

**Signing of the Tuol Sleng Museum Project Supported by KOICA**

**23 July 2015**

**Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts**

**Ms. Anne Lemaistre**

**UNESCO Representative**

H.E. Ms. PHOEURNG Sackona, Minister of Culture and Fine Arts,  
Ms. Baek Sook Hee, Country Director, KOICA  
Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Today, I have the great pleasure and honor to join the signing ceremony of the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum Project. First of all, I would like express my sincere thanks to the officials from the Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts and the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum for organizing this signing ceremony. Especially, our thanks goes to the Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) for making this initiative possible through its generous financial support.

The registration of the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum's archives on the Memory of the World Register in 2009 had been a result of much effort and hard work of the Ministry of Culture and UNESCO. The registration recognizes the universal meaning and value that these documents hold for all of humanity. The vision of the Memory of the World Programme is that the world's documentary heritage belongs to everyone and should be preserved and protected for our next generations. If we think about the tremendous knowledge, insight and meaning historical documents hold and lessons that they can teach us, we realize the great responsibility we have in protecting them.

The significance of the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum archives as a part of the Memory of the World stems from its testament to man's inhumanity to man and its documentation of one of the most extreme examples of crimes against humanity in the 20th century. This Museum and its archives are the testimonies of a terrifying crime that took place here three decades ago and act as reminders to us that such crimes should not happen again anywhere in the world.

In this light, this project, supported by KOICA, is a very important one for Cambodia. The overall aim of the project is:

- To preserve and digitize the archives of the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum, which were inscribed on the international Memory of the World Register in 2009.
- To support the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum in developing into an educational and peace-building site where youth, Khmer Rouge survivors and the general public can have access to information about their historical past and carry on dialogue about peace and non-violence.
- To build the capacity of the staff at the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum and the Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts to manage the archives.

For Cambodia to work towards a peaceful society, a place for education about the Khmer Rouge era is essential for its people. Improving the understanding of the Khmer Rouge conflict, promoting justice for victims, and bringing about reconciliation for the Cambodian society will be crucial for a peaceful future.

Once again, I express my thanks to KOICA and the Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts for their continual support and cooperation. We look forward to three years of dynamic collaboration.

I thank you for your attention.