

*Informal Thematic Debate of the UN General Assembly "Climate Change as a Global Challenge"
Statement by H.E. Dr Kosal Sea, Permanent Representative of Cambodia
August 1, 2007*

*Madam President,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,*

First of all, allow me to join the previous delegates to express our deepest thanks to you, Madam President of the General Assembly for convening this important debate on climate change.

We note with great interest the initiatives taken by the Secretary-General, H.E. Mr. Ban Ki-moon, and appreciate his determination to focus on this global challenge.

Madam President,

Cambodia ratified the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in 1995 and acceded to the Kyoto Protocol on 4th July 2002. To coordinate and implement national climate change policies, greenhouse gas mitigation, clean development mechanism (CDM) inventory and climate change adaptation projects, the Royal Government of Cambodia established the Cambodian Climate Change Office (CCCO) in 2003.

As an agrarian and least developed country, Cambodia is very vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. In recent years, we have seen the serious effects of climate change on peoples' livelihood with unprecedented, severe droughts and floods. These disasters have caused increasing losses to our fragile economy.

To meet these difficulties and unique challenges, the Royal Government of Cambodia is preparing comprehensive policies and strategies by conducting a detailed study of the existing conditions and their trends, setting up data and information management system for the coastal zone, designing an applicable plan for the country for adaptation to climate change and expanding cooperation and networks with regional partners to exchange information, experiences, and to jointly address common problems of climate change.

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We have recently taken our first steps in developing our National Adaptation Programme of Action to Climate Change (NAPA). The climate hazards addressed by NAPA include floods, drought, windstorm high-tide, salt water intrusion, and malaria. Two priority adaptation projects have been identified (1) Development and improvement of community irrigation systems; and (2) Rehabilitation of multiple-use reservoirs.

Cambodia is also strongly committed to global efforts to reduce green-house gas emissions and we believe the entry into force of the Kyoto Protocol was a turning point in global efforts to tackle climate change. As a party to the Protocol, Cambodia considers the Clean Development Mechanisms (CDM) as an opportunity to help achieving the national sustainable development and poverty reduction objectives, while at the same time reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

My Government is also actively developed and involved in promoting forestry programmes such as reforestation, promotion of participation of local communities in protecting and managing forest resources and optimal allocation of land resources. The recycling practices for better waste management, conserving water and minerals resources are included in our sustainable development strategies as well.

While most parts of the country have been identified as vulnerable to the climate change, assistance coverage programmes, dissemination systems for climate forecast are very limited. We experience inadequate technology and human resources, especially in the technical and institutional capacity of government and local communities, as well as lack of financial funds.

Madam President,

It is the fact that the challenges caused by climate change are beyond the capacity of my country and other developing countries to address them on our own. In full support to the Statement made by His Excellency the Minister of Environment of

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Pakistan on behalf of the Group 77 and China, my Delegation wishes to reiterate that in order to enable the developing countries to pursue sustainable development and to adapt to climate change, the developed countries should assist them in their efforts to enhance capacity building, provide adequate financing for adaptation and mitigation and ensure access and transfer of technologies required for this purpose at affordable terms.

My Delegation notes with interest the decisions taken by the eight industrialized nations at their Summit in Heiligendamm, to bring about substantial greenhouse gas emission cuts by 2050. We look forward to the high-level meeting on climate change, scheduled on the 24th of this September. We are also hopeful, that the outcome of the Bali Conference in December 2007, which will focus on the needs of developing countries, will be fruitful to all of us.

Thank you Madam President