

**Statement by Dr. Mam Bun Heng,
Secretary of State for Health,
Head of delegation of the Kingdom of Cambodia for the
Hague International Forum 8-12 February 1998**

Excellencies, Distinguishes Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen. It gives me great honour to represent the delegation of the Kingdom of Cambodia at such an important event as the International Conference for Population and Development. Cambodia has been implementing

✓ Population and Development activities for many years, and became very active since **1994** with support from UNFPA. Our activities have expended rapidly and we now have a multi-sectoral programme.

✓ The population of Cambodia as in March 1998 was **11.43** million consisting of 5.51 million males and 5.92 million females.

From many studies, we know that the **majority of couples in Cambodia wish to limit their families to three or four children.** However, the average number of children in a family in 1995 was **7.**

Fifty percent of the population of Cambodia is currently aged less than **15** years. The population will double in a period of about **20** years. **In view of this reality, the government of Cambodia regards the Reproductive Health Program as an essential contribution to sustainable development in Cambodia,** not only as a major input for improving the health of today's population but also as a vital component for insuring the well being of the generations to come.

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✓ Our strategy is to ensure that reproductive health inputs are integrated and complement the direction being taken by the **MoH** for health services as a whole including the development of District Health Services and the introduction of managed market reforms. This strategy includes a key component of the **MoH** for co-ordination of Reproductive Health inputs.

The Reproductive Health Program reflects global strategy of Reproductive Health which was endorsed in the Programme of the action of ICPD in 1994. Cambodia government affirmed its support

for this strategy through participation in the Cairo Conference of both the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Planning. Now the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Women Affairs and Representative of Cambodia NGOs participate in this conference.

✓ Recently, following the spirit of Cairo and in commitment to the ICPD goals, a number of laws and population-related policies were developed and adopted: abortion law, women and family law, law against domestic violence, law against sex trafficking, law against drug abuse, National policy on Safe Motherhood, National policy on Birth Spacing, National Policy on STD and AIDS, National policy on Primary Health Care etc...

✓ In 1994 the Nation Maternal and Child Health Centre of the Ministry of Health, with support from UNFPA, established a National Birth Spacing Programme with remarkable speed and efficiency. We have installed quality Birth Spacing services in over 50% of the peripheral facilities in a space of only three years. This was one of our major achievements. Soon to be released-es suggest that modern CPR has increased from 6.9% in 1996 to 16.1% in 1998.

✓ In May 1997 a new Reproductive Health Programme which builds on and expands the activities of the first Birth Spacing Programme, began. The main objective of this project is to expand the availability , accessibility and utilization of Birth Spacing services nation-wide. The project also focuses on two other reproductive health components which have particular relevance for the current Cambodian situation:

- ✓ • To improve and provide services for management and prevention of sexually transmitted diseases including HIV/AIDS as an integrated part of mainstream health services and
- ✓ • To improve maternal care and address the problem of maternal mortality. This component will include training and other inputs designed to reduce unsafe abortion and promote safe abortion within the legal parameters of the 1996 abortion law.

- ✓ **A reproductive health initiative for young people through NGOs is supported by UNFPA/the European Union. Although much has been achieved the road universal access to quality Reproductive Health**
- ✓ **services in Cambodia still long. UNFPA has played a pivotal role in assisting Cambodia and developing Countries in implementing their national programmes and the ICPD goals. But the shortage of resources**
- ✓ **remains a major obstacle to implement the programme of action of ICPD. UNFPA needs more support from the International Community to make the dream of ICPD a reality.**

Excellency, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen.

- ✓ **May I take this opportunity on behalf of the Cambodian Delegation to wish you success and prosperity.**

Thank you for your attention