

**Statement by Sweden - CG meeting for Cambodia,
2-3 March 2006 - delivered by Mr. Klas Molin, Head of the
Swedish Delegation**

On behalf of the Government of Sweden, I join others in thanking the Royal Government of Cambodia with the assistance of the World Bank for co-coordinating this annual dialogue between the government and development partners. The continued gathering of development partners in Cambodia brings us closer to reality and provides us with a better understanding of the challenges and opportunities we face in our commitment to poverty reduction.

The goal of Sweden's policy for global development is to contribute to equitable and sustainable development. This is permeated by two perspectives: a rights perspective based on international human rights conventions and the perspectives of the poor. In this regard, Sweden aims for a holistic view of what drives development and thus aims for a policy for global development that embraces all areas of policy and of political decision-making. Trade, agriculture, environment, security, migration and economic policy are areas in which measures shall be devised in such a way as to promote sustainable global development. Consistency and coherence in applying the principles and objectives of the policy for global development in all related policy areas is what we strive for.

Each and every country is responsible for creating favourable conditions for development within its boundaries. No progress is possible without development-friendly national policies. At the same time, the rich countries, for their part, must assume responsibility for supporting and complementing national efforts in poor countries.

Sweden continues to be strongly committed to Cambodia, and stands ready to continue to support the Cambodian people in their development efforts. Sweden's current strategy for development cooperation with Cambodia rests on three pillars, well aligned with the new National Strategic Development Plan 2006-2010: poverty oriented rural development, education, and democracy and human rights. Sweden has since the inception of its development cooperation with Cambodia primarily been working in partnerships with and through multilateral organizations. In many respects harmonization &

alignment, mutual accountability and the management for results have guided our work long before the Paris Agenda provided new norms and standards. Sweden, which is one of the largest contributors in Cambodia among the EU member states, will continue to follow this path.

A new five-year strategy for Sweden's development co-operation with Cambodia is to be adopted by the Swedish government at the end of 2006. The new strategy will mainly follow the same lines as the present strategy, but with a slight shift in focus. Sweden remain concerned about the situation in the field of human rights in general and freedom of expression in particular, given the development in 2005 when a number of people were arrested on defamation charges following claims made by the government. In spite of concrete plans and undertakings by the Government, the progress made during the last year with regard to the urgent need to improve governance and the rule of law were, in our opinion, too modest. Even though the Government has put Good Governance at the core of its political platform — the Rectangular Strategy — the commitment to change and reform will need to be put into action.

Sweden needs to be assured that further arrests and repression will not occur again. It is encouraging to see that the government has started to seek a dialogue with the opposition and civil society organizations, instead of pursuing a policy of confrontation. We hope that this is the start of a new phase in developing social and political capital where the climate of fear and intimidation will be part of the past

For this reason, Sweden will closely monitor the situation for human rights during the coming strategy period. Progress in the area of democracy and human rights will have an impact on our future cooperation with Cambodia.