



**KINGDOM OF CAMBODIA**  
**NATION RELIGION KING**

**MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS  
AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION**

**General Department of ASEAN**

**PRESS RELEASE**

**“Outcomes of the ASEAN-Australia Special Summit  
to commemorate the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of ASEAN-Australia Dialogue Relations”**

At the invitation of the **Honourable Anthony Albanese MP**, Prime Minister of Australia, **Samdech Moha Borvor Thipadei HUN Manet**, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Cambodia, led a high-level delegation to attend the ASEAN-Australia Special Summit to commemorate the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of ASEAN-Australia Dialogue Relations in Melbourne Australia, on 4-6 March 2024.

Leaders of ASEAN and Australia reviewed cooperation across the three ASEAN community pillars over the past 50 years, particularly the significant progress following the establishment of the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership in 2021. They also charted future directions for the region, and looked forward to the early completion of the new Plan of Action (2025-2029). The Special Summit adopted two outcome documents, namely, the ASEAN-Australia Leaders’ Vision Statement – Partners for Peace and Prosperity, and the Melbourne Declaration – A Partnership for the Future.

At the Summit, **Samdech Thipadei** highlighted that being bound by geographical proximity and shared characteristics, ASEAN and Australia are natural partners. Since becoming the first Dialogue Partner of ASEAN, relations have grown from strength to strength, bringing many tangible benefits for peoples and culminating in the establishment of a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership in 2021. ASEAN-Australia relations have always been guided by a common aspiration to



promote peace, stability, and prosperity in the region based on mutual respect, trust and interests.

Given that ASEAN and Australia share bright economic growth prospects, **Samdech Thipadei** underscored the importance of effectively implementing multilateral trade agreements such as the Agreement Establishing the ASEAN-Australia-New Zealand Free Trade Area (AANZFTA) and the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) and looked forward to the timely entry into force of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Protocol to Amend the Agreement Establishing the AANZFTA. **Samdech Thipadei** also welcomed Australia's focus to promote economic ties with the region, and the launch of Australia's Southeast Asia Economic Strategy to 2040.

**Samdech Thipadei** touched on the need to further enhance people-to-people exchanges by highlighting that many Southeast Asian people have benefited greatly from high-quality Australian education through Aus4ASEAN Scholarships, the Aus4ASEAN Digital Transformation and Future Skills Initiative, and the Australia Awards Scholarships. **Samdech Thipadei** also took the opportunity to thank the Australian Partnership for Infrastructure Initiative, for its support of the program to strengthen the capacity of Cambodian government officials and the private sector in the development of the public-private partnership ecosystem.

During a retreat session, Leaders of ASEAN and Australia discussed many strategic issues of common concern and interest, and ways on how ASEAN and Australia can work together to address shared challenges. **Samdech Thipadei** encouraged greater efforts to promote practical and mutually beneficial cooperation and strengthen multilateralism that is free, open, transparent, inclusive, fair and rules-based. **Samdech Thipadei** underscored the important role of dialogue, engagements, and confidence-building measures in maintaining and promoting peace, stability, and prosperity in the region and beyond.

On the sidelines of the Summit from 2-6 March 2024, **Samdech Thipadei** had fruitful bilateral meetings with six leaders, namely, **His Excellency Ferdinand Romualdez Marcos Jr.**, President of the Philippines, **His Excellency Joko Widodo**,



President of Indonesia, **His Excellency Lee Hsien Loong**, Prime Minister of Singapore, **His Excellency Anthony Albanese**, Prime Minister of Australia, **His Excellency Christopher Luxon**, Prime Minister of New Zealand and **His Excellency Pham Minh Chinh**, Prime Minister of Vietnam.

During their meeting on 4 March, **Samdech Thipadei** and the **President of the Philippines** applauded the concurrence of the two sides to hold the Fourth Meeting of the Joint Commission for Bilateral Cooperation in the Philippines during the second half of 2024 to discuss ways to enhance existing cooperation and expand into new areas. On the economic front, **the two leaders** committed to increase bilateral trade in rice and other agricultural products. They emphasized the importance of encouraging public-private collaboration to increase tourism flows, including through the establishment of direct flights connecting major tourist destinations of the two countries. The President of the Philippines said he would expedite the signing of the Agreement on Avoidance of Double Taxation and Prevention of Tax Evasion, which will boost business and investment between the two countries. **Samdech Thipadei Prime Minister** accepted with pleasure the invitation to pay an official visit to the Philippines at a mutually convenient time.

