ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMISSION FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC
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Name of speaker: (Mr.) (Ms.) Chanthol Sen

Country/Organization: Cambodia / Ministry of Public Works & Transport

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Agenda Item No: 9

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Keynote Speech of H.E Mr. SUN CHANTHOL
Senior Minister and Minister for Public Works and Transport of the Kingdom of Cambodia
At the 3rd Transport Ministerial Conference
November 08th, 2016, Moscow, Russia

Excellency Dr. S. Akhtar, Executive Secretary of UNESCAP
H.E. Igor Levitin, Aide to the President of the Russian Federation
Excellency Ministers and Vice Minister;
Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen;

It is my great honour to be accorded a chance to make a short intervention at this 3rd Transport Ministerial Conference today. I wish to take this opportunity to express my appreciation and to congratulate the UNESCAP and Russia for the successful convening of this conference and for the warm hospitality and excellent arrangement accorded to me and my delegation since we arrived. I am confident that today conference will raise the level of our cooperation higher and bring prosperity for all.

Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,
Infrastructure plays a vital role in socio-economic development of the world and lifts millions and millions of people around the world out of poverty through trade, investment, job creations, and brings people closer together.

The Roya Government of Cambodia has been giving high priority in the construction of road network, river water ports, sea ports, airports and rehabilitation of our railways. With the improved infrastructure, our GDP has been growing at an average of 7% per annum during the last two decades and the poverty rates has been reduced to around 15% from almost 40% 10 years ago.

We plan to further invest $12 billion the next 10 years for the infrastructure development; however, financing the infrastructure development is a major issue facing our government. In this connection, we are seeking the support from the development partners and the private sector to help finance the infrastructure development to improve the connectivity within Cambodia and with our neighboring countries to benefit from the ASEAN Economic Community, created at the end of 2015, to realize a single market and single production base for over 630 million consumers in the 10 ASEAN countries.

Allow me to highlight some of the major infrastructure projects that have been built and will be implemented to further enhance connectivity within Cambodia and with the region. We have completed the ASEAN Highway Number 1 connecting Cambodia and Vietnam, ASEAN Highway 11 connecting Laos PDR to our deep sea port of Sihanoukville, ASEAN Highway Number 123 connecting the Southern part of Thailand to our seaport as part of the Southern Economic Corridor. International airport in Phnom Penh, Siem Reap and Sihanoukville have been expanded and modernized to accommodate our open sky policy. Our deep seaport in Sihanoukville has been expanded and new river port in Phnom Penh has been built. We are planning to build a new container port in Sihanoukville to allow 97% of vessels to be able to call on our port.
The first missing link of the SKRL in Cambodia has been rehabilitated and will be in operation by the end of this year connecting our railway with the railway of Thailand. The feasibility study of the second missing link from Phnom Penh to the border of Vietnam was done and we are seeking funding from our development partners to construct this important this missing link.

We also witness the development of private ports and ICD along the Asian Highways. Additionally, a number of SEZ projects are approved by government; some are under construction, other are in operation. These facilities will enhance the logistic systems in Cambodia.

Hard infrastructure is not the only the solution for a better connectivity. Institutional connectivity is also important to facilitate trade and investment. Goods and people cannot be transported freely if border procedures are so complicated. In this regard, RGC is strongly committed to facilitate the cross-border transport with its neighbouring countries and the region. We have ratified Agreements and Protocols on Cross-Border Transport, Transport Facilitation and Multimodal Transport. At present we are implementing Bilateral Agreement on Road Transport with Vietnam and Laos, and Thailand. We will fully comply with the Cross Border Transport Agreement of the Greater Mekong Sub region which will take effect on 1/1/2017.

Excellencies Ladies and Gentlemen,
RGC fully realizes the closest relationship between transport and environmental issue, in particular, the global warming. We have attached to various international legal instruments on environment under united nation bodies. We have acceded to the Kyoto Protocol and Vienna Convention, and ratified the Montreal Protocol and its eventual Amendments, with commitment in reducing and eliminating ozone depleting substances (ODS) as scheduled by Protocol. Now we have completely phased out the use of ODS in Cambodia. We also have strictly implemented regulation on vehicle technical inspection, with an aim to limit the carbon mono-oxide and hydro-carbon in the emission.

We also aim at reducing the amount of motored-vehicle’s emission through conducting various policies, such as promoting the use of public transport, fuel diversification, promoting bio-fuel use and eco-driving, and increasing fuel efficiency. In this context, I strongly urge national and international agencies, particularly the industrialized countries, international organizations, private sectors to expeditiously promote your newly innovative technology and skill to introduce new generation of mode of transport which is environmentally sound yet can serve daily life of our next generation.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,
With the improvement of road network, road accident becomes our serious concern. Over the last 5 years, road accident is increased by 9% per annum, causing 6 deaths and 50 injured each day. According to study, road accident costs Cambodia more than 300 million US Dollar each year. I wish to take this opportunity to request your cooperation to address this concern by sharing your experience and best practices with us on how to curb with this road accident to enable us to achieve our goal of reducing the mortality rate by 50% by 2020.

Before closing, and on behalf of the Royal Government of Cambodia, I would like to express our support to the Draft Regional Action Plan on Sustainable Transport Connectivity in Asia and Pacific, Phase I (2017-2021) and the Draft Ministerial Declaration thereof, which were prepared by our Senior Officials, and confirm that Cambodia, with our resources, will do its utmost to jointly work with you all in this exercise for the benefit and prosperity of our region.

Allow me to express our thanks, once again, to our host for excellent arrangement of this conference and I am looking forward to taking part in the deliberation. Thank you!