

**Speech by Mr. HIGUCHI Yoshihiro,
Minister / Deputy Chief of Mission, Embassy of Japan
In the Kingdom of Cambodia
At the Grant Contract Signing Ceremony for
Japan's Grant Assistance for Grass-Roots Human Security Projects
February 13, 2013**

- Mr. THONG Sarun, Director of the Vocational Training for Alleviation of Poverty and Social Development,
- Ladies and gentlemen,

It is a great pleasure for me to attend this ceremony today for the signing of the contract of the Grant Assistance for the construction of a new school building at the Roleab Primary School, together with the representative of the Vocational Training for Alleviation of Poverty and Social Development. I am particularly glad that the signing is conducted in the special context of this year 2013 which marks the 60th anniversary of Japan-Cambodia Friendship.

This project aims to improve the education environment of the Roleab Primary School by constructing a 5-room concrete school building and sanitation facilities, and installing a water tank. The grant to be provided for this project amounts to USD 77, 283. Among the existing two buildings at the Primary School, the wooden schoolhouse which was constructed in 1993 was dilapidated to the point that it was dangerous to use some of the classes in it. Through the upgrading of the school facilities, the project is expected to benefit over 500 students who are currently studying at the school and also many children who will come to enrol in the future.

Education and human resources development are a foundation for the future development of Cambodia. The Government of Cambodia places a high priority on education, which in fact constitutes one of the four pillars of the Rectangular Strategy for national development. The Government is also making its efforts in increasing primary schools for achieving full dissemination of primary education by 2015.

The Government of Japan, understanding the importance of the education sector for economic and social development in Cambodia, has been assisting the efforts of the Government through assistance both in hardware and software. The new project conforms to this basic policy of Japan towards Cambodia and fits in the philosophy of the assistance scheme designed to promote the human security of the vulnerable population as well.

I hope that the project for which we proceed to sign the grant contract today will be implemented smoothly and effectively by our partner, Vocational Training for Alleviation of Poverty and Social Development, and maintained properly so that as many school children as possible can benefit from the project.

Last but not least, I sincerely hope that the project will further strengthen the friendly relations existing between the Japanese and Cambodian peoples.

Thank you for your attention.