

**Speech by Mr. TAMAMITSU Shinichi,
First Secretary, Chief of Economic & ODA Section,
Embassy of Japan in the Kingdom of Cambodia
On the occasion of the inauguration Ceremony of a new school building
at the Roleab Primary School,
Pursat Province, September 30, 2013**

- H.E. Mr. NOS Sles, Under Secretary of State, Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport,
- H.E. Mr. MAK Ra, Deputy Governor of Pursat Province,
- Excellencies, distinguished guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great pleasure for me to attend today's inauguration ceremony here at the Roleab Primary School, with the presence of H.E. Mr. NOS Sles, Under Secretary of State, Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport. First of all, I would like to express my sincere appreciation to the Deputy Governor and his staff for holding this ceremony.

I am particularly glad that this ceremony is conducted in the special context of this year 2013 which marks the 60th anniversary of Japan-Cambodia Friendship.

For the past two decades since the end of civil war, Cambodia has made strenuous efforts for its reconstruction and development, and it has reached a point where its economic growth rate is one of the highest even in the fast growing ASEAN region. Also in the field of education, both quantity and quality have been continuously improving year by year.

I would like to commend the effort that the Cambodian Government deployed to improve the education sector. The Government of Japan as well, understanding the importance of the education for achieving sustainable development, has been supporting Cambodia's efforts through construction of schools and training of teachers.

In Cambodia, currently there are around 6,900 primary schools, among which 75% are operating on a two shift basis. In addition, a part of these schools have become obsolete and need to be rebuilt for the safety of school children.

I was briefed that the students at the Roleab Primary School had to study in overcrowded classrooms because three classrooms in a dilapidated wooden school building were closed for security reasons. Leaking from the roofs also disturbed the students to concentrate on their study, especially during the rainy season. Now that this new school building with 5 classrooms and sanitation facilities was completed, all the students have become able to study at the safe and comfortable classrooms.

I am hopeful that the students of the Roleab Primary School will enjoy studying under the improved environment and will maintain the school building properly as a symbol of the friendship between Japan and the Kingdom of Cambodia for many years to come.

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 this cooperation will further strengthen the friendly relations between the Cambodian and Japanese people.

Thank you very much for your attention.