



KINGDOM OF CAMBODIA
NATION RELIGION KING

**MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION**

General Department of ASEAN

PRESS RELEASE

**“Outcomes of the 24th ASEAN-EU Ministerial Meeting
and 3rd European Union Indo-Pacific Ministerial Forum
1st -2nd February 2024, Brussels”**

At the invitation of His Excellency **Josep Borrell Fontelles**, High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice-President of the European Commission, His Excellency **SOK Chenda Sophea**, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, led a Cambodian delegation to the 24th ASEAN-EU Ministerial Meeting and 3rd EU Indo-Pacific Ministerial Forum in Brussels on 1st -2nd February, 2024.

The ministerial meeting recalled the substantive deliverables of the ASEAN-EU Commemorative Summit in 2022. Ministers reaffirmed the shared values and common interests that underpin 47 years of ASEAN-EU Dialogue Relations and commended the good progress implementing the ASEAN-EU Plan of Action (2023-2027) and the Joint Leaders’ Statement of the ASEAN-EU Commemorative Summit. They acknowledged that the two regions offer numerous growth opportunities and great potential for cooperation across the three ASEAN Community pillars, guided by the ASEAN-EU Strategic Partnership. Ministers also exchanged views on regional and international issues of common interest and concern, and adopted a Joint Statement.

During the meeting, His Excellency the **Deputy Prime Minister** underscored Cambodia’s commitment to enhancing the ASEAN-EU Strategic Partnership based on mutual respect, understanding and interests, and further working with all ASEAN



Member States and the EU to ensure that regular engagements by Leaders propel relations to new heights.

Amid growing geopolitical competition and many non-traditional security challenges, he stressed the need for the two regions to be vigilant, agile and resilient by exploring new sources of sustainable and robust growth, and intensifying efforts to develop the framework and parameters of a future ASEAN-EU Free Trade Agreement. He also underscored the importance of strengthening connectivity, including through the full and effective implementation of the ASEAN-EU Joint Ministerial Statement on Connectivity and promoting synergies between the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity 2025, the Europe-Asia Connectivity Strategy and the Global Gateway Strategy – especially in the areas of sustainable infrastructure, digital innovation and seamless logistics. He thanked the EU for its consistent support for ASEAN Centrality and ASEAN-led mechanisms by contributing to community-building efforts and implementing the four priority areas of the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific.

On the other hand, the 3rd EU Indo-Pacific Ministerial Forum focused on three matters of greatest importance to both regions – shared prosperity, economic resilience and investment; the green transition and partnering for a sustainable future; and geopolitical and security challenges.

His Excellency the **Deputy Prime Minister** shared his insights on economic resilience and investment. He underscored the critical importance of bolstering partnerships and cooperation between the EU, ASEAN and Pacific countries in response to the unpredictable and complex challenges posed by COVID, the war in Ukraine, the conflict in Gaza, and the crisis in the Red Sea. He also highlighted the significance of balanced and inclusive EU investment in the Indo-Pacific region, which would significantly contribute to promoting the green economy and climate resilience, optimizing the benefits of digital transformation, and creating a favourable and predictable business climate to facilitate economic ties. He highlighted the Royal Government's considerable efforts in safeguarding livelihoods and preventing an economic crisis during the pandemic, successfully maintaining a stable and promising business and investment environment, and carrying out reforms to build greater resilience against future crises.



In the sidelines of the above events, His Excellency the **Deputy Prime Minister** held bilateral meetings with foreign ministers from the Czech Republic, Latvia, Hungary, and had discussions with His Excellency **Josep Borrell Fontelles**, High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice-President of the European Commission, the European Commissioner for International Partnerships, foreign ministers from Belgium, Cyprus, France, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and the UAE. To his counterparts from Belgium, France and Luxembourg, His Excellency the **Deputy Prime Minister** said he looked forward to their support for Cambodia's candidacy to host the 20th Francophone Summit in 2026. He also met with the Japanese Ambassador to Belgium.

Phnom Penh, 3 February 2024

