



**KINGDOM OF CAMBODIA
NATION RELIGION KING**

**MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION**

PRESS RELEASE

**Outcome of First Senior Officials' Talks
Between Cambodia and Australia
16-17 September 2019**

The 1st Senior Officials' Talks between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of the Kingdom of Cambodia and the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Australia was held on 16-17 September 2019 in Canberra, Australia. The meeting was co-chaired by Her Excellency Secretary of State EAT Sophea and His Excellency Richard Maude, Deputy Secretary of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Australia.

The meeting was held in a cordial atmosphere and mutual understanding, reflecting shared aspiration to promote fruitful cooperation between Cambodia and Australia bilaterally as well as in multilateral frameworks. Both sides reviewed the development of bilateral relations and expressed great satisfaction that past and ongoing cooperation in various fields has significantly contributed to Cambodia's socio-economic progress and enhance friendly ties between Cambodia and Australia.

The Australian side expressed commitment to further support Cambodia's development through its Aid Investment Plan 2020-2024 which aims to promote (1) sustainable and inclusive public services, (2) resilient and inclusive economic growth, (3) efficient and transparent public policy making process. The Cambodian side expressed deep appreciation to Australia for supporting Cambodia's peace process and continued assistance in key areas including education, infrastructure, agriculture, health, demining, gender and disability, public financial management, water resources management and energy.



On economic relations, both sides shared the view that there is significant potential for increasing trade, investment and tourism exchange between Cambodia and Australia, and agreed to jointly work closely together to explore ways and means to encourage further growth of these areas. Both sides agreed that people-to-people exchange will promote mutual understanding and mutually beneficial cooperation in economic sectors between the two countries.

On security and defense cooperation, both sides noted the good cooperation between Australia and Cambodia in combatting transnational crimes such as human trafficking, money laundering and terrorism, illegal immigration and border management and agreed to further strengthen cooperation in these areas. Both sides also concurred to promote cooperation and regular dialogues between the defense institutions of the two countries through existing mechanisms.

The meeting also exchanged view on the situation of human rights and democracy in Cambodia and on promoting Australian-Cambodia cooperation and dialogue on human rights and democratic process.

Apart from bilateral relations, the meeting exchanged views on regional and international matters, including cooperation under Mekong sub-regional frameworks and ASEAN, 13th ASEM Summit preparation, the negotiation on the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) which both sides held the same position that it should be concluded at the earliest, the South China Sea, the Indo-Pacific initiatives, North Korea and U.S.-China Trade War.

The Cambodian delegation also participated in the Round Table talk on "Women in Leadership" hosted by H.E. Mrs. Penny Williams, Deputy Secretary of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Australia.

The Cambodian side expressed sincere appreciation to the Australian side for the cordial hospitality extended during their stay in Canberra and agreed with the Australian side to hold the next Senior Officials' Talk in 2020.

Phnom Penh, 24 September 2019.

