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Closing Remarks
Sr. Minister Mr. KEAT CHHON, M.P.
Minister of Economy and Finance
First Vice-Chairman, Council for the Development of Cambodia
7th Consultative Group Meeting for Cambodia
Phnom Penh, Cambodia, 6-7 December 2004

Colleagues from the Royal Government
Distinguished Representatives from the Donor Community Ladies and Gentlemen,

1. First of all, I would like to thank all of you for your valuable and candid contributions, and productive discussions during the past two days. Your views, comments, concerns, suggestions, and recommendations are highly appreciated by the Royal Government. We know they are made in a spirit of goodwill not only to further Cambodia's development process but also to keep your constituents and the general public in your countries informed on progress that is being made in Cambodia.

2. On behalf of the Royal Government I would like to thank all of you, and those not present here today, for your continuing interest in and generous assistance to Cambodia. Our **traditional multi and bilateral development partners** present here have pledged 504 million US$ for 2005. This amount is partners have Government's our traditional similar to what our traditional multi and bilateral development pledged in previous years. This amount is in fine with the Royal request for assistance of 500 million US$ per year as ODA from multi and bilateral development partners at this CG Meeting.

3. I would like to take this opportunity to also thank our **other bilateral development partners** who are not present here today to make pledges -- but who have been providing significant assistance for the rehabilitation and construction of much needed infrastructure and for the social development of our country.

4. The Royal Government will continue to encourage greater participation of the **private sector partners** in financing the construction of physical infrastructure through PPI arrangements. A high priority of the Royal Government over the next year is to strengthen public-private sector partnerships, to bring a greater coherence to public-private sector investments. Such an approach will ensure the participation of the private sector in the implementation of the Royal Government's Public Investment Program. I would also like to thank the **NGOs** who have been made significant contributions to Cambodia's development. Although formal pledges from our NGO partners have not been recorded today, on behalf of the Royal Government, I would like to express our appreciation for their efforts to mobilize resources from governmental and non-governmental sources to provide development services to our people.

5. Since the last CG meeting, we have made significant progress to improve the effectiveness of ODA. For the Royal Government, the creation of the 17 restructured joint Technical Working Groups and the Government-Donor Coordination Committee are important steps in establishing an institutional mechanism that will enhance transparency and accountability in the utilization and management of ODA. I would like to emphasize that monitoring progress on the implementation of the Royal Government's reforms programs is an important responsibility of the concerned government ministries and agencies. In this regard, the TWGs will serve as a mechanism for on-going dialogue, coordination, issue identification, operational planning and resource mobilization. This mechanism will ensure a greater mutual accountability for achieving the jointly agreed monitoring indicators in each area.

6. I am encouraged by the fact that because of the existence of this mechanism, for the first time in the CG process, we have had an opportunity to openly discuss and review the indictors to monitor progress. I expect that the pending issues on monitoring indicators in one area, that we discussed yesterday, will be resolved by the concerned institution before the end of this month. Based on our experience on discussions concerning the monitoring indicators, I strongly recommend that in preparations for the next CG Meeting, we should: (i) allocate sufficient time for discussions between the Royal Government and concerned development partners to agree on a set of monitoring indicators; and (ii) ensure that the monitoring indicators selected are realistic in Cambodia's context and are achievable within the specified time frames.

7. The Government-Donor Coordination Committee (GDCC) that we have established is an important forum for both the Royal Government and our development partners to review progress on a quarterly basis and to take corrective actions. I would like to propose that the 2nd meeting of the GDCC be held on 7 March 2005 at 9 a.m. at CDC to review progress. I am confident that this collaborative process will result in maximizing the benefits of your assistance for the benefit of our people.

8. In the spirit of this new collaborative process, I would like to propose that following this meeting the Royal Government and the development partners engage in a serious discussion on how to allocate the resources that you have pledged to meet our high priority development needs and to achieve Cambodia's Millennium Development Goals.

9. On behalf of the Royal Government, I would like to assure you that we remains committed to maximize the benefits of your assistance for the socioeconomic development of our country and to reduce poverty. We hope that in the process of further strengthening partnerships with you, we will continue to adopt procedures and practices that will enable the utilization of these resources for reducing poverty among our people in a transparent and accountable manner. The Royal Government remains committed to conducting regular high-level and policy coordination consultations with all our external partners as an integral element of our development management strategy.

10. To conclude, on behalf of the Royal Government, I would like to express our appreciation to the World Bank for organizing this meeting and my Co-Chairman for effectively managing the meeting in the true spirit of participation and partnership. I would like to thank my colleagues from the Royal Government for their efforts to make this meeting a success. On behalf of the Royal Government of Cambodia, I would also like to thank UNDP and Sweden who have been generous in providing support in the preparations for and the conduct of this very important meeting. Let me thank all of you for coming to this meeting and sparing your valuable time to give us advice and assurance of continued assistance. Finally, I am looking forward to our next CG Meeting that will be held in Phnom Penh.

Thank you all once again. Bon Voyage.