



Please check against delivery.

Mr. Yuxue Xue  
UNDP Thailand Deputy Resident Representative  
**Signing Ceremony of the Declaration of Partnership**  
*under the “Clean City, Clean Mind” Framework*  
between  
The United Nations Development Programme and  
the Municipality of Nakhon Ratchasima  
1 May, 2009

Your Excellency Mayor Suruwut Cherdchai (Mayor of Nakhon Ratchasima)  
Colleagues,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

- On behalf of the United Nations Development Programme, I am honoured today to launch the first project supported under UNDP’s “Clean City, Clean Mind” initiative.
- The Decentralization Act of 1999 stipulates that local government organisations must practice sound planning, effective human resources management, and sustainable financing. This is the basis for the “Clean City, Clean Mind” initiative, through which different cities in Thailand are able to strengthen their capacity to become environmentally sustainable cities while ensuring high standards of practice by local government agencies and officials in terms of management, accountability and transparency.
- The “Clean City, Clean Mind” initiative is based on the premise that without transparent, participatory and accountable management, there can be no sustainable development. Sustainable development and environmental good practice go hand in hand, and require the engagement of communities in decision making, and the challenging of bias and corruption at all levels. Without these key elements, poverty cycles are self-perpetuating due to entrenched, wasteful and unsustainable uses of both financial and natural resources.
- UNDP and Korat city will work together to enhance the capacity of municipal officials to deliver public services in a more efficient and cost-effective manner. This will be achieved by improving the existing administrative system, including the flow of information, and exchange of data and knowledge between local administrative authorities and the general public. Effective tools and indicators will also be established to measure the quality of service delivery, and tangible improvements made to people’s lives.
- “Clean City, Clean Mind” also addresses important environmental challenges faced by cities. We all know that in today’s world, climate change is no longer a challenge that only concerns scientists and policy makers. The impacts of global warming are being felt closer to home every day.

- Thailand today ranks 26th among carbon dioxide polluters in the world and 7th highest overall in Asia. The damage to agriculture and coastal areas as consequences of climate change could have enormous economic, cultural and environmental impacts: one degree of warming could destroy the rice crops that are central to the economy, and a few centimetres of sea level rise could submerge the capital city and devastate coastal tourism.
- It is therefore more urgent than ever for us all to: firstly, understand the possible effects of climate change; second, act now to try to alleviate these negative impacts; and thirdly, prepare ourselves for the challenges that await us.
- Action can be taken either individually, or collectively. “Clean City, Clean Mind” is just one example of such action. Through this initiative, UNDP is supporting local government organisations to play a pivotal role in turning awareness into concrete remedial action.
- It is not just by chance that Korat city was selected as the pilot city for cooperation under the “Clean City, Clean Mind” initiative. As the gateway to the poorest region in the northeast of the country, Nakhon Ratchasima is an obvious target province for economic development.
- Under the partnership being established today, UNDP and Korat city will work together to strengthen the management capacity of municipal officials related to urban governance, including best practices in waste management, clean energy technology and sustainable transport, while being fully accountable for their performance.
- UNDP’s partnership with Korat city began last year, when the city expressed an interest to receive technical assistance from UNDP to access the carbon trading market through the development of a waste-to-energy project. These priorities correspond to UNDP’s MDG Carbon Facility Programme aimed at helping local governments access carbon trading (or the so-called ‘Clean Development Mechanism’ - CDM).
- The signing of today’s ‘Declaration of Partnership’ marks an official start to an exciting new cooperation between Korat city and UNDP. UNDP is proud to be able to support the city of Korat. To this effect, I would like to express my sincere appreciation to Mayor Surawut for his vision and determination in balancing the economic development of his municipality with environmental concerns and good governance. I also congratulate him for his commitment to move Korat city towards becoming a city with low-carbon output.
- I wish to thank the people of Korat for their warm welcome and for hosting this event.
- Thank you.

\* \* \* \* \*