



**Ninth Meeting of the
Government-Donor Coordination Committee (GDCC)
Phnom Penh, Cambodia, 12 February 2007**

Opening Remarks
by Sr. Minister Keat Chhon, M.P.
Minister of Economy and Finance
First Vice-Chairman, Council for the Development of Cambodia
Chairman, GDCC
Royal Government of Cambodia

- Colleagues from the Government
- Honourable Ambassadors and Distinguished Representatives of Development Partners
- Ladies and Gentlemen

1- It is an honour and a pleasure for me to welcome you to the ninth meeting of the Government-Development Cooperation Partner Coordination Committee. As this is our first meeting in 2007, I hope that it is not too late to communicate my best wishes for the New Year. My own wish for the GDCC in 2007 is for a closer and more effective partnership; one that builds on the progress of previous years and ensures that, together, we make real progress in implementing the National Strategic Development Plan (NSDP) and toward achieving the Cambodian Millennium Development Goals (CMDGs).

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen

2- Our planned agenda today is very much based around our partnership for implementing the NSDP and we were to begin with a reflection on the Joint Monitoring Indicators (JMIs) that were discussed and agreed at the March 2006 Consultative Group meeting. Following discussion that has taken place at the highest levels of Government over the last days, however, I wish to propose an amendment to this agenda item.

3- As you are aware, at the October 2006 GDCC meeting we had agreed that a meeting would take place between Royal Government and Development Partners, specifically to discuss the Anti-Corruption Law. I have now been asked to inform you about H.E. Deputy Prime Minister Sok An's intention to schedule this meeting as early as possible after this GDCC meeting. The meeting with H.E. Sok An will provide an opportunity for a full discussion on the Anti-Corruption Law and the revised timetable for submission of this and other fundamental laws to the legislative branch. Public Administrative Reform and land will also be topics for dialogue. I am sure that you will agree that the proposed meeting with H.E. Sok An will provide an opportunity for a full dialogue. You may rest assured that your views have been communicated and the need to discuss them openly and comprehensively, are taken most seriously at the high level of Government. Indeed, these complex legal and reform-related issues are awarded the highest priority in Government, which welcomes the opportunity for a more detailed dialogue. I therefore hope that the discussion on Legal and Judicial Reform including the Anti-Corruption law, Public Administrative Reform and all land issues other than economic and social concessions can be removed from our agenda this morning pending a later discussion. I am convinced that this way to proceed meaning to have H.E Sok An taking over with you

some issues of the JMIs will not taint the integrity of the GDCC. The Government-Private Sector Forum has, for its part, created ad-hoc working groups as part of its dialogue processes.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen

4- I hope that this proposal is agreeable to you. With this amendment to the agenda, our focus on the Joint Monitoring Indicators can then rest with the issue of Social and Economic Land Concessions. I note the advanced sharing of the statement on this and other JMIs from our Development Partner colleagues and I thank them for taking this initiative. I also bring your attention to a JMI Progress Report that has been prepared by the GDCC Secretariat and is available for your reference. This Report helps to address many of the issues raised in the Development Partner statements and will be regularly up-dated between now and the CDCF meeting. I hope the statement on land concessions from our Development Partners and the Progress Report will help to ensure that our dialogue is both frank and constructive.

5- After having discussed the Joint Monitoring Indicators on Land, we will discuss our preparation for the Cambodia Development Cooperation Forum-the CDCF-which will take place in the middle of the year. You will recall from our discussions last year that the CDCF will replace the Consultative Group format and will provide for a national consultation centred on the NSDP. We will begin by receiving an up-date from the Ministry of Planning on the preparation of the first Annual Progress Report of the National Strategic Development Plan – the NSDP. After some discussion on this matter we will then turn to other analytical work that will be prepared for the CDCF meeting.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen

6- I wish to note that the Consolidated Report on the Progress of the TWGs is available. Reporting on this occasion was based on progress since the March 2006 CG Meeting and will be used to contribute to reporting on the Harmonisation, Alignment and Results Action Plan at the CDCF meeting. In brief, it appears that most TWGs are making progress in implementing their Action Plans, although many continue to be constrained by concerns related to funding, an appropriate level of participation and efficient information sharing. All of our TWG Chairs and Development Partner Facilitators are present this morning, I urge them to work together to resolve the issues that have been identified in the Consolidated Report.

7- I am pleased to bring your attention to the Guideline on the Role and Functioning of the Technical Working Groups. This document, which has been subject to extensive consultation both within Government and amongst Development Partners, has now been finalised and submitted to Samdech Prime Minister HUN SEN for endorsement. The Guideline is based on the Review of the GDCC and TWGs that we conducted in the latter half of 2006 and I thank my colleague, H.E. Chhieng Yanara and his staff at CDC, who coordinated this exercise. I hope that this Guideline will provide clarity and structure to the TWGs as they serve as the technical cornerstone of our partnership to implement the NSDP. All TWGs must now reflect on the Guideline and apply it to their own work. I also remind them that they may revert to H.E. Chhieng Yanara, in his position as the Chair of the GDCC Secretariat, if further support is required.

8- Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, with these brief remarks, I invite any comments from you before I turn to the first of our agenda items. I thank you for your kind attention and I look forward to our discussions.