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Coded Character Sets
Secretariat: [Japan \(JISC\)](#)

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Phnom Penh, May 30th, 2001

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Dear Mr. Frost,

The National Information Communications Technology Development Authority (NiDA) of Cambodia, chaired by the Prime Minister, has recently become aware that the Unicode Consortium has submitted a coding scheme for the Khmer script to the International Organization for Standardisation (ISO). We are surprised and concerned that this process was conducted without any official involvement or endorsement by the authorities of Cambodia.

We believe that any decisions concerning the Cambodian national language must have Cambodian official endorsement. Without this, any such coding system will not be regarded as our national standard, and neither will it be regarded inside Cambodia as having been given appropriate international standing.

We recognise the fact that Cambodia has been late in coming to adopt a character coding system for its national language, due to our difficult political situation during the period of Unicode's development. However, during 2000 the Royal Government of Cambodia took significant steps to set in place the appropriate institutional mechanisms to deal with this issue with the establishment of the aforementioned NiDA and its Committee for Standardisation of Khmer Characters in Computers

These bodies, in conjunction with the Royal Academy, are now reviewing the Khmer Code Table for ISO 10646-1:2000, which was apparently adopted by ISO/IEC JTC1 /SC2/WG2, as well as other approaches to the issue of Khmer character encoding. In discussions over

recent months some quite substantial reservations have been expressed about the proposed ISO code (in particular the decision not to establish independent codes for subscript characters).

Due to the fact that the appropriate Cambodian authorities are still in the process of finalising their position and coming up with an endorsed national standard, we request you to halt all activities of disseminating any unendorsed code tables, and to advise all relevant bodies, particularly those who may be implementing such code, of our official position as expressed above.

We would also request that you correspond with the appropriate Cambodian authorities in any future deliberations regarding the Cambodian national language.

Sincerely,

Leewood Phu
Secretary General