



**KINGDOM OF CAMBODIA**  
**PERMANENT MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

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**Statement  
of**

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

**on**

**High-level Event on the Millennium Development Goals  
63<sup>rd</sup> Session of the United Nations General Assembly**

**New York  
Thursday, 25 September 2008**

Co-Chairs,

1. My highest regards to H.E. the President of the Republic of Malawi, H.E. the President of the Government of the Kingdom of Spain and wish to extend my sincere appreciation for co-chairing Round Table-1 on Poverty and Hunger at this High-level Event on the Millennium Development Goals.
2. I wish to start by quoting the numbers from the World Development Report 2008 in order to give us some useful information. According to this Report, there are “three of every four poor people in developing countries live in rural areas...” or “2.1 billion [people] living on less than \$2 a day and 880 million [people] on less than \$1 a day...” At the same time, we have witnessed the growing gap between the developed and developing countries due to the speed of globalization and to some extent the concentration of wealth in the world.
3. Furthermore, the gap between the developed and developing countries has also been aggravated by the ongoing food crisis in many parts of the world due to the skyrocketing oil prices, high commodity prices, climate change affecting the crop production, and diversion of food crops for bio-fuel production. There is no doubt that all of these have greatly exacerbated poverty in the developing countries, especially the least developed countries of the world.

Co-Chairs,

4. I strongly believe that the world cannot continue its business as usual because the widening gap between the developed and developing world is more and more pronounced and in a more rapid pace. I am pleased to note that World Bank President Robert Zoellick warned in July of this year that the rising food and oil prices posed a serious “crisis for the world’s poor.”
5. Then, we should ask ourselves the profound question of: “What is the ultimate solution to this ongoing global problem?” In the face of this combination of real challenges - poverty, high oil prices, and food crisis, I believe that the world leaders need to come up with global measures, in particular those countries that are more likely to be less affected by the prolonged energy and food crisis.

6. If there is no concrete or real global solution to the current challenges, it is very likely to become a human security problem for the whole world. At the same time, we should anticipate the growing problem of illegal migration by those who have nothing to lose and who need to fill the stomachs for their own survival and of their families. We see this problem everyday on TV, in which many people are from the poor countries taking their chance to migrate to the developed countries, such as those in Europe and other Western countries because of poverty and hunger.
7. Therefore, the current problems of food crisis and high oil prices have serious implications on global poverty and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), both collectively and individually.

Co-Chairs,

8. For Cambodia, peace and stability are the prerequisites for sustainable development. Poverty reduction is the top priority for the policy of the Royal Government of Cambodia. Through its National Strategic Development Plan (NSDP), the Cambodian Millennium Development Goals (CMDGs), and the "Rectangular Strategy," Cambodia has worked hard to reduce poverty in order to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. Overall, the poverty level in the country has declined by 10 percent in just ten years. Then, it further declined from 34% in 2004 to about 31% in 2007, thanks to its NSDP. Cambodia hopes that it will realize its goal of reducing poverty to the level of 19.5 percent by 2015.
9. Cambodia has enjoyed steady economic growth, which is important for development and prosperity of the country so that it could liberate its people from poverty. In fact, Cambodia's economic growth rate from 2000 to 2006 was at the rate of 9.4%, substantially increased each year. In 2007, the economic growth rate was 10.2%.

10. To ensure food security in the country, the Royal Government of Cambodia had made great efforts to increase agricultural production through various measures, such as the promotion of crop intensification and diversification, family livestock-raising, aquaculture, and so forth. As a result, Cambodia had been producing rice surplus since 1996. Last year, with production of 6.72 million tons of rice, which exceeded the domestic consumption of some 2.57 million tons. Rice yield has also increased from 2.1 tons per hectare to 2.62 tons per hectare. I wish to underline that food security is very important for combating poverty in the country.
11. To increase food supply for its domestic consumption and to ensure rice surplus for export, Cambodia has put in place a number of measures to boost its food production, such as management of rice stock, food security and food supply safety net; study of rice export management policy, rice price control and subsidy; facilitating and supporting farmers' accessibility to agricultural inputs and credit; encouraging more investment in agricultural sector, especially investment in irrigation system; and provision of education and transfer of new agricultural technologies to farmers.
12. In essence, I believe what is needed for Cambodia is more investment, more technology and know-how, and a more appropriate policy to ensure food security and thus to reduce poverty.

Thank you.