

GOVERNMENT DONORS COORDINATING COMMITTEE

June 14, 2006

SPEAKING NOTES

H.E. NGO HONGLY

Secretary General, Council for Administrative Reform

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen

We have made good progress in Public Administration Reform since the beginning of the year. I would like to thank all those that have contributed to this success and particularly the CAR staff who have worked relentlessly to accelerate the reform. I am very pleased to say that we are well on our way to meeting the objectives we set for ourselves as part of the CG process. A brief overview of where we stand is attached to my statement.

I would like to take this opportunity to raise an issue that is significant to the future of the Cambodian Public Service.

The CAR is currently finalizing the policy framework to widen and deepen the reform of the Public Service over the coming few years. These reforms are fundamental and far-reaching. They will modernize the Public Service in ways that are best suited to Cambodian conditions. They will also better position the Public Service to support the Government in the major tasks associated with the development of Cambodia across all sectors. By the end of the year, the Royal Government will have approved a set of seven policies: through improved and more accessible service delivery; improved pay and employment conditions; better management of people; better human resource development and capacity development; and, enhanced use of ICT.

Our attention is now turning to implementing this policy framework. Change will affect all levels of the Public Service in all parts of Cambodia. Overtime, we will see a fundamental paradigm change from administrators to public servants. We are conscious that wide commitment and effective cooperation will be needed across the Public Service and that capacity constraints will need to be overcome.

Significant, predictable and timely assistance will be required. We should now put in place mechanisms that are demand driven, flexible and participative; and that will support such core principles as national ownership, leadership and Cambodianization.

As some of our partners recognized in September 2003, the issue is how best to uphold such core principles.

Everyone agrees that the Administrative Reform is at the heart of the Royal Government change agenda. Every one also agrees that not much else can be achieved and be sustainable without a Public Service that is an effective provider of public services and a trusted development partner. We need a coherent and sustainable approach to building up the contribution made by the Public Service. Strengthening State institutions and developing their capacity should be a major component of every country assistance strategy.

TWGs are primarily a mechanism to set common priorities and to mobilize requisite resources to fulfill these priorities thereby facilitating development cooperation. As a group, the PAR TWG has worked diligently to set a yearly agenda of work that has the support of every member. It now needs to address mid-term requirements of the reform and set realistic JMIs in such a context.

Despite the best of goodwill and for very good reasons, it does not seem possible for our development partners to generate relatively modest level of funds needed to support our common yearly agenda on a timely basis. Unless JMIs are within the span of their individual country assistance strategy and related projects, members cannot fund them or require long lead time to secure new funds. I understand the need for procedures to protect the interests of citizens in donor countries. However, the CAR and other change agents also face constraints that shall be addressed. It is a matter of finding a common ground.

Based on the policy framework being completed, we need to articulate a medium-term program of assistance that will address both the capacity issue and the need for predictable, adequate and timely resources. Continuing as we now do is not a satisfactory way to support a fundamental, far reaching and cross-cutting program such as the administrative reform. I have suggested that a core group of our partners and the CAR Secretariat now address the need for new mechanisms urgently.

This is a clear responsibility of the PAR TWG for which we need GDCC support. As chair of the PAR TWG, I look forward to working with our partners to develop such mechanisms, to mobilize requisite resources, to do better with what is available and to ensure the sustainability of sectoral change programs and related investments.

Thank you very much for your kind attention.

JMIs - OVERVIEW OF PROGRESS

- The phasing out of salary supplementation (JMI 1)

The CAR Secretariat appreciates the replies received to the questionnaire on salary supplementation practices. These we have now received from all except a few development partners. Because of delays in receiving responses, TWGs are only now able to start working on sectoral action plans- these plans will not be available until later this year. We have also just mobilized funds to analyze the data received, thanks to Danida, and will pass the results on in due course.

- Policies to improve pay and employment (JMI 2)

The two studies to inform decision making on these policies are being funded by an IDF grant. They will be completed in two months and we expect the policies to be formulated and approved by October.

- Policy on HItM (JMJ 3)

The CAR Secretariat has completed the design of both the policy and the HRM manual and will undertake inter-ministerial consultations starting in July. The new policy will strengthen merit based practices and introduce performance enhancing mechanisms.

- Enhancing service delivery through establishment of OWOs (JMI 4)

The policy on service delivery was approved by the Council of Ministers on May 5, 2006. The Secretariat is now completing inter-ministerial consultations to formulate the policy on OWOs which we expect to be approved by the end of June. Funding is in place to establish OWOs this fiscal year