



IT Awareness Seminar
Sept, 11-13, Phnom Penh
Inter-Continental Hotel

Joint Press Statement - 13 September

Excellency & distinguished participants

I am called upon and hence have the privilege to read out the joint press statement on behalf of **NiDA, UNDP & UNESCO**.

The IT Awareness Seminar, organised by NiDA in partnership with UNDP and Unesco, was successfully concluded today. During the past three days 30 guest speakers from Cambodia and around the world have contributed a wealth of knowledge and insights in developments in the areas of information and communications technology in Cambodia. New technology was exhibited by sponsors from the private sector, especially IBM, Mobitel, BigPond, Camnet, CIT, UniSQL, PPML, CPOA, Samart and Siemens also exhibited, demonstrating vibrancy of Cambodia's burgeoning IT sector.

The Prime Minister, Chairman of NiDA, said that the seminar was of great significance "since it is a timely response to the immediate needs and requirements of Cambodia and helps the country catch up with the region and the world." He stressed the need to develop a national information plan, and stated that NiDA will devote itself to this task. Such a plan will address the need for a sophisticated telecommunications infrastructure and policies to establish a legal and regulatory framework. He said: "continuous efforts are needed to promote and encourage the participation of the private sector in IT development".

His Excellency Sok An, Deputy Chairman of NiDA, said that in developing the national information plan, "NiDA will review and attempt to incorporate the many valuable insights brought by each and every one of our speakers." Time and again speakers made the point that information is more important than technology, that the human and organizational factors are more important than technological ones in bridging "the digital divide".

Secretary-General of NiDA, H.E. Phu Leewood, acknowledged the importance of forging an ongoing partnership with the UN agencies, in particular, UNDP and Unesco, in providing a global response to the challenge of IT development.

Mr. Bill Pigott the acting Resident Coordinator elaborated about the advantages of ICT as well as the significant role it can play in reducing poverty.

Mr. Etienne Clement, Representative of Unesco, encouraged the government to promote policies targeting those who are at the greatest risk of being left out of the knowledge revolution, especially the rural population and the urban poor. H.E. Sok An concluded the seminar by saying "NiDA's mission is to establish an environment for IT to grow, so that every Cambodian has access to information and the knowledge and opportunity to use it."

Thank you.

Ramesh Chandran
Deputy Resident Representative
(Operations)
UNDP Cambodia