

**OPENING REMARK BY
HIS EXCELLENCY MR. KHIEU MUTH
SECRETARY OF STATE
FOR THE ENVIRONMENT
KINGDOM OF CAMBODIA**

TO THE

**WORKSHOP 2010 OF THE ASIAN
NETWORK FOR PREVENTION OF ILLEGAL
TRANSBOUNDARY MOVEMENT OF
HAZARDOUS WASTES**

**HELD IN
SIEM REAP, CAMBODIA
30 NOVEMBER- 2 DECEMBER 2010**

- Your Excellency
- Mr. Kazuhiro Yoshida, Director, Office of Waste Disposal Management, Waste Management and Recycling Department, Ministry of Environment, Government of Japan
- Mr. Aboejoewono Aboeprajitno, Director of the Basel Convention Regional Center for South-East Asia (BCRC-SEA)
- International guests, distinguished participants, ladies and gentlemen

This morning, it is my great honor and pleasure to be with you all at the opening session of the **Workshop 2010 of the Asian Network for Prevention of Illegal Transboundary Movement of Hazardous Wastes.**

On behalf of the Ministry of Environment and the Royal Government of Cambodia, I would like to extend my warm and cordial welcome to you all to Cambodia, in particular the glorious Siem Reap, the City of Angkor Wat Temple and complex renowned for the world cultural heritage, and I hope that you will spend time enjoying visits during your stays here. I would also like to express my sincere appreciation to the Ministry of Environment of the Government of Japan and the Basel Convention Regional Center for South-East Asia for their strong support and cooperation in organizing today's workshop.

Honorable Guests, ladies and gentlemen.

The Royal Government of Cambodia has placed a high priority on health and environmental quality that necessitates sound environmental management of hazardous wastes within the framework of our national development capacities and efforts. The long-term vision of the Kingdom is to address this issue, largely related to protection of environmental quality and public health. Ensuring such quality, this greatly contributes to poverty reduction across the country, and assists it to quickly achieve the Millennium Development Goals and the balanced sustainable environment and socio-economic development of the country following the Governmental Rectangular Strategic Policy in Phase II.

The promotion of hazardous wastes management is very important for the protection of environmental quality and public health. We realize its vital role in maintaining and conserving healthy ecology, natural resources and the river system whereby the world is increasingly focused on sustainable development and sound environmental management. In this respect, the Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC) is seriously taking the prevention of environmental pollution, particularly caused by hazardous wastes as having paramount importance to poverty reduction and zero-waste target for sustainable development. So, even though Cambodia has competing domestic issues to deal with, such as social and economic affairs, the government is committed to fully participate with the worldwide community to resolve global environmental problems through international, regional and national conventions, agreements, declarations and existing mechanisms.

It is important to note that hazardous wastes become an unresolved issue and pose a great challenge to all nations within the region. Despite this, Cambodia ratified the Basel Convention in 2001, and we are in a strong position to conduct studies on

any potential adverse environmental impacts. We also try our best to avoid any illegal imports of hazardous wastes into our country, since we had sour and bitter experience of the illegal imports of three hundred thousand tons of mercury wastes into the country in 1998.

Please, bear in mind that the transboundary movement of hazardous wastes is not an issue for any single state; it is a cross-border matter affecting all countries in the whole region. Dealing with this challenging matter, all nations within the region have an urgent need to closely cooperate and coordinate with each other and act together to control such movements. As a Party to the Basel Convention, the RGC is committed to cooperate with other nation states in order to improve the monitoring and control of the transboundary movement of hazardous wastes. The government also remains highly committed to implementing **Samdech Akka Moha Sena Padei Techo Hun Sen, Prime Minister of Cambodia**'s precious recommendation that "**Cambodia is not a dumping site of foreign hazardous wastes**".

Today, with the financial support kindly provided by the Government of Japan, we have taken a significant step forward through the organization of this **Workshop 2010 of the Asian Network for Prevention of Illegal Transboundary Movement of Hazardous Wastes** with multi-stakeholder participants from Government Officers and Officials within our Region. On this special occasion, I would like to express my gratitude to the Government of Japan for their generous financial support for this Workshop.

Honorable Guests, ladies and gentlemen.

Even though this workshop is for only three days, I am confident that this event will be a great forum for discussion and enable the participants to better understand the Sound Environmental Management of hazardous wastes, especially the prevention of illegal transboundary movement of hazardous wastes. I do hope that the workshop will provide and open up an opportunity for all of us to develop a strategy for the implementation of hazardous wastes-monitoring procedures as well as establish national and regional capacity to fully engage all concerned agencies and institutions in the Basel Convention implementation. Your presence today reaffirms our commitment to building capacity as well as facilitating discussion and collaboration between participants. Let me confirm that Cambodia will make every effort to foster participations from all sectors to actively contribute to effective control of illegal transboundary movement of hazardous wastes and the country, thereby, reaps the benefits of preventing environmental and health risks posed by hazardous wastes.

I am highly indebted to the Ministry of Environment of the Government of Japan and the Basel Convention Regional Center for South-East Asia for their invaluable support for this workshop and I am especially grateful to the International experts for devoting their valuable time to sharing their experience with the Delegates.

I would like to thank the Staff and Officials from Cambodia's Ministry of Environment and Basel Convention Regional Center for South-East Asia that have worked so hard to organize this workshop. My thanks are also extended to the Officials and Officers from other Government Ministries and Institutions and you all here.

Finally, I would like to express my best wishes to the Workshop Organizers and the Delegates, wishing you a success during your discussions. I hope that you all enjoy a pleasant stay in the historical and ancient city of Siem Reap, and explore more of the fascinating tourist places in your trip. Now I would hereby declare the official opening of **“Workshop 2010 of the Asian Network for Prevention of Illegal Transboundary Movement of Hazardous Wastes”**.

Thank you.