Statement by: **H.E. PAN BUN THOEURN**
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At the

**Workshop of National Focal Points for LDCs on**

Implementation the Istanbul Program of Action 2011-2020
7 - 8 December 2015, Brussels, Belgium, HQ of the EU Commission

**H.E. Mr. Gyan Chandra Acharya**, Under-Secretary General of United Nations and High Representative for the LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS (UN-OHRLLS)

**Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen!**

1. At the outset, I would like to express my high appreciation and sincere thanks to the United Nations Office of the High Representative for Least Developed Countries (LDCs), Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs) and Small Island Developing States (SIDS) for organizing and invitation me to attend the Workshop of National Focal Points for LDCs at this time.

2. **Cambodia**, similar to the other LDCs, fully recognized and regarded Istanbul Program of Action as a priority tool for Cambodia's socio-economic development and poverty reduction. In response to this program of action, Cambodia has designed and integrated it into Government's policies and strategies, such as Rectangular Strategy, Cambodia’s Millennium Development Goals, National Strategic Development Plan (2014-2018), National Strategy for Food Security and Nutrition(2014-2018), National Strategic Plan on Green Growth (2013-2030), National Strategic Plan on Climate Change (2014-2023) as well as Policy and Strategy for Regional and ASEAN, and Policy and Strategy for Global framework. Furthermore, the RGC is under preparing the National Environment Strategy and Action Plan (NESAP) covers the period 2016 to 2023, aligning with the National Strategic Development Plan and other national planning cycles. The process of formulating the NESAP began in September 2015 and it is anticipated that the final product will be endorsed by the National Council on Sustainable Development and finally approved by the RGC before the end of 2016.

3. Likewise, Cambodia has heavily invested in economic and social infrastructure especially it is structured around the eight development priorities set out in the Istanbul Program of Action such as roads, electricity, water and irrigation systems, education, health, and other social services in order to promote inclusive and sustainable growth, socio-economic development and ensure poverty reduction of more than targeted 1% per annum.
4. Now let me move to brief on achievements of the Implementation the Istanbul Program of Action since the adoption on 11-13 May 2011 at the Fourth UN Conference on the LDCs in Turkey. With the support from multilateral and bilateral development partners and complemented with a committed by the Royal Government, Cambodia achieved annual average growth 7.7% in these past two decades. GDP per capita has remarkably increased from 253 USD in 1998 to 1,225 USD in 2015. As the result, poverty rate was reduced from 53.2% in 2004 to 13.5% in 2014, which Cambodia achieving CMDGs poverty reduction target well before the end of 2015 alone with four other targets, including child mortality rate, maternal health, and so forth. We recognize that these achievements could not be possible without the generous supports from all development partners.

5. Along with the proudness of poverty reduction and because of poverty is a multifaceted issue, and in order to ensure the success of our undertaking in continuing to eradicate poverty in the future as well as for Cambodia graduation from LDC status by 2020, Cambodia recognized and continue fully to implement the Rectangular Strategy and the National Strategic Development Plan that is the overall guide for Cambodia’s socio-economic development and Sustainable Development Goals. The Rectangular Strategy encompasses four key elements of i) sustainable growth that is inclusive, equitable and resilient through economic diversification, ii) creating additional jobs for the youth and unemployed, iii) commitment to reduce poverty by 1% every year while placing high agenda on environmental sustainability for future generations, and iv) building institutional capacity and furthering good governance. Keeping this mind, Cambodia has embraced economic liberalization and integration in the global economy as a means to stimulate economic growth and employment.

6. Furthermore, what Cambodia must do from now on is to create opportunity for all the people to participate in socio-economic activities through the following important measures:

First, we need to maintain long-term high economic growth and promoting a transformation of economic structure to be more productive, particularly through promoting SMEs development, attracting investment and increasing investment in physical infrastructure for better linkages between rural to urban areas and to market as well as to other countries in the region;

Second, we need to pay more attention to investing in agriculture and relevant infrastructure such as irrigation and water management system, and continue to provide support services, new technologies as well as other inputs to the sector for enhancing productivity, production and export;

Third, we need to accelerate implementation of trade liberalization policies especially through improving trade facilitation, providing preferential treatments to developing countries, and reducing trade barriers for diversifying export products and markets in the region and the world;

Fourth, we need to continue to upgrade quality of education and skill trainings that generate value addition, particularly in science, technology, and engineering as well as promoting professional careers and strengthen vocational education along with other important social protection programs; and promoting financial inclusion and
providing easy access to sources of finance in order to give opportunity to all the people to use financial services.

**Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen !**

7. To achieve the above important measures and with successful implementing Rectangular Strategy and the National Strategic Development Plan, Cambodia needs the continuation supports from all development partners and from donors to increase funding for LDCs in implementing the Istanbul Program of Action and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). In particular, the provision of Official Development Assistance (ODA) to LDCs from donors to fulfill their commitments to provide an equivalent of 0.15 - 0.20 of their Gross National Income (GNI) as ODA to LDCs and mainstream the IPoA and SDG into the work programs of all UN System organizations and into Country Cooperation Programme that is the tool for effective implementation to achieve the IPoA or SDG for LDCs especially for Cambodia as LDCs country.

8. Last but not least, taking this opportunity, I would like to make suggestion to the Office of the High Representative for Least Developed Countries , Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (OHRLLS) or make intervention to UNDP representative in Cambodia to provide financial support or technical assistant to Cambodia related to the preparation of Mid Term Review report of the implementation of the IPoA for the LDCs for the decade 2011-2020 and the related documents for the upcoming High Level Meeting review scheduled to take place in June 2016, Turkey. So far, Cambodia, we never receive any financial support in the framework of LDCs to support the Cambodian National Focal Point.

9. It is indeed, each country will not able to achieve the greatest endeavour of eliminating poverty alone. We need to come together to achieve this goal. This indicates the significant of strengthening global alliance to reduce and eradicate poverty which remains our main global issues in the post 2015 development agenda or Sustainable Development Goals and especially we gather here in this time, we will show our willing to graduate from LDCs status by half of LDCs countries in 2020 as committed by IPoA . In this spirit, Cambodia urges all relevant stakeholders to exhibit political will and economic and financial commitment to achieve this primary objective.

10. Finally, I wish the Workshop of National Focal Points for LDCs great success and wish Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen good health and prosperity in your endeavours.

Thank you !