

Remarks by Douglas Gardner
UNDP Resident Representative and UN Resident Coordinator
At the signing ceremony on the Special Support to the Cambodian side of
the budget for the Extraordinary Chambers of the Courts of Cambodia
15 June 2006

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am very pleased to see this progress in establishing the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia. The start up phase is well advanced. We are pleased that Michelle Lee has assumed the position of Deputy Director of Administration for the ECCC, working closely with her national counterpart. H. E. Sean Visoth.

Today we are signing an agreement that is yet another step forward for the realization of this important trial – a trial to finally bring to closure a dark chapter of Cambodia's modern history and to boost legal and judicial reform in Cambodia.

The Royal Government of Cambodia and the UN have traveled a long way together to be where we are here today. And, as you know, the UN side of the budget (\$43m) is almost totally subscribed. On the Cambodian side, the Royal Government has received external funding from India and Thailand to meet the costs of US\$13.3 million to implement the international agreement establishing the ECCC.

Today, we are signing an agreement that will enable the channeling of funds through UNDP to the ECCC of approximately US\$5 million from the UN and €1 million from the European Commission member states.

For this to happen, extensive work has been undertaken in order to ensure that there are sound systems in place for the management of these funds. A recent independent mission was conducted in collaboration with the ECCC to assess capacities including finance, accounting, human resources and procurement. The outcome of this mission confirmed that the financial management systems in place are sound. The mission also recommended regular spot checks and audits to be conducted by an independent audit firm for monitoring and to ensure proper mechanisms stay in place to assure contributors on the use of their funds.

The purpose of the funding agreement today is to finance mainly salaries of all national staff including judges, prosecutors, co-investigating judges, legal assistants and support staff. Some of the funds may cover necessary alteration and repair of premises as well as network cabling.

The ECCC, as HE Sok An said recently, will be a unique opportunity to serve as a model court for Cambodia and the advancement of the legal and judicial reforms. Indeed, the Khmer Rouge Trial is an excellent opportunity for the Cambodian judiciary to become more familiar with international standards for the administration of justice. It is also an opportunity to rebuild the trust of Cambodians in the justice system which is critical to ensure and protect human rights.

In this context we note that legal and judicial reform is a pillar of the government's rectangular strategy, and the National Strategic Development Plan.

The draft criminal procedure code has been recently completed and it is now under consideration at the Inter-Ministerial Committee. We acknowledge this efforts and encourages the government of Cambodia to expedite its enactment which is of great relevance to the proceedings of the ECCC.

We are very pleased to support the ECCC and we would like to thank, the UN member states once again for their willingness to utilize former UNTAC funds for this purpose and the members of the European Union and the European Commission for their contribution to the Cambodian share of the budget. The commitment and generosity of the international community are greatly appreciated to ensure that justice is done.

Thank you