

**Speech by H.E. SHINOHARA Katsuhiko,
Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Japan
to the Kingdom of Cambodia
On the Occasion of the Inauguration Ceremony of the New Building of the
National Institute of Statistics, Ministry of Planning**

**January 14, 2008
Ministry of Planning, Phnom Penh**

- Venerable Monks,
- Excellency Mr. SAR Kheng, Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Interior,
Chairman of National Census Committee,
- Excellency Mr. CHHAY Than, Senior Minister, Minister of Planning,
- Excellency Mr. AKIBA Kenya, Vice-Minister for Internal Affairs and
Communications of Japan,
- Distinguished Guests,
- Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great pleasure for me to take part in celebrations for the inauguration of this new building for the National Institute of Statistics of the Ministry of Planning, constructed using the Japanese Counterpart Fund of Non-Project Assistance, under the high presence of His Excellency SAR Kheng, Deputy Prime Minister of the Royal Government of Cambodia. I would like to express my sincere congratulations at the successful completion of this building.

I believe that accurate statistics are indispensable for formulating effective plans on national development. From this point of view, the Government of Japan has been supporting Cambodia in its efforts to issue more comprehensive and reliable statistics. Japan has extended considerable technical assistance to this end, targeting various levels. In this regard, I would like to express my appreciation to Chief Adviser, Mr. NISHI Fumihiko, who is also here today, for his long-term commitment to the project.

Japan is also making direct contributions in terms of the implementation of the Population Census to be conducted in 2008, in cooperation with the Government of Germany and UNFPA.

The construction of this building is also part of Japan's focus on contributing towards the improvement of statistical data in Cambodia. I sincerely hope that the new facility will serve as a focal point for collecting and analyzing statistical data for the entire nation. As a Japanese citizen, I am especially pleased that Japan is extending meaningful, albeit small, cooperation towards this objective.

Looking back on history, it is worth noting that Cambodia and Japan have a long history of such cooperation. This year marks the 55th anniversary of diplomatic relations between the two countries. It is a great pleasure for me today to attend and celebrate this opening ceremony with H.E. Mr. AKIBA Kenya, since his visit is the first one by a Japanese parliamentarian this year. In fact, Cambodia-Japan relations can be traced back to the 17th century. As we celebrate the opening of this facility today, I strongly hope that mutual understanding, at both governmental and personal levels, will be further enhanced through people-to-people exchange, including technical assistance.

I would like to conclude my speech by humbly requesting guidance from Excellency Mr. SAR Kheng and Excellency Mr. CHHAY Than to ensure that the new facility will be maintained in good condition and utilized for the forthcoming Population Census in 2018. I would like to express once again my heartfelt appreciation to all the people who have worked towards the successful inauguration of this building.

Thank you for your attention.