

**Statement**  
**CDCF Meeting June 19-20, 2007**  
**Delivered by H.E. Minister Dr. Ing Kantha Phavi**

Excellencies, Excellencies Ambassadors, Distinguished Partners of Development, Ladies and Gentlemen, on behalf of the Royal Government of Cambodia I very much welcome and appreciate the joint consensus of the development partners on gender related issues.

I am proud to inform you that the National Action Plan to prevent Violence against Women was finalized and the Ministry of Women's Affairs submitted the Plan to the Royal Government for approval. The National Action Plan addresses the complex and multiple root causes of violence against women including gender inequality, educational gaps, the social construction of role models or the needed harmonization in the legal framework as we find in the case of power delegation to the sub-national level. The Plan consists of 24 objectives referring to many sectors such as education, justice, interior, media and arts, social affairs, labor and health. To implement this plan all concerned line ministries need to provide human and financial resource. We will only be able to do this with substantial support from development partners. I encourage all those present today to review your strategies to include support for the National Action Plan to prevent Violence against Women.

As far as the mentioned draft Law on the Suppression of Human Trafficking and Sexual Exploitation is concerned we need to understand that the current legal reform is an extremely difficult process. The Royal Government meanwhile has approved the Penal Procedure Code and has finalized the new draft Penal Code. Above this, Cambodia has ratified the human trafficking related Palermo Protocol. All these activities were performed after the draft Law on Suppression of Human Trafficking and Sexual Exploitation had been prepared. The Ministry of Justice therefore adjusted the former draft to enhance the compliance with the other drafts and international documents. This is quite a complex task that could not be completed in the twinkling of an eye. This enhanced draft law will timely be discussed and finalized in the upcoming inter-ministerial meetings. I am absolutely confident that the Cambodian legislator will have adopted this very important draft law in a properly formulated shape and operationally embedded in the international and Cambodian legal framework – by the end of this year. However, the adoption of this law is only one step in the right direction. I want to encourage the development partners to understand that only a comprehensive funding will allow an effective implementation of the Anti-Trafficking strategy of which the adoption of this law is just one element. This funding should cover all bodies combating trafficking such as police forces, judges and prosecutors.

Please allow me to extend my comment to another topic the RGC is committed to seriously address under the gender perspective. With regard to the D&D reform process the RGC has made many constructive efforts to engender the draft organic law. So far MWA has provided several recommendations to the Ministry of Interior. They range from smoothing the interface between the organic law and the Law on Domestic Violence to effectively strengthen women's participation in sub-national elections and important decision-making positions such as commune-chief. Above this, MWA has contributed ideas in order to make sub-national budgets more gender-responsive. Although the D&D reform is a multi-layered process affecting innumerable aspects of public administration in Cambodia, I am sure that the RGC will keep on taking gender issues professionally into account while finalizing the draft. Thank you.