START-UP OF MARITIME EDUCATION IN CAMBODIA
COOPERATION BETWEEN MEKONG BORDER STATES

Introduction

In September 2004 a project was started to assist the Cambodian authorities to establish maritime education and training by setting up a Maritime Navigation department as part of a "Cambodia Maritime Academy".
At this Maritime Navigation Dept. Cambodian students will be trained
- to become Deck Officers in the merchant marine;
- (in a further career) to be employed in the maritime industry (pilotage, shipping, stevedoring, ...), in the Port Authority, in the nautical departments of the Ministry of Public Works and Transport, in maritime education and training, etc.

A grant has been awarded by the Commission of the European Community (Asia-Link Programme) to support this project.

Lead Applicant is the Antwerp Maritime Academy (Belgium).
Other partners in the project are:
- Cork Institute of Technology - Dept. for Nautical Studies (Ireland)
- Universidad Polytechnica de Cataluna - Facultad de Nautica de Barcelona (Spain)
- Vietnam Maritime Academy (Haiphong City, Vietnam).
The Cambodian partner in the project is the Ministry of Public Works and Transport.
**Objectives of the Project**

The overall objectives of this project are:

1. to improve the overall economic and intellectual situation of Cambodia by contributing to the further development of the country’s education system;
2. to support the economic policy guidelines of Cambodia by training staff for the maritime transport sector;
3. to create new study opportunities in Cambodia;
4. to enhance international co-operation between EU Institutes and between EU and Asian maritime education institutions;
5. to develop European international activity in the field of maritime training and education assistance.

This project aims at providing a major contribution to the establishing of a Maritime Academy in Cambodia and to solve the tedious problem of the Cambodian maritime sector, where at this moment no maritime education at higher level is available (causing deficiencies in the economic development, a lack of legislation, of state port control, of qualified personnel on board, etc.).

The long-term benefits are:

- a generation of well-trained maritime professionals will start a career at sea, contributing to safety and working conditions;
- improved policy-making and business practice in the maritime area;
- an improved reputation for Cambodia as a maritime nation (hoping for an IMO White List status in the middle term).

**General Overview of the Project**

The project’s duration is 35 months, starting at 1 September 2004 and ending at 31 July 2007.
During this period all necessary actions will be taken with regard to the administrative and educational set-up of a Maritime Navigation department in the future "Cambodia Maritime Academy", including:

- the development of a curriculum and teaching methodology;
- the training of Cambodian instructors in Belgium, Ireland and Vietnam;
- the operational set-up of the department;
- the organisation of teaching support by European and Asian guest lecturers.

**Implementation Progress – Phase 1**

The first phase of the project was the start-up of a restricted STCW Operational Level Training Course.

This was realised on 25 January 2006 with the official opening of the Cambodia Maritime Training Center.

This training center is based in the Phnom Penh Port Authority building.

A special curriculum has been worked out, resulting in a training session of 2 semesters (totalling app. 2 x 600 hours) – see annex.

The first session will be devoted to the training of a selection of 25 employees of the Phnom Penh and Sihanoukville Port Authorities. These employees have various positions in these port authorities (pilots, surveyors, technicians, etc.) but most of them do not have the certificates in accordance with the latest IMO (International Maritime Organisation) regulations, the so-called “STCW 95 standards”.

The training session will therefore serve two purposes:

1. Updating/upgrading the aforementioned port employees
2. Try-out for the future bachelor-level maritime education.

In the STCW training course 3 compulsory certificates have to be obtained:

a. Basic Safety Training Certificate (survival at sea, fire fighting, first aid, social responsibility)

b. Radar/Arpa Training Certificate

c. GMDSS Certificate (Global Maritime Distress and Safety System).
For this training specialised (and expensive) equipment is required (rescue boats and other safety equipment, navigation simulator, communications simulator), which is not yet available in Cambodia.

Therefore, an agreement will have to be concluded with the Vietnam Maritime University (VIMARU) to organise 3 training sessions (of 2 weeks each) at their Ho Chi Minh City campus.

The Cambodia Ministry of Public Works and Transport will send an official application to VIMARU in this respect. In view of the good relations between Cambodia and Vietnam as Mekong river border states, and the fact that VIMARU is a partner in the maritime education project, favourable conditions will be certainly be obtained. Nevertheless, the cost of these training sessions will remain considerable and are not covered by the project. Therefore, alternative financing will have to be found.