



**KINGDOM OF CAMBODIA
NATION RELIGION KING**

**MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION**

PRESS RELEASE

On 22 February 2022, at the joint invitation of H.E. Mr. Jean-Yves Le Drian, Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs of France, who is holding the presidency of the European Council, and H.E. Mr. Josep Borrell Fontelles, High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice-President of the European Commission, H.E. Mr. Prak Sokhonn, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Cambodia, attended the Ministerial Forum for the Cooperation in the Indo-Pacific in Paris, France.

The Forum brought together Foreign Ministers of EU Member States and some 30 countries in the Indo-Pacific region.

At the plenary session, panelists touched on various aspects of the Indo-Pacific from the viewpoints of European Union, ASEAN and countries in the Indo-Pacific. Panelists shared common concern about the binary view of the world that leads to confrontation, rivalries and tension. Panelists suggested that there are areas that Europe and countries in the Indo-Pacific can join hands to provide alternative to shape orders that are multilateral, rule-based and open for the benefit of peace, security, stability and prosperity.

In that regard, ASEAN is recognized as one of the central actors in the Indo-Pacific, and views were raised that ASEAN and Europe should make efforts to find complementarities and synergies between the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific (AOIP), and the European Union's Strategy for Cooperation in the Indo-Pacific, especially in tangible cooperation areas such as connectivity, sustainable development, digital transformation, climate change, economic recovery, health security, maritime cooperation and biodiversity protection.



As one of the panelists, H.E. Deputy Prime Minister Prak Sokhonn, in his capacity of the chair of ASEAN, opined that both the EU and ASEAN see multilateralism as an instrument for peace and development, in light of the fast-changing global landscape, including geopolitical rivalries and other complex regional hot spots, the COVID 19 pandemic, and climate change.

He expressed satisfaction on the enhancement of the ASEAN-EU strategic partnership and looked forward to the convening of the ASEAN-EU Commemorative Summit this year to mark the 45th anniversary of Dialogue Relations.

His Excellency Deputy Prime Minister underlined that greater economic interdependence will reduce the risks of conflicts, and as such countries need to deepen further intra- and inter-regional economic cooperation. He commended the conclusion of the ASEAN-EU Comprehensive Air Transport Agreement, and looked forward to the future realisation of the ASEAN-EU Free Trade Agreement. He encouraged more efforts to be made to tap the benefit from the entry into force of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP), and concrete linkage between the Master Plan of ASEAN Connectivity (MPAC) 2025 and the Global Gateway of the EU.

His Excellency Deputy Prime Minister also shared perspectives of ASEAN in shaping the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific (AOIP) believing that the Outlook may provide platform to accommodate complementarities among various versions of the Indo-Pacific strategies to materialize the common objectives in preserving peace, stability and bringing prosperity to the people.

Touching on issues of concern in terms of regional peace and security, His Excellency Deputy Prime Minister also briefed the forum on the development in Myanmar, the intention of the icebreaking visit made by Samdech Techo Prime Minister Hun Sen to Myanmar in early January, and pragmatic approaches of the Special Envoy of the ASEAN Chair in furthering the implementation of the Five Point Consensus.

The Plenary session was followed by three roundtables on connectivity and digital technology, global challenges (climate, biodiversity, oceans, health), and security.



and defence issues. His Excellency Deputy Prime Minister attended the roundtable on security and defence, in which he reiterated Cambodia's position in modernizing Ream naval base for the purpose of national defence that is strictly in line with the Constitution.

Phnom Penh, 22 February 2022

