



# The Clay Marble

## BACKGROUND

### Cambodia's Vital Statistics

- Cambodia is located in Southeast Asia and is surrounded by the countries of Thailand, Laos, and Vietnam.
- Cambodia covers an area about the size of the state of Oklahoma.
- The climate is tropical, with average temperatures in the 80s much of the year. There is a monsoon season, a time of strong winds that bring torrential rains, from late April until mid-autumn.
- Most of Cambodia's over seven million people live near the Tonle Sap ("Great Lake") and the Mekong River, Cambodia's main bodies of water.
- During the dry season, the Tonle Sap River flows *out of* the lake southeast and into the Mekong River. During the rainy season the flow of the river goes in the opposite direction, flowing *into* the lake, because the Mekong River rises to a height greater than that of Tonle Sap.



- In 1994, over 90% of the population were descendants of the original Khmer people. So it is no surprise that the national language is Khmer. French, the language normally used in business, is the second most commonly spoken language.

