

Speech by H.E.Mr. KUMAMARU Yuji
Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Japan
to the Kingdom of Cambodia
at the Inauguration Ceremony of Arun Watei Lower Secondary School,
Phnom Penh, December 24, 2015

- Venerable monks,
- H.E. Mr. Pa Socheatvong, Governor of Phnom Penh Capital City,
- Distinguished guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great pleasure for me to attend the inauguration ceremony of a new building of the Arun Watei Lower Secondary School with the presence of H.E. Mr. Pa Socheatvong, Governor of Phnom Capital City.

Ensuring access to education for all the students in Cambodia is essential for the country's development. I would like to express my sincere respect to the commitment and efforts of the Cambodian Government to prioritize the education sector. Understanding the importance of education for achieving human resources development, the Government of Japan has been supporting Cambodia's efforts through construction of school buildings and teachers' training since 1990s.

Related to lower secondary education, the Japanese Government, in the past, has funded 18 grassroot human security grant projects in Phnom Penh City. The present project at Arun Watei Lower Secondary School is the 19th of such projects. Soon, the Government of Japan will initiate another new project, named "the Project for Expansion of Lower Secondary Schools in Phnom Penh". It will be implemented by JICA and its ground breaking ceremony will be held in January next year. The project, involves providing 8 lower secondary school buildings with 165 classrooms in Phnom Penh City.

I understand that students of Arun Watei Lower Secondary School had to study in the classrooms, which sometimes accommodating more than fifty students due to shortage of classrooms. The construction of this new school building with seven classrooms, equipped with school furniture, enables all the students to study in classrooms with a smaller size of students. Moreover, the project will provide full day schooling, enabling each student to take 32 to 35 hour lessons per week, which is recommended by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport.

I sincerely hope that the new building, furniture and equipments will be well maintained and long lasting. I hope it remains 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 Japanese and Cambodian people.

Thank you very much.