



**KINGDOM OF CAMBODIA
NATION RELIGION KING**

**MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION**

PRESS RELEASE

**Outcomes of the Third Senior Officials' Talks between Cambodia and Australia
05 May 2022**

The Third Senior Officials' Talks (3rd SOTs) between Cambodia and Australia was held on 05 May 2022 in Canberra, Australia. The meeting was co-chaired by Her Excellency TUOT Panha, Secretary of State of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Cambodia, and Her Excellency Katrina Cooper, Deputy Secretary of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Australia.

The two sides expressed their satisfaction over their good longstanding and mature relationship that have been nurtured and cherished by the two peoples, while the two countries are commemorating their 70th anniversary of the establishment of their diplomatic relations this year. They are gratified by the progress of their past and ongoing cooperation over a wide range of areas, including economy, trade and investment, defense and security, agriculture, education, healthcare, people to people linkages among others. They also reaffirmed their commitments to work even more closely to strengthen their existing good relations for mutual benefits of the two countries and for peace, stability and prosperity in the region, especially during Cambodia's ASEAN Chairmanship this year.

On the security and defense fields, both sides took note of their close cooperation over the years on policing and law enforcement in a broad range of activities focusing on transnational crime and threats of shared concern, particularly child exploitation and money laundering. They also discussed and exchanged views on how to promote Cambodia-Australia cooperation on cyber security and border management. The meeting acknowledged the importance of maintaining active engagements among security and defense officers of both countries through bilateral

and multilateral platforms to further strengthen cooperation in these areas. Australia also pledged to support Cambodia in capacity building, technical assistance and training in this endeavor.

On economic relations, both sides expressed satisfaction with the increasing trend of bilateral trade and discussed new avenues to complement existing cooperation frameworks, with the goal to further expand bilateral trade, investment and market accessibility, as well as new areas of cooperation that bring increased momentum to the economic relations and partnership between the two countries. Australia also affirmed her support for Cambodia's efforts to build human capacity to boost economic prosperity and address energy and climate related issues.

On development cooperation, the Australian side reiterated its commitment in providing official development assistance to Cambodia to support infrastructure, agriculture, education and health, which contribute to Cambodia's socio-economic development. The Cambodian side also thanked the Australian government for providing such invaluable assistance to Cambodia, especially the financial, technical, and operational supports, as well as vaccines and other medical equipment to help Cambodia fight against COVID-19. Both sides also recognized that the long-term scholarship offered to Cambodian students has contributed to the sustainable development in Cambodia. Australia will consider to offer more scholarship in the fields related to Industrial Revolution 4.0, Cyber-Security, and Digital Economy in line with Cambodia's need.

Both sides also agreed to continue to promote people-to-people connectivity through the New Colombo Plan and Australian Volunteers Program which enhance mutual understanding and exchange of experiences. Acknowledging that Cambodia is a popular destination for Australian students to do internships, and that Australia is a popular destination for Cambodian students to pursue their studies, both sides agreed to further encourage these trends.

Apart from bilateral relations, the two sides also extensively exchanged views on regional and international issues of common interests and concerns, including the issues of Russia-Ukraine, Myanmar and South China Sea.



On Mekong-Australia Partnership (MAP), Cambodia valued Australia's long-standing vision in the Mekong region through promotion of human resource development, economic resilience, trade and investment, environmental resilience and strengthening cyber and critical technological capabilities as stipulated in the MAP.

On ASEAN cooperation, the Australian side reaffirmed its support for Cambodia's ASEAN Chairmanship in 2022. Cambodia highly appreciated Australia's unwavering support for ASEAN Community building efforts, assistance towards the region's recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, and commitment to ASEAN Centrality through its active participation in ASEAN-led mechanisms. Both sides welcomed the entry into force of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) Agreement in January this year and looked forward to the implementation of the Agreement. The two sides also looked forward to the early conclusion of the negotiations to upgrade the Agreement Establishing the ASEAN-Australia-New Zealand Free Trade Area (AANZFTA).

The meeting was held in a friendly atmosphere with candid discussion and mutual understanding, reflecting the common aspiration to strengthen and expand cooperation between Cambodia and Australia in both bilateral and multilateral frameworks. The Cambodian and Australian sides agreed to hold the fourth Senior Officials' Talks in 2023 in the Kingdom of Cambodia.

Phnom Penh, 06 May 2022

