

Message of H.E. PRAK Sokhonn
Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Foreign Affairs and
International Cooperation of the Kingdom of Cambodia
On the Celebration of ASEM Day
01 March 2023

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On the occasion of the 27th Anniversary of the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM), on behalf of the Royal Government and the people of Cambodia, I wish to extend my warmest greetings and sincere wishes to all the peoples across Asia and Europe for their good health, longevity and prosperity. I am pleased to share my personal message for this annual "ASEM Day 2023".

Over the past 27 years, ASEM has grown into a significant forum with its 53 members with its mission of maintaining peace and security as well as promoting connectivity and development for the two continents. It has also served as a high-profile forum for advancing dialogues to enhance multilateralism, in the spirit of consensus, mutual interest and respect, to address inter-regional issues and global challenges.

Against the backdrop of the COVID-19 pandemic, Cambodia had a great honour to host and chair the 13th ASEM Summit (ASEM13) virtually in November 2021 under the theme "***Strengthening Multilateralism for Shared Growth***", with the high level of participation from all ASEM members. Driving by the collective spirit to tackle the pandemic and to move toward a sustainable socio and economic recovery, ASEM Leaders have reached broad consensus on three deliverables, namely: (1) the ASEM13 Chair's Statement: Strengthening Multilateralism for Shared Growth; (2) the Phnom Penh Statement on Post-COVID-19 Socio-Economic Recovery; and (3)

the Way Forward on ASEM Connectivity. These documents have charted a new course of actions for ASEM cooperation to contain the public health crisis and to further enhance Asia-Europe connectivity through the strengthening of multilateralism for sustainable and inclusive economic recovery.

As we recovered from the COVID-19 pandemic, the year 2022 has witnessed a dramatic shift in the dynamics of regional and global security and economic architecture with the eruption of the war in Ukraine, the increasing tension between superpowers and the ensuing prospects of economic decoupling and fragmentation of the global supply chains. All these factors have contributed to the weakening of multilateralism, which undermines our global efforts to tackle humankind existentialist issues related to climate change and the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

In this critical moment, I urge ASEM to provide its decades long leadership to mobilize joint actions to deepen its cooperation to pursue more sustainable solutions to the above issues so that our two continents could maintain its course to secure a more resilient future for our next generations to come.

In this connection, Cambodia attaches great importance to ASEM as the relevant multilateral platform of dialogue and reaffirms her readiness and proactive engagement to work and collaborate with all its members and stakeholders to achieve the noble goals of peace and prosperity as set out by our ASEM leaders, and to bring back a renewed vitality into the ASEM process.

Thank You.