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**Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development
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Delivered by

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Excellencies

Distinguished Delegates

Allow me to begin by expressing my sincere thanks and appreciation to the ESCAP Secretariat for organizing this important event.

I believe that this forum is not only timely, but imperative, as we are aware of our vulnerability to climate change and the economic crises that are increasingly occurring throughout the world.

I am certain that we all realize that if we are going to weather these storms, it would be to our mutual benefit to respect and support each other's strengths, as well as understand each other's weaknesses. Attaining sustainable development that can withstand both natural disasters and economic crises is top of the development and poverty reduction agenda.

Excellencies

Ladies and Gentlemen

Cambodia is experiencing fast dramatic changes in our socio-economic development. Since its interception in 1993, the Kingdom has been committed to achieving sustainable development which has been integrated across a variety of sectors, policies and plans. Among them are sustainable development in Cambodia MDGs and National Strategic Development Plans (NSDP).

I now invite you to consider a brief perspective from Cambodia in relation to sustainable development, poverty reduction and building resilient society. The policies we adopted and the strategies we have implemented under a refreshed and updated NSDP for 2014 – 18, determine our success in achieving our national aspirations. These include:

1. Ensuring an average annual economic growth of 7%. This growth should be sustainable, inclusive, equitable and resilient to shocks, through diversifying the economic base to achieve a more broad-based and competitive structure, with low and manageable inflation, a stable exchange rate and steady growth in international reserves. In addition, this growth should be inclusive one that is broadly based, across sectors, and with benefits for investors and businesses - large, medium and small enterprises, benefits flowing to large sections of the country labor force, benefits for both men and women, for the young, for the poor and vulnerable, and benefits to the government in terms of revenue collection to contribute to social development goals in poverty reduction and the delivery of health, education and social protection services.
2. Creating more jobs, especially for youth, through further improvement in Cambodia's competitiveness to attract and encourage both domestic and foreign investments.

This means that Cambodia strengthen our focus on agricultural development to improve livelihoods in rural Cambodia; to encourage the dynamism and productivity of our private sector, particularly small and medium enterprise, and associated foreign and domestic investment to support economic diversification; to create good jobs for our young population, and provide skills for young people merging into the labor market through enterprise and innovative public-private partnership based vocational education and training to bridge the gap we currently face between labor market needs and what we can supply.

3. Achieving more than one percentage reduction in the poverty rate annually, including realising the Cambodia Millennium Development Goals (CMDG), while placing high priority on the development of human resources and sustainable management of environmental and natural resources.
4. Improving hard and soft infrastructure that is needed for efficient business transactions, and connecting all parts of the country, as well as the region.

Also focusing on development, transfer and dissemination of technologies, particularly modern and high quality information and communication technology.

5. Improving institutional capacity and governance at both national and sub-national levels and ensuring effectiveness and efficiency of public services to better serve the people.

Excellencies

Ladies and Gentlemen

The integration of Cambodia's economy into the Asia-Pacific region is also crucial to our success in fostering sustainable development and poverty alleviation. Cambodia is located strategically within the Greater Mekong Subregion in ASEAN, and is in close proximity to Eastern and Southern Asia.

With greater connectivity, Cambodia's location will be considered a major asset for private sector development and foreign investment. In this respect, major investments can be directed toward improving the physical transport infrastructure that links Cambodia with other countries in the Asian region, especially with Thailand, Laos, Vietnam and China.

This will be most welcome with the expected increase in the flow of goods and people when the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) comes into effect at the end of 2015.

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In conclusion, it is time for a new dialogue to better reflect and respond to the issues concerning the centrality of the region which is at the forefront of the global economy. I hope, we the Representatives of our nations are here, attending this forum sincerely unite in our approach concerning the theme of "sustainable development and poverty reduction" with keeping in mind a direct correlation to our independence, interdependence and cooperation with each other.

Once again, allow me to express my Government's sincere appreciation and profound gratitude to the UN system and Development Partners for their continued cooperation and support for Cambodia's rapid progress and success, as well as her people's better livelihood.

I wish Asia and the Pacific Forum a successful outcome. I also wish you all peace and prosperity.

I thank you for your attention

