

**Joint Communiqué
between the
Republic of Maldives and the Kingdom of Cambodia**

16 January 2023

1. At the invitation of His Excellency Ibrahim Mohamed Solih, President of the Republic of Maldives, Samdech Akka Moha Sena Padei Techo Hun Sen, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Cambodia, undertook an Official Visit to the Maldives from 15 -17 January 2023. Samdech Techo Prime Minister Hun Sen was accompanied by a high-level delegation, including H.E. Mr. Prak Sokhonn, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, H.E. Mr. Othsman Hassan, Senior Minister in Charge of Special Mission, H.E. Mr. Thong Khon, Minister of Tourism, H.E. Prof. Mam Bunheng, Minister of Health, as well as senior officials of the Government of the Kingdom of Cambodia and business leaders from the Cambodia Chamber of Commerce.
2. Samdech Techo Prime Minister Hun Sen was accorded a ceremonial welcome in Malé.
3. H.E. President Ibrahim Mohamed Solih and Samdech Techo Prime Minister Hun Sen held Official Talks on 16 January 2023 in a warm, cordial and friendly atmosphere. They reviewed the entire range of bilateral engagements including exploring new avenues to further strengthen cooperation on trade, investment, connectivity, health, culture, agriculture and human resources development. They also exchanged views on regional and international issues of mutual interest.
4. During the visit, Vice President H.E. Mr. Faisal Naseem, Speaker of People's Majlis and the former President, H.E. Mr. Mohamed Nasheed, Chief Justice, H.E. Uz. Ahmed Muthasim Adnan and Minister of Foreign Affairs, H.E. Mr. Abdulla Shahid, paid courtesy calls on Samdech Techo Prime Minister Hun Sen. H.E. President Solih hosted an Official Luncheon in honour of Samdech Techo Prime Minister Hun Sen and his delegation.
5. H.E. President Solih commended Samdech Techo Prime Minister Hun Sen on his Government's leadership in maintaining peace, stability, high economic growth, a robust tourism industry and improvements in the quality of life of the Cambodian people over the past decade. Samdech Techo Prime Minister Hun Sen also highly commended the achievements made by the Government of Maldives under the leadership of H.E. President Solih in promoting sustainable development, economic stability, expansion of tourism, and social welfare of the country.
6. H.E. President Solih congratulated Samdech Techo Prime Minister Hun Sen on the victory of the Cambodian People's Party (CPP) in the Commune/Sangkat election in June 2022, and considered the first visit to the Maldives by Samdech Techo Prime Minister, as a historic milestone and a catalyst for enhancing bilateral

cooperation in practical areas, including trade and investment, tourism, cultural exchange and technical cooperation. H.E. President Solih welcomed Samdech Techo Prime Minister Hun Sen's decision to appoint the Cambodian Ambassador to India as the Non-Resident Ambassador to the Maldives. Samdech Techo Prime Minister Hun Sen termed the Maldives as a close friend and an important partner of Cambodia in the region. Samdech Techo Prime Minister Hun Sen announced that Cambodia-Maldives Friendship Street will be designated in a coastal city of Cambodia to highlight the opening of a new page which will bring closer the bonds of friendship between the two countries. Both leaders also expressed their commitment to develop a strong and mutually beneficial partnership not only at bilateral level, but also at regional and international levels with a view to ushering peace, stability and sustainable development of the two nations and the world.

7. H.E President Solih appreciated the initiatives taken by the Government of Samdech Techo Prime Minister Hun Sen for successfully managing the Covid-19 pandemic in Cambodia with people centred policies by balancing lives and livelihoods and minimizing the negative impact on the economy. Samdech Techo Prime Minister Hun Sen also congratulated H.E. President Solih and the people of Maldives for their resilience, successful vaccination drive and the solid economic post-pandemic rebound.
8. Both leaders underscored the importance of the regular exchange of high-level visits and consultations that would enhance ways and means to strengthen and expand bilateral cooperation in all feasible areas for the mutual benefit of both nations. In this connection, the two leaders expressed desire for the first meeting of Bilateral Consultations between foreign ministries of the two countries to be convened at the earliest.
9. Both leaders recognized the importance of bilateral trade and noted the economic relations are important for strengthening the bilateral ties. Acknowledging that economic cooperation between Maldives and Cambodia still has much room for improvement, the two leaders concurred to task the institutions concerned in both countries to work together in order to increase bilateral trade, investment, and tourism exchanges, and encouraged closer collaboration between the private sector of the Maldives and Cambodia in fully exploiting economic potentials and business opportunities in both countries. The two leaders discussed the interest of the Maldives in importing rice from Cambodia, and to explore further opportunities to increase business interactions in this area. They also discussed importing other agricultural products from Cambodia, namely, maize, pepper, dried cassava, cashew nut and fruits, garment products, including clothes, footwear and travel goods, and non-garment products, such as electronic components, decorative lamps, wood products, plastic products, processed animal skins. The Maldives also expected that Cambodia would consider importing the Maldives' seafood and fish.
10. Samdech Techo Prime Minister Hun Sen highly commended H.E. President Solih for the Maldives' tremendous success in the growth of the tourism and hospitality

