

**3rd National Forum on Climate Change
Phnom Penh, 5-7 November 2013**

DRAFT CLOSING REMARKS

by H.E. Sabo Ojano, Secretary of State, Ministry of Environment
on behalf of H.E. Say Samal, Minister of Environment
Sofitel Phokeetra Hotel, Phnom Penh, Cambodia, 7 November 2013



- *Excellencies, Lok Chumteav, ladies and gentlemen, Government senior management and staff*
- *Ambassadors, Representatives of Diplomatic Corps, Development Partners, Civil Society, NGOs, Private Sector, Academia and Youth Association*
- *Dear national and international guests, and participants of the Forum*

On behalf of H.E. Say Samal, Minister of Environment, and the National Climate Change Committee, allow me express my sincere gratitude to all of you for your active participation and productive outputs you have made during this three-day Forum. The recommendations we have received from this Forum are solid and will serve as guidance to support our efforts in our responses to climate change.

Excellencies, Lok Chumteav, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is evidence that the Forum we are concluding now has provided us with many opportunities to reinforce our understanding and knowledge about climate change science, its causes and impacts. We now have a better understanding that addressing climate change, as a cross-cutting developmental issue, will require a strategic, integrated, participatory and coordinated approach in planning our responses at all levels. Appropriate policy and legislation are equally important. We further understand that relevant institutions, meaningful finance, good coordination, strong capacity and regional and international cooperation are the necessary prerequisites for translating our plans into actions that will bring concrete and tangible results, the results that will support our move towards sustainable development under a changing climate.

During the opening ceremony, Samdech Akka Moha Sena Padei Techo Hun Sen, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Cambodia and Honorary Chair of the NCCC, praised us for the achievements we have made in our effort to prepare the Cambodia climate change strategic plan, which he has launched as the national level planning document to guide climate change responses in Cambodia. He further provided key strategic recommendations to support the operationalisation of this plan with a particular focus on resource mobilisation, research and development, technology transfer, capacity building and public awareness. These recommendations and the outputs of this 3-day Forum will constitute a solid foundation for our actions to respond to climate change in Cambodia. The vivid picture of the victims of the recent flood and the damages it has inflicted to our society is more than enough for all of us to urgently and immediately act at all levels.

Since the Second National Forum on Climate Change back in 2011, Cambodia has achieved impressive results in its efforts to address climate change. Climate change has become an important theme of the national development agenda and has been gradually integrated into sub-national and community levels via different approaches. Cambodia has mobilised over 250 million US Dollars for climate change responses. The report of the 3-day Forum proceedings indicates that this Forum has brought very satisfactory outputs thanks to the active participation of all the participants from Government, Development Partners, NGOs, academia and the private sector, particularly the meaningful contribution of the co-chairs, national and international experts-presenters, who have kindly accepted our invitation to share knowledge and experience, making this Forum lively and enriching. All these will contribute to our way forward to address climate change, particularly the implementation of the CCCSP, our national planning reference to guide climate change responses by all stakeholders.

The tasks ahead are many: climate change policy development, technical and institutional capacity strengthening, research and development, reinforcing our coordination and partnership, actual implementation of priority measures and up-scaling, resource mobilisation, education and awareness raising, and climate change international negotiations, particularly preparation of the country's positions towards CoP-19 in Warsaw, Poland next week. Of course, we shall not consider this or the subsequent Forums as the end result or a stand-alone event, but rather as an inseparable component of our effort to address climate change, where we can share updated information and experiences, review our progress and failures, discuss ways forwards, and promote our coordination and partnership. In a situation where resources are scarce and demand is high, strong coordination is fundamental for effective climate change responses among Government, development partners, civil society, academia and the private sector. Harmonization among development partners, as a core aid effectiveness principle, should also be applied to climate change cooperation. In addition, I want to stress the important role of the public-private partnership in implementing climate responses. For this reason, the Government is committed to building an enabling environment for a meaningful participation of the private sector in both mitigation and adaptation responses.

I wish to reiterate our commitment to work with all partners to address climate change. The fact that Cambodia is a least developed country tells us that we cannot afford to ignore climate change since the cost of ignoring it will far exceed the cost of taking actions now. This is the wisdom of the precautionary Principle, which is highly relevant in our context. Of course, the world is not very fair to us: our contribution to this problem is negligible both historically and in the future. We are indeed the victim of a problem of which we are not the cause. Nevertheless, we wish to be a part of the solution of this global problem. Because addressing climate change is not an option, it is the only way to survive and possibly prosper. Because we believe that addressing climate change makes sense, politically, economically, environmentally and technologically. Because we believe that we can turn the climate change crisis into a new opportunity for a greener, low-carbon, resilient, equitable, sustainable and knowledge-based development.

Within its legal mandate given by the Royal Government, the National Climate Change Committee with the Ministry of Environment acting as its Chair is ready to responsibly fulfill its mission, to enhance cooperation, coordination, and partnership in an equitable, transparent, efficient and credible manner. We are committed to enhancing and ensuring an enabling environment for all the climate change actors to have an equitable opportunity in participating in the efforts to address this life threatening challenge.

In conclusion, on behalf of the NCCC and senior management and staff of the Ministry of Environment, I would like to express our gratitude to all the participants, co-chairs, presenters and resource persons for their valuable time to participate in this National Forum to share their knowledge and experience; actively contribute in the discussions; and provide valuable comments. I particularly thank the representatives of the private sector, national and international organisations and NGOs for participating in the climate change fair. I profoundly thank all the NCCC members and staff of the Forum Secretariat for their hard work to successfully organise this forum. Finally, my special thanks go to our sponsors, namely the European Union, UNDP, Sida, Danida, UNEP, NGO Forum, DanChurchAid and CCCN for their generous financial support to this Forum.

I wish Excellencies, Lok Chumteav, ladies, gentlemen, and all the participants the four Buddha's gems and allow me to officially declare this Forum closed. Thank you.