

**Speech by Mr. TSUGAWA Takahisa
Minister / Deputy Chief of Mission,
Embassy of Japan in the Kingdom of Cambodia
at the Inauguration Ceremony of Kampong Thkol Pre- School,
Kandal, July 15, 2015**

- Venerable monks,
- H.E. Mr. Mao Phirun, Governor of Kandal Province,
- Mr. Sam Sarey Rath, Committee, Early Childhood Care and Development, Ministry of Education Youth and Sport,
- Ms. Ky Samphy, Executive Director, Krouser Yoeung Association
- Excellencies, distinguished guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my great pleasure for me to attend today's inauguration ceremony for the construction of three pre-school buildings at Kampong Thkol, Kbal Koh and Pong Taek with the presence of H.E. Mr. Mao Phirun, Governor of Kandal Province and Mr. Sam Sarey Rath, Committee, Early Childhood Care and Development, Ministry of Education Youth and Sport.

Every child has the right to receive education as basic human rights and it is important to ensure equal access to education throughout the country. Investment in Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) has a high rate of return. Therefore the government of Japan places a high value in this field. The Royal Government of Cambodia has been making its efforts to improve the quality of ECCD for the children under 6 based on the national plan of "Education for all". However, the improvement of education both in quantity and quality is a long-term process which requires continued efforts. The Government of Japan has been supporting the efforts of the Cambodian Government to improve the education sector through various schemes including Grass Roots Grant Assistance projects and this is the 21st education project in Kandal Province.

I understand that those 3 pre-schools used to use the classrooms of nearby primary schools because there was no facility available. classrooms. The construction of 3 new school

buildings with total 9 classrooms and sanitation facilities enables all those children to study in a safe and hygienic environment.

I hope that this project will contribute to improve educational environment for the children aged under 6 and it leads to reducing drop-out rates of primary school students and human resource development of this country.

Finally, I would like to express my sincere appreciation to all the people who have contributed to the smooth implementation of the project. I strongly hope that the school buildings will be maintained properly as a symbol of the friendship between Japan and Kingdom of Cambodia and it will further strengthen the friendly relations between Japanese and Cambodian people.

Thank you very much for your attention.