industry and hoped for greater collaboration and cooperation between both countries in the tourism sector. While noting that the Maldives and Cambodia both have great potential in tourism, the two leaders agreed to urge all relevant institutions to work closely together to organize joint promotional activities to increase tourism exchanges, tapping into the rich cultural and natural heritage of both nations. They also tasked the relevant institutions of both countries to consider creating cultural cooperation and exchange programmes.

11. Acknowledging the importance of strengthening the cooperation in human resource development between the two countries, H.E. President Solih proposed that the Maldives will provide up to 20 internships for Cambodians, to work in various tourist resorts in the Maldives to further their hospitality skills, as part of an exchange programme. President Solih also offered the opportunity for Cambodia a placement to participate in the Basic Diving Course organized by the Maldives National Coast Guard for the year 2023, and two scholarships to study at the Maldives National University. In the same vein, Samdech Techo Prime Minister Hun Sen announced ten undergraduate scholarships for Maldivians to study in Cambodia.
12. Both leaders shared the view that direct air connectivity is needed to facilitate business, people-to-people contact and tourism exchanges between both countries. In this connection, they instructed the respective civil aviation authorities to expedite discussion on the conclusion and implementation of the Air Service Agreement between the two countries.
13. Stressing the need for deepening technical cooperation in the field of aquaculture and fisheries, the two leaders tasked the concerned institutions of both countries to consider creating cooperation mechanisms and exchange programmes.
14. The two leaders expressed satisfaction at the growing level of multilateral cooperation between the Maldives and Cambodia, and agreed that representatives of both countries should collaborate more closely on various regional and international fora, including the UN, for peace, stability, security, sustainable development and shared prosperity.
15. On regional and international cooperation, both leaders exchanged views on issues of common interest and concerns. H.E. President Solih congratulated Samdech Techo Prime Minister Hun Sen on Cambodia's successful Chairmanship of ASEAN in 2022 under the theme "ASEAN A.C.T.: Addressing Challenges Together" as well as the hosting of the 40th and 41st ASEAN Summits and Related Summits held on 10-13 November 2022 in Phnom Penh. H.E. President Solih expressed hope that Cambodia will continue its support to the Maldives' ongoing efforts to accede to the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in South East Asia (TAC).

16. H.E. President Solih extended the full support of the Government of Maldives, for Cambodia's application to become an Observer State of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC).
17. H.E. President Solih and Samdech Techo Prime Minister Hun Sen expressed strong optimism that the bonds of friendship and cooperation between the Maldives and Cambodia would become much more vibrant as a result of Samdech Techo Prime Minister Hun Sen's first visit to the Maldives and the signing of cooperation documents during the visit.
18. On conclusion of the Official Talks, the two leaders witnessed the exchange of the following bilateral instruments between the two countries:
 - a) Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Maldives and the Government of the Kingdom of Cambodia on Visa Exemption for Holders of Diplomatic, Official and Ordinary Passports.
 - b) Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Maldives and the Government of the Kingdom of Cambodia on Economic Cooperation.
 - c) Memorandum of Understanding on Bilateral Consultations between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Maldives and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of the Kingdom of Cambodia.
 - d) Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of the Republic of Maldives and the Government of the Kingdom of Cambodia on Tourism Cooperation.
 - e) Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of the Republic of Maldives and the Government of the Kingdom of Cambodia on Health Cooperation.
 - f) Memorandum of Understanding Between the Maldives National Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MNCCI) and the Cambodia Chamber of Commerce (CCC).
19. Samdech Techo Prime Minister Hun Sen conveyed his gratitude to H.E. President Solih and the people of Maldives for the warm welcome and gracious hospitality extended to him and the members of his delegation during their stay in the Maldives. Samdech Techo Prime Minister Hun Sen extended a cordial invitation to H.E. President Solih to visit the Kingdom of Cambodia at a mutually convenient time. H.E. President Solih accepted the invitation with pleasure, and thanked Samdech Techo Prime Minister Hun Sen for the invitation. The dates of the visit would be worked out through diplomatic channels.
