



Embassy of Japan in the Kingdom of Cambodia

Speech by H.E. Mr. Masafumi KUROKI
Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Japan
to the Kingdom of Cambodia
On the Occasion of the Inauguration Ceremony of
Sihanoukville Port Special Economic Zone Development Project
At Sihanoukville Autonomous Port
May 1, 2012

- Venerable Monks,
- Samdech Akka Moha Sena Padei Techo HUN Sen, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Cambodia and Lok Chumteav Kittiprittbandit BUN Rany HUNSEN,
- His Excellency Mr. TRAM Iv Tek, Minister of Public Works and Transport,
- Excellencies, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great pleasure for me to attend today's inauguration ceremony of the Sihanoukville Port Special Economic Zone and the Reminiscence Ceremony of the 126th International Labor Day.

First of all, I would like to express my deep gratitude to Samdech Akka Moha Sena Padei Techo HUN Sen, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Cambodia and Lok Chumteav Kittiprittbandit BUN Rany HUNSEN for their high presence at this ceremony.

Sihanoukville Port is a very symbolic project of Japanese cooperation in Cambodia. Since 1996, Japanese Government has been providing its financial cooperation for the construction of the Container Terminal and the Multipurpose Terminal as well as its technical cooperation for an efficient management of the Port.

Today, we celebrate the completion of the Sihanoukville Special Economic Zone which was financed by Japanese soft loan of 3.6 billion Japanese yen, equivalent of USD 45 million.

The Special Economic Zone is expected to attract foreign direct investment for the production and the export of the manufactured products. Direct connection of the Port is one of the advantages of this SEZ by reducing the cost and time for transport of materials and products. High quality of infrastructure such as water supply and sewage treatment facilities in the Zone is another attracting point of this SEZ.

I have heard that Ojitex Harta Packaging Ltd., a Japanese affiliated company producing cardboard boxes, had already decided to operate at this SEZ. I strongly hope that many more investors, particularly from Japan will come to invest in this SEZ and contribute to the creation of new employment, the diversification of industrial production and the promotion of Cambodian exports.

Completion of the construction of the SEZ is not the end but the beginning of the Project. I hope that the Sihanoukville Autonomous Port Authority will make best efforts to promote the SEZ to the potential investors and attract them as soon as possible.

Under the wise and strong leadership of Samdech Techo HUN Sen, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Cambodia, Cambodia has recorded significantly high economic growth for the past decade and even overcome the Global Economic Crisis of 2009 to return to growth track. The image of Cambodia has completely changed from the country with a difficult past to the one with great potentials and opportunities. Cambodia is now drawing global attention as a new destination of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI).

I take an example of Japanese investment. For a long time, Japanese investment in Cambodia remained at a low level but since 2010, we have more and more Japanese companies investing in this country. In 2010, 6 new Japanese investment were approved with the total amount of 35 million US dollars and in 2011, 19 new investment were approved with the total amount of 75 million US dollars. I am expecting much more investment from Japan this year.

Cambodia is part of the Mekong region and the development of this region is important to achieve the ASEAN Economic Community by 2015. Considering the importance of the development of Mekong Region countries, Japanese

Government organized Japan-Mekong countries Summit Meeting on 21st of April in Tokyo, in which Prime Minister Semdech Techo Hun Sen participated with his delegation.

On that occasion, Japanese government made a commitment to provide a total amount of 600 billion Japanese yen, equivalent to 7.4 billion US dollars, as development assistance for five Mekong countries from 2013 to 2015. Infrastructure projects which are related with the connectivity and the promotion of trade and investment are one of the high priority sectors of Japanese assistance for Mekong region countries.

For Cambodia, Japan will continue to put high priority of assistance, among others, on the development of Southern Economic Corridor which goes from Ho Chi Min through Phnom Penh to Bangkok as well as the development of Sihanoukville Port including this SEZ. I do hope that Sihanoukville Port together with this SEZ will play a vital role for the promotion of trade and investment and contribute to the dynamic economic development of Cambodia, which can create decent job opportunities for the growing young population of this country.

Last but not least, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to all the people who have contributed to the completion of this Project and I strongly hope that this SEZ will remain as a symbol of the long-lasting friendship between Japan and the Kingdom of Cambodia.

And finally, on this occasion of the 126th International Labor Day, I hope to all of you the happiness, good health and prosperity.

Thank you very much for your attention.