



**Statement of the Kingdom of Cambodia
Delivered by Ambassador Long Kemvichet
Permanent Representative of Cambodia to WTO and Other International Organizations
(Economy & Trade)**

**Intergovernmental Group of Experts on E-commerce and the Digital Economy
Sixth session
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General Statement

**President of 6th Session of the IGE on E-Commerce and Digital Economy, H.E. Ambassador Sabri Bachtobji (Tunisia),
Secretary-General of UNCTAD, Ms. Rebeca Grynsan,
Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and gentlemen,**

1. At the outset, my Delegation congratulates you, Mr. President, on your election as the Chair of the 6th session of the IGE on e-commerce and digital economy. We extend our full support and cooperation to you to accomplish our tasks at this session.
2. Let me first acknowledge the presence and the insightful remarks by the Secretary-General of UNCTAD, Ms. Rebecca Grynsan. Madam, it is good to see you again.
3. We would like to thank Madam Sirimane for her informative presentation.
4. Before I start, my Delegation would like to align ourselves with the statement made by Indonesia on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

Mr. President,

5. E-commerce and digital economy remain the next frontier for Cambodia and the LDC in general. The exemplary works conducted by UNCTAD in assessing e-trade readiness of LDCs - a program that has been so well received, it has been extended to non-LDCs as well - have been invaluable for our countries to understand the depth of the challenges before us and the depth is very deep. The LDCs remain constraint by the overarching issue of digital divides and specific challenges such as hard and soft infrastructure, legal and regulatory framework, payment systems, digital literacy and many others which are all well documented in the e-trade readiness assessments. These challenges would need to be addressed before the LDCs can leverage the opportunities of e-commerce for inclusive development.

Mr. President,

6. The plight of the LDCs in achieving digital transformation and leveraging the development impact of e-commerce is indeed a global issue. The Doha Program of Action for the LDCs 2023-2031 prescribed the actions to be taken to accomplish this objective. It encompasses the need to leverage the power of science, technology and innovation to addressing the long-standing challenges outlined

earlier in my statement. The DPOA also called for “strengthened international cooperation to support least developed countries in strengthening science, technology and innovation, including by providing financial contributions for investment in ICT infrastructure, ... strengthening of digital literacy and skills, as part of efforts to bridge digital and knowledge divides, as a prerequisite for inclusive participation in the digital economy.” So, this decade will be crucial for the LDCs and we cannot afford to fail as the speed of technological advancement is even more rapid than ever and failing in this decade would certainly result in others are being too far to catch. As such, there is room for UNCTAD to play and be at the forefront in implementing some of those actions continue supporting and working with the LDCs in achieving this goal.

Mr. President,

7. Let me turn the attention to some progress in digital economy transformation in my own country. Cambodia has already taken initiative in preparation to transform into a digital economy through the implementation of the Digital Economy and Society Policy Framework which specifies a 3-phase approach for transformation: (1) Building Foundations and Digital Adoption from 2021-2025; (2) Digital Adoption and Digital Transformation from 2025-2030; and (3) the final phase, Digital Transformation from 2030-2035.

8. A number of national laws have been enacted or in the process of drafting. The e-commerce law and consumer protection law which were promulgated in 2019, and the competition law in 2021, formed the fundamental legal and regulatory framework. Other legislations are making some headways in their drafting process including law on data protection and privacy, a law on electronic transactions, a law on public information, and law on cybercrime.

9. As part of Cambodia’s regional integration efforts, Cambodia has signed and ratified the ASEAN agreement on e-commerce with the objectives to facilitate cross-border e-commerce transactions in ASEAN; building trust and confidence in the use of e-commerce; and strengthening cooperation to develop e-commerce for inclusive growth and narrowing developmental gaps. Moreover, in the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP), Cambodia-China FTA and Cambodia-UAE Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) also contained the e-commerce chapter which outlined similar objectives.

Mr. President,

10. Before concluding, my Delegation, once again, reiterate our call for the international community to further support and work with the LDCs to promote and leverage digital economy and e-commerce as a driver for inclusive growth and development. The DPOA already provides the roadmap to accomplish this and only our collective effort will do if we truly want to ensure that no one is left behind.

11. I thank you, Mr. President.