
USAID HIGHLIGHTS

USAID supports the National Workshop on Mechanisms and Policies for Combating Trafficking in Persons

Phnom Penh
February 05, 2008



USAID Mission Director to Cambodia Erin Soto, delivers her remarks during the National Workshop on Mechanism and Policies for Combating Trafficking in Persons, February 05, 2008.

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) in partnership with the Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC) Ministry of Interior (MOI) kicked off the first National Workshop on Mechanisms and Policies for Combating Trafficking in Persons under the leadership of the National Task Force against Trafficking (NTF).

The National Workshop for provincial officials and police officers was successfully held at the Sunway Hotel in Phnom Penh. Total attendance was almost 200 people including provincial governors and deputy governors, representative from various ministries, police officers, UN agencies, NGOs and donors.

His Excellency Sar Kheng, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior, and Ms. Erin Soto, USAID Mission Director to Cambodia, welcomed the participants, with both speakers emphasizing the great success made recently by the Royal Government of Cambodia to combat trafficking. Other high level officials were also at the event.

In her remarks, USAID Mission Director Erin Soto applauded the government's efforts when she said, "In only one year, the RGC has made tremendous strides in addressing trafficking with many significant, national level initiative underway: like the establishment of the National Taskforce against Trafficking in Persons, the ratification of the Palermo protocol, the establishment of the High Level Working Group, the new Trafficking in Persons law and the decision to establish provincial taskforces comprised of multi-disciplinary teams. She noted that without the RGC's full cooperation, "the new law and decrees against trafficking will not have their intended impact. The real fight against trafficking must be done in villages, neighborhoods, towns and cities by governors, police, courts and all relevant ministries."

Spirited presentations by H.E. Sar Kheng, H.E. You Ay, head of the Task Force, and other high ranking officials helped to reinforce the message that local authorities are vital to the fight against trafficking.

The National Workshop aimed to provide a forum through which the Ministry of Interior could inform its provincial authorities of recent national initiatives to combat trafficking and their subsequent responsibilities at the local level. The workshop emphasized recent successes and initiatives, including the adoption of the new Law on Suppression of Human Trafficking and Sexual Exploitation; the establishment of provincial trafficking taskforces; the upcoming national information campaign, a CTIP-led initiative in partnership with the Government, that will be launched in March; and the plan make Cambodia's provinces ChildSafe through the program managed by Friends International.