

**The Seventieth Session of the Economic and Social Commission
For Asia and the Pacific**

Cambodian Perspective on Regional Connectivity for Shared Prosperity

Delivered by

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**Madam Executive Secretary
Excellencies
Distinguished Delegates
Ladies and Gentlemen**

It is my privilege to begin by expressing my country's warm congratulations to Your Excellency Dr. Shamshad Akhtar on your appointment as the United Nations under Secretary General and the Executive Secretary of ESCAP. I am confident that under your leadership and direction, our countries will come together to renew and improve our commitments towards the realization of our common goals.

We also wish to extend our gratitude and appreciation to the ESCAP Secretariat for providing us all with a forum to once again work together and draw from our individual and mutual experiences the inspiration needed to accomplish the challenging work that lies ahead for all of us.

On this auspicious occasion, I am pleased to announce that Cambodia will be hosting the Regional High-Level Policy Dialogue on the Istanbul Programme of Action for LDCs in March next year. The meeting will serve as a midterm review for our countries' efforts to graduate from the LDC status. At the meeting, we aim for a very high-level representation of the Asia-Pacific LDCs. We are looking forward to welcoming you in Cambodia.

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I believe that our regional connectivity for shared prosperity, in many ways, has become a reality. However, we have a long journey ahead to strengthen our countries' partnerships by reducing barriers through active cooperation and participation to enhance trade, transport, ICT, energy, and people to people networks.

Excellencies
Dear Friends

The Cambodian perspective in making regional connectivity for shared prosperity

Under the leadership of **Samdech AkkaMoha Sena Padei Techo Hun Sen**, Prime Minister, Cambodia is experiencing fast dramatic changes in our socio-economic development. And the Kingdom is committed to giving prioritized attention to a number of sectors which are key to building and promoting regional connectivity for economic growth and sustainable development.

The policies, we adopted and the strategies we have implemented under a refreshed and updated National Strategic Development Plan (NSDP) for 2014 – 18, determine our success in achieving our national aspirations and regional integration. 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.
2. Creating more jobs, especially for youth, through further improvement in Cambodia's competitiveness to attract and encourage both domestic and foreign investments.
3. Achieving more than one percentage reduction in the poverty rate annually, including realising the Cambodia Millennium Development Goals (CMDGs), while placing high priority on the development of human resources and sustainable management of environmental and natural resources.

4. 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.
5. Improving the 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.

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Integration and cooperation contribute to regional connectivity for shared prosperity

The integration of Cambodia's economy into the Asia-Pacific region is crucial to our success of regional connectivity for shared prosperity. 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 towards 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 the 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.

It is time for a new dialogue to better reflect and respond to the issues concerning the centrality of making regional connectivity for shared prosperity.

I would like then to take this opportunity to share some ideas for further strengthening our regional connectivity:

1. Sharing good practices and lessons learnt amongst member states for inclusive and sustainable economic growth;
2. Working together to maintain political and economic stability in the region;
3. Diversifying our economies so as to broaden our markets to drive sustainable socio-economic development;

4. Promoting regional connectivity and cooperation through the building of national and regional physical infrastructures to significantly reduce energy consumption in the transportation sector;
5. Providing technical assistance and offering the transfer of technology towards helping LDCs and other developing countries in the reduction of the effects of climate change.

I hope, we, the representatives of our nations who are here attending this session, can sincerely unite in our approach to the “Regional Connectivity for Shared Prosperity”.

In conclusion, allow me to once again express my Government’s sincere appreciation and profound gratitude to the UN organisations and Development Partners for their continued cooperation and support for Cambodia and her people.

I wish the 70th Session a successful outcome, and I wish you all peace and prosperity.

I thank you for your attention

Cambodia
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Connectivity, just like any other field of development requires accurate, complete and timely statistics to guide decisions, and to enhance monitoring, evaluation and accountability.

Cambodia, like I am sure other LDCs, aspires to produce and own its own data to monitor progress, and to assess its graduation process.

This requires capacity-building for statistics production and analysis, and for international development partners to work with us and not around us for development indicators.

This is part of sustainable development and institutional capacity- building of countries including civil registration and vital statistics. Having the ability to produce economic, social and environmental statistics will enable us to fulfill the promise of leaving no one behind.