

**JOINT EIF ES AND UNOPS SUPERVISION MISSION
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Excellencies, Colleagues, Ladies and Gentlemen*

Allow me first and foremost, in my capacity as Secretary of State and EIF Focal Point in the Ministry of Commerce, to welcome our guests to Cambodia once again. We appreciate your regular supervision mission as it always provides food for thought on how we have been performing over the past 12 months and on ways and means to keep our focus on implementing our Aid for Trade agenda.

Your last supervision mission took place 15 months ago, back-to-back with the launch of the CTIS 2014-2018 and the launch of the CEDEP II project. I am pleased to report that a lot has happened since then, on the Aid for Trade front, but also in terms of other key trade reforms spearheaded by the Ministry of Commerce. I am sure you will see that for yourself in the numerous meetings you will have this week. Worth of a mention here are the reforms on trade facilitation, on Intellectual property and on training and research as well as the work led by DICO to improve our Trade SWAp governance framework.

2015 represents a key juncture of our aid-for-trade agenda. Our two flagships programme, the Tier 1 and CEDEP I for EIF and the TDSP are coming to an end in 2015 early 2016. Both programmes have been monitored and evaluated on a regular basis, and evaluations have provided us with solid recommendations to ensure the programme can deliver the expected outputs.

We have entered the last stage of those programmes and are working hard to ensure all activities are executed and all programme objectives met. We will hear later from DICO on concrete achievements, on-going and planned activities in the framework of the two programmes.

This juncture means also that MoC needed to look ahead on how to cover the existing needs as described in the Trade SWAp road maps updated last year. In order to plan future interventions, the MoC requested the support of the EIF to carry out a prioritization exercise through a Medium-term plan (MTP). The MTP is well under-way: we have carried out a stock taking exercise of our SWAp Road Map implementation, we have worked with our line ministries and the private sector in defining where assistance will be most needed, and we are confident that a first draft of our AFT programme for the period 2016-2020 would be ready by the end of the month, at the time of our planned CTIS implementation review workshop. We are grateful to EIF, UNOPS and UNDP for supporting our trade mainstreaming and AFT prioritization efforts.

Yet, while we can be satisfied with recent progress and reforms, there are still some areas where more needs to be done, and in particular in relation to the implementation of the EIF programme.

First, we have renewed our requests to obtain no-cost extension of our EIF Tier 1 project to until March 2016 to ensure that we can achieve all expected outputs under the project and, even more important, to launch the next AFT programme phase in early 2016 with all institutional mechanisms in place. This critical role is to be played by the NIU, reason for which the Tier 1 extension (at no cost is critical).

Second, with an unprecedented efforts from the Government, the Cambodian and Swiss private sector, the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA), a very ambitious project to establish Cambodia's "Academy of Culinary Arts" has been remodeled to fit UNOPS and ES requirements several times. We have been patiently waiting for a successful outcome and are looking forward to hearing positive news on the approval and subsequent launch of this project.

Third, DICO in partnership with CEDEP I MIE is preparing to submit formal requests for no-cost extension of the CEDEP I project, for which your guidance will be very much appreciated to ensure that the requests do not face delays as experienced with Tier 1 and ACAC.

Fourth and last, Cambodia has been fortunate to participate in the recent EIF Global Platform in March 2015 in Geneva and to witness the human wealth of the EIF programme and the ambitions it has set for itself for its 2nd phase (2016-2022). Cambodia, along with representatives from all 50 EIF member countries made recommendations on how to improve the programme implementation. We would be very grateful for any feedback on the decisions that have been made at the EIF Executive Board and Steering Committee levels for the continuation of the programme, for the funding of the next phase, and for increasing the efficiency of the current arrangements.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Cambodia has registered many successes lately, and the EIF programme has played a catalytic role to achieve that. We would like to retain this and ensure that our delivery becomes even better in years to come.

We therefore wish to make good use of the presence of officials from EIF ES and UNOPS, whom we hope, with their global vision and experience, will help bringing best practices and standards in our use of the EIF know-how, network and resources. I have instructed DICO to bring all assistance needed to your delegation during your mission.

I would like to thank all of you, especially our SWAp stakeholders, representatives from line ministries, from the private sectors and Cambodia's development partners, to give us the pleasure of your presence here today.

I certainly look forward to listening your candid recommendations by the end of the week. In the meantime, I wish you success in your mission and a fruitful week in Cambodia.

Thank you.