

**Speech by H.E. Mr. KUMAMARU Yuji**  
**Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Japan**  
**to the Kingdom of Cambodia**  
**At the Ground-Breaking Ceremony**  
**for the Project for Expansion of National Maternal and Child Health Center**  
**Phnom Penh, June 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2015**

- His Excellency Dr. Mam Bunheng, Minister of Health,
- Excellencies, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen.

I am delighted to attend this ground breaking ceremony for the Project for Expansion of National Maternal and Child Health Center.

First of all, I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to H.E. Dr. Mam Bunheng, Minister of Health, and the officials of the Ministry of Health as well as the staff of the National Maternal and Child Health Center for organizing the ceremony.

The Government of Japan supported the construction of National Maternal and Child Health Center in 1995. Japan has also been continuously supporting the capacity development of the personnel engaged in maternal and child health since 1995, both at the center and at the provincial hospitals. We believe that maternal and child health is critically important for healthy growth of the children. For this reason, the Government of Japan has been placing priority in this field for long time.

I am delighted that Cambodia has achieved significant improvement in the maternal and child health sector in recent years. I would like to congratulate Cambodia for having achieved two health sector goals of the Millennium Development Goals: reducing maternal mortality rate and under-five mortality rate. This is most significant achievement that Cambodia should be proud of. We would be most pleased if our support in the past made some contributions to Cambodia achieving MDGs.

The new project for which we have ceremony today, intends to make further assistance to the National Maternal and Child Health Center through 1) the construction of a new training center; 2) the renovation of the existing facilities; 3) the provision of equipment. It is our strong hope that our assistance will be fully made use of and it will contribute to upgrading the quality of health services at the center.

I sincerely hope that the construction will proceed in accordance with intended schedule, so that the improved National Maternal and Child Health Center will start at an early date its service to meet the health needs of Cambodian people and to enhancement of the training function.

Finally, I would like to conclude my speech by strongly hoping that this assistance from the people and the Government of Japan will further strengthen the close and friendly relations existing between Japan and the Kingdom of Cambodia.

Thank you very much.