



EUROPEAN UNION

DELEGATION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION TO THE KINGDOM OF CAMBODIA

Press Release

EU and UNDP contribute over \$2 million for basic rural infrastructure in Battambang Province

Phnom Penh, 27 July 2006 – Recently, the European Commission (EC) and the Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC) signed an addendum to the Financing Agreement for the *"European Fund for Micro projects in Selected Areas in the North-western Provinces of Cambodia" (EFMP)*, to allow the implementation phase of the project to take off. The EC and the UNDP have now signed a contract agreement for the full implementation of the project.

The EC-UNDP project, *"European Fund for Micro projects in Selected Areas in the Northwestern Province of Cambodia" (EFMP)*, aims to improve the quality of life and stimulate economic development in four districts of Battambang province (Kam Rieng, Phnom Porek, Samlot and Sampo Loun), by implementing micro-projects in basic rural infrastructure. During the first phase of the project, a European expert worked with the Provincial and District authorities for more than a year to identify and prioritise local development needs and to prepare specifications for the works.

The three-year project (2006-2009), which will now be implemented by the UNDP, building on their long standing experience working at the local level, will result in the improvement of roads access between villages, communes, districts and in the province through rehabilitation, upgrading or construction of 4 to 6 metres wide earth roads with pipe or box culvert structures, concrete drift and concrete bridges. It will also provide local citizens with access to clean drinking water through construction of water supplies, mainly tube wells and pumps, and sanitation facilities. In addition, better primary school facilities will be provided for several communes.

"I am delighted that the EC and the UNDP have agreed to work in partnership with the local authorities for the final implementation of this important project. Through this initiative, the villagers who live in the four selected districts will no longer be isolated, they will no longer suffer from diseases caused by drinking unclean water, and their children will not need to walk long distances to go to school. It is another example of the European Commission's ongoing support for the process of rural development in Cambodia, and especially our commitment to fund practical initiatives that target those most in need," said Winston Mc Colgan, Chargé d' Affaires, a.i. of the Delegation of the European Commission to Cambodia.

"We are very pleased to be associated with this project which will further contribute to poverty reduction and to the achievement of the Cambodia Millennium development goals and the National Strategic development Plan 2006-2010 targets" added Ms Anne-Isabelle Blateau, Programme Director of UNDP.

The total cost of the project is estimated at €2,018,180, of which the EC contribution is €1.9 million (US\$2.3 million). The RGC will provide an in kind contribution to the value of €99,000 and the UNDP will provide a contribution of €118,180.

Further information please calls 023 220 611 / 2 or e-mail: Delegation-Cambodia@cec.eu.int or Delegation-Cambodia@ec.europa.eu

About the European Commission: The European Commission is the executive arm of the European Union. Since the signing of the Paris Peace Accords in October 1991, the Commission has granted more than 478 million Euro in aid to Cambodia. This aid is additional to that granted bilaterally by individual EU Member States, and covers a broad range of sectors, such as humanitarian assistance, health, education, rural development, human resource development, the environment, mine clearance, democratisation and human rights.