

**PRESENTATION BY**  
**Hon. Ms. KRUOCH SAM AN**  
**Relating to Case Study on**  
**"Safe abortion in Cambodia"**

*(Santepheap Palace, Phnom Penh Capital, March 9-12, 2011)*



**My respect to:**

- **Hon. Madam Chair**
- **Hon. Delegate**
- **Excellencies**
- **Distinguished guests**
- **Ladies and Gentlemen,**

May I, first, express my welcome this Women Parliamentarians of ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly (AIPA) Seminar on the "Accelerating the Achievement of the Millennium Development Goal-5 through the Role of Women Parliamentarians.

All citizens, especially women are truly proud with hope and full of confidence under the leadership of **Her Excellency Doctor Bun Rany Hun Sen**, President of the Cambodian Red Cross, the National Champion of the Asia-Pacific Regions combating HIV and AIDS. Recently, **Her Excellency** has been entitled as the National Champion of the United Nations Secretary General's Joint Plan of Actions for Maternal and Children's Health at the recognition ceremony held on February 21, 2011.

The national report is clear that Maternal Mortality Rate is remained high. So in order to accelerate the achievement of the Millennium Development Goal-5 by 2015, we need to maximize the reduction of challenges to a certain level. Safe abortion is another key factor that we should not overlook including birth spacing and family planning.

- The Cambodian Law on Abortion was adopted on October 6, 1997
- The Ministry of Health elaborated that abortion of less than twelve weeks pregnancy is authorized by law. Although we have the Law on Abortion but the implementation of the safe abortion service is limited, and there were no proper record in numbers of the maternal mortality caused by abortion.

However the observation showed that majority of the abortions is carried out by non-trained personnel of private sector. It is another contribution factor causing death of mother who received abortion service with non-trained personnel.

Relating to the record of the death registration certification and the monitoring of maternal mortality has not safe yet; and the statistic is not adequate that can provide us with appropriate estimation of the number of the deaths resulting from abortion service.

In 2002, they estimated that maternal mortality rate were in between 20% to 29% per cent (is about 130 per 100,000 life births) in Cambodia relating to the report of unsafe abortions (from WHO's report in 2002).

According to the 2005 Cambodia Demographic Health Survey (CDHS) showed that 51% per cent of the abortions were carried out by the women themselves, or by the traditional abortion method, or abortion carried out by non-safe abortion service providers.

All of the aforementioned factors evidently show the unsafe abortion which are considered as the major factor contributing to maternal mortality rate remain higher in Cambodia.

The Department of National Health Statistic has been taking note numbers of abortions and numbers of cases carried out by abortion service providers are as the following:

- There were 354 cases in 2008;
- There were 280 cases in 2007;
- There were 379 cases in 2006;

Based on the above figures, the report of Cases of abortion carried out by abortion service providers is appeared not complete. According to the observation recommended that majority of the abortions might be carried out not within the State's Health System.

Abortion is resulting from unwanted pregnancy. In Cambodia, almost half numbers of all women ending her pregnancy because they were experiencing of abortion in the past. Particularly, young females and women who have many children expose higher risk. If there is still inadequate the access to safe abortion in the upcoming years, and the demand for abortion services is remained higher, many women shall be exposed to risk of unwanted pregnancy and unsafe abortion.

To mitigate the numbers of abortions of either safe or unsafe abortion, the reduction of unwanted pregnancy is crucial importance following to the Fast Track Road Map of Accelerating the Reduction of Maternal Mortality of the United Nations.

In order to respond to the above cases, we, Parliamentarians, have very important role in collaborating with relevant Ministries especially Ministry of Health and Development Partners in accelerating the achievement of this goal successfully by:

- Enforcing Law on Abortion
- Widely disseminate Law to people
- Promote awareness on reproductive health
- Provide knowledge on birth spacing
- Increase accessibility for family planning;
- Increase the Accessibility to safe abortion service;

We are being understood that safe abortion is essential part that requires our attention. Public awareness on reproductive health must disseminate

widely to every woman. We shall continue to monitor the implementation of the law on abortion by skilled health personnel and ensure the safeness which shall contribute to the reduction of Maternal Mortality especially in the rural area.

- Another role of Parliamentarians is to extend their collaboration and support with relevant Ministries, Institutions and National and International Organizations to continue to support and encourage all women, particularly pregnant woman to receive pre-antenatal care during pregnancy and after delivery birth as well as abortive female to receive reproductive health service before and after abortion.
- Support for safe abortion and the safe abortion program should be fully incorporated into maternal health and reproductive and family planning programs.

On behalf of members of the National Assembly and Senate, I would like to express my profound thanks to **Her Excellency Doctor Bun Rany Hun Sen** for her acceptance of this difficult role for influencing in behaviors changes and undeveloped practice and bringing in better health care for Cambodian women. My thanks go to Development Partners, and National and International Organizations for their support in Maternal and Children's Health for Cambodia. We also call for their continuous support in materials, equipments and finance and sharing of good lesson learnt and technique for Cambodia toward achieving the United Nations' Millennium Development Goals by 2015.

**Thank you for your attention!**