

Development Partner Remarks
Delivered by Mr. Qimiao Fan, World Bank Country Manager
At the Opening Session of the 17th Meeting of the Government-Development Partner
Coordination Committee
Phnom Penh, October 18, 2010

*Excellency Keat Chhon, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Economy and Finance,
Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,*

Thank you, Your Excellency Deputy Prime Minister Keat Chhon for your opening address that has usefully highlighted the objectives and key issues for our meeting today. I would like to take this opportunity to express development partners' appreciation for Your Excellency's role in ensuring the strong partnership between the Royal Government of Cambodia and its development partners, a partnership that is of critical importance to the success of our shared goal of improving the well-being of all Cambodians, in particular the poor and vulnerable people.

Thank you to His Excellency Chhieng Yanara and his team at the Council for the Development of Cambodia for their impressive coordination of this meeting, and to all the Technical Working Group chairs, leads and members, Government and development partner representatives, who have worked hard to ensure that our discussion today is informed by up-to-date progress reports.

On behalf of development partners, I would like to summarise three key areas which we believe will most benefit from our dialogue today.

First, we congratulate the Royal Government of Cambodia for the progress that has been made since the endorsement of our joint monitoring indicators and other commitments at the June Cambodia Development Cooperation Forum. We very much welcome the conclusion of today's useful technical working group progress report that all agreed targets can be on track within the existing timeframe of implementation, if the current effort can be sustained and challenges addressed. Government and development partners are to be commended for the effective collaboration across the many sectors that are seeing real results in the achievement of Cambodia's important development goals.

In particular, we congratulate the Government for speedy work on the Policy Paper on the Promotion of Paddy Production and Rice Export. This is a critical element of the Government's promotion of agricultural development and rural infrastructure investment, which will broaden Cambodia's sources of growth and make future development more inclusive and sustainable. Development partners welcome the Deputy Prime Minister's guidance on the assistance needed from development partners and look forward to continuing this discussion at the relevant sector and TWG level.

We would also like to commend the Government for the progress made in establishing the legal framework for anti-corruption, legal and judicial reform, and the establishment of the anti- corruption unit.

Turning to the essential underpinnings of our partnership, we very much appreciate the sterling work undertaken by H.E. Yanara, the CDC team and the TWG Network on developing improved guidance to TWGs and implementing the excellent initiative to support programme-based approaches for development results. With this excellent work and leadership by the Government, as development partners, we should all continue to examine whether we are living up to our commitments to the Government of Cambodia to deliver aid effectively and identify any changes needed in the delivery of our aid. Only then can we ensure that our assistance achieves maximum results. We stand ready to support and participate in a review of the GDCC mechanism that may inform the post-Paris Declaration policy framework.

Second, there are some areas of the joint monitoring and CDCF commitments where we hope today's dialogue can help improve progress. In particular, we look forward to discussing how development partners can most effectively support the Government's next steps in four priority areas:

1. integrating strategic planning, budgeting and aid management;
2. implementing the anti-corruption law and strengthening the anti-corruption institution;
3. preparing and implementing other legislation on access to information and other remaining legal and judicial laws; and
4. implementation of the forthcoming National Social Protection Strategy.

We note that one of the main issues raised by TWGs for consideration of the ODCC is resource availability. Development partners are committed to improving the predictability of their financing and will work with concerned TWGs to ensure that the implementation of planned activities is not constrained by uncertain financial commitments.

Third, with the Priority Operating Costs scheme under way, it is important to focus our dialogue on the second track of public administration reform including wider compensation reform. We appreciate the steps taken by the Council for Administration Reform and the Ministry of Economy and Finance to consider and consult on the options for sequencing compensation reform. Development partners look forward to our discussion today to strengthen our shared understanding of the feasible next steps and timetable on compensation reform.

Your Excellency, I thank you very much for giving me the opportunity to say these few words and I look forward to a productive meeting.