KINGDOM OF CAMBODIA
Nation Religion King

Statement to COP23
By His Excellency Khut Chandara, Head of the Cambodian Delegation, Under Secretary of State, Ministry of Environment
Bonn, Germany, November 2017
ঌঌ✸ৰৰ

His Excellency Mr. President, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Royal Government of Cambodia would like to express our sincere gratitude to the Government of Fiji for the COP23 president and the Government of Germany and its people for very warm hospitality and hosting this important event in the beautiful City of Bonn.

Mr. President!

2015 was a landmark year for global development, with the adoption of the Paris Agreement on Climate Change. In 2016, many of our countries including Cambodia have confirmed their commitment by ratifying the Paris Agreement, which has now entered into force much earlier than expected. We need concrete mechanisms to deliver on the Paris commitments and to track progress.

I hope that 2017 will be the year when these commitments are put into action. As His Majesty the King of Cambodia mentioned at the Paris Conference, "climate change is the defining challenge of our time […] and almost every aspect of human development faces major threats from climate change, including the seventeen Sustainable Development Goals […] adopted by the UN General Assembly".

This not a choice that we have, but a necessity. The clock is ticking, and every year that passes without decisive action increases the impacts of climate change, and makes the achievement of the SDGs more difficult. Just this week, the World Meteorological Organization confirmed that 2016 had been the hottest year on record, for the third year in a row. Record heat waves and droughts have been observed in a number of countries, including Cambodia.

Least developed countries are particularly the most vulnerable to the negative impact of climate change. According to UNDP's Human Development Index, Cambodia has been one of the top seven countries with the highest improvement in human development over the past 25 years.

But climate change is now a major threat to our economy and society. Our water resources are under stress, which has impacts on both agriculture and health in rural areas, with women and children among the most vulnerable groups. Higher temperatures can impact worker productivity and health in key sectors of our economy, including not only agriculture, but also manufacturing and construction. Extreme weather events have become more frequent and the costs of maintaining and upgrading our infrastructures have gone up.

Although Cambodia is responsible for a negligible amount of global emissions – less than 0.1% – the Royal Government of Cambodia is fully committed to international efforts against climate change. Cambodia is taking action in line with its Nationally Determined Contribution to promote a low-carbon economy, and put in place adaptation measures.

Mr. President, we cannot face this challenge alone. Developed countries have a critical role to play in making available the financial and technological resources that will allow us collectively to address climate change, and reach our human development targets.

 More human development in developing countries is a win-win situation for all. It creates more economic opportunities, and reduces risks to international peace and stability. At a time when some developed countries are tempted to reduce their global engagement, our message to them is that the road to prosperity and further human development requires more engagement from them, not less. Climate change is a global issue, it is not an issue that you can just run away from. Investments in the climate change agenda, both public and private, will deliver immense development and economic benefits. Any further delays will see the costs increase exponentially for our economies and our people. we need as an LDC is to see better and faster access to international climate finance, technology transfers and capacity development support from developed countries.

We hope that our work here will deliver the concrete implementation mechanisms that we need.

Thank you