

**Welcome Speech and Report  
of H.E. Chhay Than, Senior Minister, Minister of Planning on the  
Occasion of the Inauguration Ceremony of New Building of National  
Institute of Statistics of the Ministry of Planning  
Ministry of Planning, 14 January 2008**

Respected:

- Excellency Sar Kheng, Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Interior
- Excellency Kenya Akiba Vice-Minister of Internal Affairs and Communications of Japan
- Excellencies, Lok Choumteav, Members of the Royal Government
- Excellencies Ambassadors, Representatives of International Organizations and Development Partners
- Ladies, Gentlemen

Today, I am very pleased and honored the Ministry of Planning is organizing the inauguration ceremony of a new building of National Institute of Statistics (NIS) granted by the Government of Japan and presided over by His Excellency Sar Kheng, Deputy Prime Minister. On behalf of the Ministry of Planning and development partners, I would like to express my deep respect and most warm welcome to the honorable presence of His Excellency Deputy Prime Minister in this occasion and sincere and warm welcome to His Excellency Kenya Akiba, Vice-Minister of Internal Affairs and Communications of Japan, Excellencies, Lok Chumteav, Excellencies Ambassadors, representatives of international organizations and development partners, and all distinguished guests present today.

I am pleased to inform His Excellency Deputy Prime Minister and the whole ceremony that the new enormous building was built with granted support from Government of Japan of USD 946,433, including furniture for building. The Government of Japan through JICA has approved to construct this building on 1 August 2006 and the construction started since late of 2006, which took about one year of construction period. The forthcoming Population Census in March 2008, this building will be used for preparation of population census and data processing of 100 personnel computers. Moreover, the new building will be comprised of library and data users service center, statistical and computer training units, conference room included large and small, and also room available for international meetings. So far, under JICA project on improving official statistics in Cambodia, NIS has provided training to a total of 664 staff including NIS staff, statistical staff of line ministries and statistical staff at provincial and districts levels in the first round starting from late of 2005 to the end of 2006. In the future, the NIS will have better statistical infrastructure for implementing statistical activities as well as the development of Cambodia National Statistical System, especially an integration in to ASEAN.

The 8<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Heads of Statistics Meeting hosted by Cambodia, the delegations have also been visited the new building and highly appreciated the efforts of the Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC) and other development partners on statistical activities.

As stated in Statistical Master Plan (SMP), the statistical activities outlined in the SMP and related financing and technical requirements have all been agreed through extensive consultations over the last two years, between line ministries and institutions and their development partners. There is strong support for the full implementation of the SMP from both line ministries and institutions and development partners. The SMP was unanimously approved by Statistical Advisory Council on 30 April 2007.

In the last nine years, Cambodia achieves peace and political stability and high economic growth. The good stability and security is contributing to high economic growth and the Royal Government can also carry out reform in many fields. According to the latest data of the NIS of the Ministry of Planning, GDP per capita in current prices is USD 575. Inflation of statistics is fairly low of 4.7% in 2006 and 6% in 2007. Economic growth in constant price was 10.0% in 2004, 13.5% in 2005, 10.8% in 2006 and 9.6% based on estimation in 2007.

Statistical capacity development, especially the reliance on external technical assistance should be taking into consideration. The key component of statistical capacity building is training. But, training inputs have to be coordinated to meet the overall objectives of development of the capacity of the National Statistical System (NSS) rather than being delivered in a piecemeal manner. On-the-job training is an important component to augment and consolidate formal training. Management training must be provided as well as technical statistical training.

Statistics Law provides consultation and cooperation mechanisms to develop the NSS. Priority statistical activities can be established through these mechanisms. These will enable statistical standards, classification systems and methodologies to be developed and updated consistently in the Cambodian official statistics as a whole.

By the increased attention on the management for development results, policy makers and international development community, they more understand the importance of statistical activities in providing the information and management of development intervention. Good statistics is one part of environment which enable development. Strengthening of statistical capacity development it is very important that in supporting, preparation, monitoring and evaluation national strategic development plan, poverty reduction strategy, sectoral strategies, and millennium development goals. Having a good statistical information and strong capacity of the Government, and development partners in measurement of monitoring system and report on the development of all political aspects; providing as basic development policy and the achievement of millennium development goals. Expanding of national statistical services has been recognized that the essential step in producing data to monitor results of measurable development. In addition, the need for high quality of statistics with scientific used of high information technology in the process of statistical production, which is assure that a good quality and reliable. As internet system would increasingly at the present, it would helps users more easily to access the comprehensive information, so that the users always find the information that accurate, important, reliable and timely.

His Excellency Deputy Prime Minister  
Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen

Now we are very busy with the preparations of General Population Census of Cambodia which will take place in March 2008, the second census after the population census in 1998. The 2008 General Population Census will provides the only opportunity to development partners to support aid assistance to Cambodia in order to produce statistical benchmark data for monitoring results of the development. Also, the

census provides the capability to enhance of statistical infrastructure, such as building and computers. Other sectoral statistics will be setting out around population census in order to improve and develop the data collection and dissemination in these statistics areas. Cambodia Demographic and Health Survey (CDHS) provided wide range of data and its results has been used extensively for monitoring the Cambodia Millennium Development Goals (CMDGs), National Strategic Development Plan which combined with data on the development of economic and social, especially related to the issues of population welfare. The result of CDHS 2005 indicated the success of Royal Government efforts in the social sector and linked to the development of economics in the past few years. The census will provide a crucial role of measurement progress in moving toward to achieving the MDGs. It not only monitoring progress of several sectors in order to meeting the MDGs, but also used for preparation of poverty mapping and the requirement of population, so that it is a tool used for formulation of national strategic development plan.

The census data is the denominator of many CMDGs indicators. If there is no new population census it will be very difficult in measurement of the achievement of MDGs.

National Statistical System of Cambodia have been strengthened. In fact, we had strengthened the statistical legislations, including Statistics Law and Sub-Decree on the Organization and Functioning of National Statistical System. The national statistical system of Cambodia has been integrated in to the statistical system in the region and in the world. At the same time, Cambodia has made the efforts of its statistical development and has supported from the united nation statistical system and also comparable with the data of other countries. So far we received support from development partners: UNFPA, JICA, SIDA, UNDP, ADB, IMF, UNICEF and WB subsequently in development and strengthening of statistical system of Cambodia. The statistics of Cambodia have a good relationship in all sectors with United Nations Statistics Division, statistics of ASEAN secretariat and other Statistics Units of international statistical organizations and agencies.

Finally, I would like to wish Excellency Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Interior, and Chairman of National Census Committee of Cambodia; His Excellency Kenya Akiba, Vice-Minister of Internal Affairs and Communications of Japan good health and success.

I would like to take this opportunity to express my deep thanks to Japan, Government of Japan and Japanese people, which provided the new building for statistical activities and forthcoming 2008 census. Also, I would like to thank JICA and all development partners in the support of national statistical system of Cambodia.

I would like also thank to Excellencies, Ladies, Gentlemen, national and international distinguished guests for participating in this inauguration ceremony of the new building of the NIS and I wish all good health and success.