



KINGDOM OF CAMBODIA
PERMANENT MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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**Statement
of**

**H.E. Dr. Widhya Chem
Ambassador, Permanent Representative
of the Kingdom of Cambodia
to the United Nations**

**Agenda Item 61: Advancement of Women
Third Committee
61st Session of the United Nations General Assembly**

**New York
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Mr. Chairman,

1. Please allow me to join previous speakers in extending our congratulations to you, Mr. Chairman, and other members of the Bureau, for your recent elections to the Bureau of the Third Committee of the General Assembly 61st Session. We are confident that your distinguished experience and ability will guide all of us in the efforts to achieve successful results in this session.
2. Cambodia would also like to align itself with the statement delivered earlier by the representative of South Africa on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

Mr. Chairman,

3. When the leaders of the world converged in 2005 at the World Summit, they reaffirmed that gender equality plays a key role in the achievement of sustainable development, peace, and international security. They further recognized that gender mainstreaming is an important tool for achieving gender equality and it should be promoted in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programs in all political, economic, and social spheres.
4. In response to the calls of the Summit, the Royal Government has adopted the National Strategic Development Plan for the period of 2006-2010, which consolidates the Socio-economic Development Plan, National Poverty Reduction Strategy and the Millennium Development Goals into a single planning and monitoring framework.
5. The NSDP recognizes that a speedy removal of latent and overt barriers inherent in gender disparities is very critical to poverty reduction. The Ministry of Women's Affairs (MoWA) is the leading national mechanism in the promotion and protection of the rights of Cambodian women through the elaboration of responsive policies and strategies, the enhancement of the economic empowerment for women, the development of related laws and law enforcement mechanisms to protect the rights of women, the promotion of HIV/AIDS prevention, the control of nutrition of women and girls, and the increase of women's and girls' participation in both formal and non-formal educations.
6. As a result of these diligent efforts, Cambodia has made positive progress in some areas, such as reducing poverty and improving the livelihoods of the

people in general. Cambodia's poverty level has declined significantly from 39% in 1993 to 28% in 2004. In 2005, the IMF reported that Cambodia's economy grew at a rate of 13.4%, after having had a regular increase of GDP from 7% to 10% since the launch of our own MDGs. The Royal Government of Cambodia has projected that GDP growth will reach 8% in 2006. The above-mentioned achievements have also impacted the women's health condition positively as reflected in the significant reduction of the number of women receiving gynecology-obstetrics inpatient care, from 12.2% in 2000 to 2.7% in 2004, while the hospital maternal mortality rate has been stable at 0.1% in the past five years.

7. On their part, the Cambodia National Assembly and Senate have recently adopted Law on Prevention of Domestic Violence and Protection of the Victims. This new law plays a significant role in the enforcement of measures to ensure safety for domestic violence victims, who unfortunately are mostly women and children.

Mr. Chairman,

8. Cambodia highly appreciates the continued contributions of UNIFEM and UNFPA in the efforts to promote gender equality and women empowerment as well as the accomplishments of United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW) in advancing the cause of women in the world, in particular in developing countries.
9. Information, technology and trade opportunities, which are the ingredients of economic progress, have become more accessible in the age of globalization. However, with the current limitations and obstacles that women face, many continue to be left behind and suffer from poverty, poor working conditions and job insecurity. With the empty promise of wealth and better future, accompanied by the opening of national borders, women are more susceptible to become victims of trafficking.
10. Cambodia believes that the Beijing Declaration and Program of Action remain as the main benchmark for the efforts of Governments and members of the international community to further the advancement of women. Efforts to achieve their objectives require a balanced and comprehensive approach. The issue of gender equality is crucially important for the achievement of sustainable and long-term development.
11. It is in this spirit that I would like to reiterate our call for the international community to remain firm in their commitment to assist developing nations

and honour its commitments to ODA, in particular to Least Developed Countries under the Brussels Program of Action. These concerted efforts are indeed required in the successful achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, and in particular, in the improvement of lives of women.

Thank You.