

Welcome Remarks by

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At the CICA Special Working Group and Senior Officials Committee

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- *H.E. Mr. GU Ziping, Chair of the Meeting,*
- *Ambassador GONG Jianwei, CICA Executive Director*
- *Excellency, Distinguished Colleagues, Ladies and Gentlemen,*

Good morning and welcome to you all to Siem Reap. I hope you all had good rest yesterday. Let me foremost extend the warm greetings from my Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, H.E. Senior Minister PRAK Sokhonn. He wishes us a successful event and a fruitful consultation. Personally, I am very pleased to that I could finally deliver on my promises to invite to come to my country, particularly to Siemreap, where I am sure you will have some quality time to explore one of the World Heritage Site, Angkor Wat, our national pride.

I would like to extend to all delegates my deep appreciation to their taking the time from their busy schedule to attend these two meetings for the next 3 days. My sincere thanks also go to China, as CICA chair, and the Secretariat for their close coordination and collaboration with us to ensure the delivery of these two very important meetings.

Excellency, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Today we have a good context to start our meetings. The successful convening of the “*Informal Meeting of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of CICA member states*”, which took place on the sidelines of UNGA 72nd Session last September in New York, marked an important milestone in CICA’s institutional history. The Statement adopted at the Informal Meeting reiterated our commitment to further promote CICA process and enhance the role of CICA at both regional and international stages. After all, we have successfully achieved 25 solid years of our common journey. As such, these meetings are an important contribution to the celebration of the 25th Anniversary of CICA establishment.

I can't stress enough on the important role that we, as CICA Senior Officials Meetings, play in the past 25 years in the building of the platforms for CICA Member States to discuss and exchange views on the implementation of Confidence Building Measures (CBMs), in line with the CICA Basic Documents and our Leaders' vision and commitments. Today, we are moving along to deepen, solidify and seek more ways to implement the various CBMs. I look forward to listen to our colleagues brief us the recent activities and developments of the CICA process and future activities. We will also have the opportunity to discuss the "*Draft CICA plan of action for Implementation of UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy*" and the "*Draft Action Plan on the Implementation of CBMs in the area of Finance*". I hope that we will have fruitful discussion and we could reach consensus on those pending documents.

In conclusion, let me wrap up by saying that confidence building measures have also a lot to do on our understanding and our appreciation of each other culture, each other past and present. For my country, we are proud of our glorious past and I felt that it would be for Cambodia to share its experiences to our CICA colleagues on how we have been able to turn our cultural and patrimonial heritage into economic assets, that have helped brought jobs and prosperity to the country, and uplifting millions of people out of poverty.

As such, I would like to invite all CICA colleagues here to visit our Seventh Wonders of the World, the famous Angkor Wat Temple complex, on the afternoon of the 24th. I hope you will all have an enjoyable stay in my country.

Thank you.