our young women will go on to further study next year, and require our continued support.

I refer to our financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2018 which show reserves of \$277,497, excluding funds of \$29,840 held by Kids off the Kerb from donors wishing to support our worthy cause.

We needed around A\$150,000 to support Kampuchea House in Cambodia during the last financial year, part of which we met by accessing the sale proceeds from our original residence at Dom Dek. We will need ongoing support beyond our current reserves to secure an orderly wind down, including the desired educational and personal outcomes for the children in our care.

We are most fortunate to continue to enjoy support from Westbourne Grammar School, both financially through the dedicated efforts of their school community, as well as group

visits to Siem Reap where there is wonderful interaction with our children. A very special school.

Looking ahead, we are making some adjustments to our Siem Reap operations to better reflect the changing age profiles (and study status) of our children and to ensure we effectively manage our costs in a difficult environment.

With the term of one of our residential leases ending in January 2019, we intend to move our operations into one facility, covering both residential accommodation and office services. Through our local director, Sour Sokleng, the staff and children have all been informed of our plans. Unfortunately, this will mean redundancies for several valued members of our staff, but we have taken steps to assist the individuals affected by these necessary changes.

We have also been advised last month of the cessation of our arrangements with Kids off the Kerb as from 31 December 2018, which will mean we can no longer provide an alternative means of giving to our cause on a tax effective basis. This is unfortunate, but we do thank Kids off the Kerb for all they have done for us over a number of years, and welcome their continued willingness to promote our cause among their constituents.

You will all have received a communication on this important development by now, and we sincerely hope you will continue to be in a position to support our work in Cambodia. That support will be critical in enabling us to achieve an orderly wind down.

We are very much indebted to Leng, our director in Cambodia, and all the staff there, as well as the tireless work of our Vice President, Belinda Lightfoot, in dealing on the ground with Leng on the many issues arising from the wind down, whilst continuing to maintain our good standing with the authorities in Cambodia. Through their efforts we expect to successfully finalise the extension of our Memorandum of Understanding with the Cambodian authorities early in 2019.

A special thank you to all members of the Committee who make such a worthy contribution. We also wish Sean White all the very best and thank him for the valuable contribution he has made to Kampuchea House in so many ways.

Thank you also to our supporters, may you remain with us on this journey as we seek to secure appropriate outcomes for the remaining children in our care in Cambodia.

I will be retiring as President at the AGM after five years of service in that role, and will of course be continuing to support Kampuchea House going forward.

Chris Penman
President
26 November 2018