**Samdech Thipadei's** meeting with the **President of Indonesia** was held on 5 March. **The two leaders** applauded the celebration of the 65<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Cambodia-Indonesia diplomatic relations in 2024, which presents a good opportunity for convening the 5<sup>th</sup> Joint Commission for Bilateral Cooperation. **Both sides** agreed to encourage relevant institutions to effectively implement the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Cooperation in the field of Agriculture and to expedite the signing of the MoU on expanding rice trade. **The President of Indonesia** agreed with **Samdech Thipadei** on the importance of sea and air transport connectivity to increase trade and investment, as well as tourism flows between the two countries.

Both sides agreed to encourage relevant institutions and the private sector to explore the possibility of connecting tourist destinations of the two countries. **Samdech Thipadei** welcomed Indonesian enterprises and companies to invest in infrastructure projects in Cambodia.



The meeting between **Samdech Thipadei** and the **Prime Minister of Singapore** covered many areas, including economy and education. **Both leaders** agreed to promote bilateral cooperation projects on renewable energy. They shared the view on the importance of establishing an ASEAN Power Grid to enhance energy security in the region. They also discussed increasing cooperation in the field of tourism, in particular by encouraging the private sector to develop joint tourism packages to help the industry recover from the impact of the Covid-19 crisis. On enhancing the capacity of Cambodia's workforce, **Prime Minister Lee** offered to share Singapore's experience in technical, vocational education and training (TVET). **Samdech Thipadei Prime Minister** accepted with pleasure the invitation to visit Singapore during the third quarter of 2024.

During his meeting with the **Prime Minister of Australia**, **Samdech Thipadei** expressed deep appreciation for Australia's contribution to Cambodia's peace process and support for Cambodia's rehabilitation and development in areas such as agriculture, education, and demining. He welcomed the recent launch of Australia's Southeast Asia Economic Strategy to 2040. **Samdech Thipadei** suggested that relevant institutions of the two countries work more actively to increase the exchange of trade and investment, encourage university-to-university cooperation focusing on science, and agricultural research and development, as well as cooperation on TVET and labor. The **Prime Minister of Australia** stressed that Australia attaches great importance to relations in all fields with Cambodia and the rest of Southeast Asia and agreed that there are many potential areas to expand cooperation with Cambodia. Australia has good experience in agricultural productivity and science, and Cambodia has tourism potential. **Both leaders** hailed the signing of the Air Transport Service Agreement by their two foreign ministers on 5 March, which will help boost trade, investment, tourism and people-to-people connectivity. The **Prime Minister of Australia** accepted with pleasure an invitation to pay an official visit to Cambodia at an appropriate time.

In his meeting with the **Prime Minister of New Zealand**, **Samdech Thipadei** lauded the traditional friendly relations and fruitful cooperation between the two countries. **Prime Minister Luxon** commended the rapid development of Cambodia



under the leadership of **Samdech Techo** and **Samdech Thipadei**. **Samdech Thipadei** expressed deep appreciation to New Zealand for providing invaluable support to Cambodia's socio-economic development, especially in human resource development, agriculture and demining. **Samdech Thipadei** sought to boost trade and investment with New Zealand in potential areas including agriculture and agro-industry, as well as continued support for the goal of "landmine-free 2025" of Cambodia. **The two prime ministers** also agreed to encourage relevant institutions to discuss ways and means to further promote cooperation in areas that brings mutual benefits to both countries.

On March 6, **Samdech Thipadei** met with the **Prime Minister of Viet Nam** to continue discussions on efforts to further promote traditional friendship and cooperation between Cambodia and Viet Nam. **Both leaders** applauded the frequent high-level exchanges of visits between the two countries, resulting in closer state-to-state and party-to-party ties. They exchanged views on preparations for state visits of the President of Viet Nam to Cambodia and His Majesty the King of Cambodia to Viet Nam during the second quarter of 2024. **Samdech Thipadei** informed his Vietnamese counterpart on the organization of the Cambodia-Laos-Viet Nam Development Triangle Summit in Cambodia at the end of this year and recalled the concurrence on holding regular annual meetings between the institutions responsible for foreign affairs, security and defense. On boosting economic ties, **Samdech** and his **Vietnamese counterpart** shared the view that relevant institutions should be further encouraged to achieve the two-way trade target of USD 20 billion in the near future. On infrastructure connectivity, they agreed that relevant institutions should identify at the earliest time the connection point for the Phnom Penh-Bavet-Moc Bai-Ho Chi Minh City Expressway and continue efforts to realize construction of other expressways to enhance the efficiency and facilitate the transport of goods and people. On tourism connectivity, **both leaders** agreed to promote the implementation of the initiative of "**three countries, one destination**" between Cambodia, Lao PDR and Viet Nam.



**Samdech Thipadei** exchanged views with all six leaders on enhancing cooperation to prevent and combat transnational crimes, including human trafficking and cybercrimes, which require multilateral cooperation.

**Samdech Thipadei** also met with many companies interested in economic and investment opportunities in Cambodia.

Phnom Penh, 06 March 2024

