

**Opening Statement
for UNDAF Strategic Planning Workshop
30 August 2006**

Honourable Secretaries, Dashos, partners, ladies and gentleman,

It is my immense pleasure to welcome you all to UNDAF Strategic Planning Workshop. The UNDAF, United Nations Development Assistance Framework, is one of the main instruments of UN reform to articulate a coherent vision and strategy for a unified approach towards common development goals at the country level. There is also a growing expectation from donor countries for the UN agencies to work together. It includes streamlining financial arrangement and reporting system. UNDAF provides a good opportunity to find and establish a way to respond to these.

UNDAF, as you know, is a framework of UN's assistance to the country's development efforts. I cannot emphasise more the importance that UNDAF fits well into national priorities in terms of poverty reduction and achieving MDGs. At the same time, we also need to be sensitive to changing environment. Bhutan will go through a tremendous change very soon with adoption of the Constitution and the new political system. Smooth transition to parliament democracy will need some

investment both in terms of human resources as well as physical infrastructure.

Preparation of 10th Five Year Plan is well under way. It is going to be the last Five Year Plan before the deadline of achieving MDGs. Royal government's commitment and effort to move toward MDGs is certainly commendable, and the country has made a tremendous progress in this regards. There are three MDG indicators already achieved, and the UN system will continue to support the government's efforts to achieve the rest of the MDGs.

Looking at the wider context of ODA globally, though the total amount is increasing, the UN base resources are not growing proportionately. A more cohesive approach will benefit the country more, and it would lead to more resource mobilisation.

UNDAF is not only about programmes and projects, but also about how we work together. Financial procedures and reporting process will be harmonised and streamlined. This will create an environment to work together more easily. It will improve our efficiency in delivering our services to the people in Bhutan.

Lastly, not least, I would like to thank the Royal Government for jointly organising this meeting. Especially, Honourable

Finance Secretary, Aum Yanki Wangshuk for co-chairing the workshop.

I very much look forward to insightful discussion and active participation.

Thank you and Tashi Delek!