



**KINGDOM OF CAMBODIA
NATION RELIGION KING**

**MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION**

Press Release

**Outcomes of the ASEAN Post Ministerial Conferences on the sidelines of the 53rd
ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Meeting (53rd AMM) and Related Meetings**

10 September 2020, Via Videoconference



On 10th September 2020, His Excellency **PRAK Sokhonn**, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, participated in the second day of the ASEAN Post Ministerial Conferences (PMC) which were held on the sidelines of the 53rd ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Meeting and related meetings.

ASEAN PMC+1 Session with the U.S.

The Meeting reviewed the past cooperation and discussed future direction of relations between ASEAN and the United States of America. The ASEAN Member States and the United States expressed satisfaction that all action lines to implement the ASEAN-U.S. Strategic Partnership 2016-2020 have been carried out according to the Plan.

The ASEAN Member States expressed appreciation for the U.S. commitment to uphold ASEAN centrality in the evolving regional architecture that is open, transparent, inclusive, rules-based, built upon ASEAN-led mechanisms, and where multilateralism remains an effective tool for addressing regional and international issues. The Meeting stressed the significance of ASEAN-US economic and socio-cultural cooperation such as in trade, infrastructure connectivity, and human resources development. The ASEAN Member States thanked the U.S. for its contribution to fight Covid-19 and looks forward to deepening collaboration with the U.S. in post pandemic recovery.

H.E. Deputy Prime Minister highlighted the achievements of existing good cooperation through both bilateral and regional frameworks. He thanked the United States for its support in healthcare sector, and the strong presence on the ground of the Center for Disease Control (CDC) in assisting countries like Cambodia in combatting the contagion. He expressed support for the draft Joint Statement on Human Capital Development. He encouraged the U.S. to continue supporting programmes aimed at

upskilling and reskilling the ASEAN workforce so as to enhance ASEAN’s industry competitiveness. Promotion of digital infrastructure development, digital ecosystem, women entrepreneurship, linkages of fintech and technology start-ups with US companies, are among other possibilities for the US to enhance cooperation with ASEAN. He reiterated Cambodia’s strong commitment to further deepening Cambodia-U.S. relations as well as ASEAN-U.S. partnerships to a new height on the basis of mutual respect, mutual interest and mutual trust.

The Meeting agreed to adopt Plan of Action 2021-2025 which laid out action lines and strategic areas for cooperation to chart future cooperation between both sides to the next five years.

ASEAN PMC+1 Session with Canada

The Meeting assessed the achievements and cooperation in the past and discussed how to further enhance cooperation for mutual interest. The Meeting noted with satisfaction the full implementation of the Plan of Action to Implement the Joint Declaration of ASEAN-Canada Enhanced Partnership (2016-2020) and adopted the new Plan of Action (2021-2025).

ASEAN Member States welcomed Canada’s commitment to strengthen partnership with ASEAN, in particular in the field of economic and trade, post COVID-19 recovery, enhancing people-to-people connectivity and capacity building, among others.

H.E. Deputy Prime Minister emphasized on the importance of concluding an ASEAN-Canada Free Trade Area in order to energize the economic growth for both regions. He requested Canada to provide additional support for ARMAC in Phnom Penh. He commended Canada in considering “Empowerment of Women” as one of its cooperation priorities, and encouraged more cooperation in the area of peacekeeping, peacebuilding, and conflict resolution, especially in the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) Agenda.

ASEAN PMC+1 Session with Australia

The Meeting reviewed cooperation and exchanged views on future cooperation, especially in the post COVID-19 era. The Meeting noted with satisfaction the progress achieved in the implementation of the ASEAN-Australia Plan of Action (2015-2019).

Recognizing the substantive cooperation between both sides, ASEAN supported the annualization of the ASEAN-Australia Summit which will take into effect from 2021.

Cambodia acknowledged Australia’s Non-paper on Options for Enhancing ASEAN-Australia Cooperation on the COVID-19 Response and Recovery, and thanked Australia for its active contribution in combatting the COVID-19, especially to



Cambodia through the Health Equity and Quality Improvement Project (H-EQIP). Cambodia stressed on the importance of education and people-to-people exchange, and encouraged Australia to provide more scholarships taking into account the specific needs of each AMS. Human resource development and capacity building, women entrepreneurship and digital leadership development, are also critical to inclusive and resilient economic recovery.

ASEAN PMC+1 Session with New Zealand

The Meeting was co-chaired by **H.E. Prak Sokhonn**, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Cambodia as country-coordinator for ASEAN-New Zealand dialogue relations (2018-2021) and H.E. Chris Seed, Secretary of Foreign Affairs and Trade of New Zealand.

The Meeting took note with satisfaction the substantive progress of ASEAN-New Zealand partnership and was pleased with the achievements in carrying out the Plan of Action to Implement ASEAN-New Zealand Strategic Partnership (2016-2020) and the two key strategies of “People and Prosperity”. The Meeting adopted the new Plan of Action 2021-2025 which emphasizes four areas of cooperation, namely, People, Prosperity, Peace, and Planet.

The Meeting also looked forward to the conclusion and formalisation of a high-quality ASEAN-New Zealand Air Services Agreement.

As the country-coordinator, **H.E. Deputy Prime Minister** delivered the ASEAN Common Statement that stressed on the achievements and the importance of the enduring strategic relationship between ASEAN and New Zealand. On the future direction, he recommended more cooperation should be explored in areas such as digital economy and e-commerce; smart cities development; tourism; cybersecurity cooperation; capacity building and human capital development in science, technology and innovation; agriculture, food security and food safety. He also sought further support to ARMAC. **H.E. Deputy Prime Minister** reiterated Cambodia’s commitment to work proactively with fellow ASEAN Member States and New Zealand for the convening of the ASEAN-New Zealand Leaders’ Summit to commemorate the 45th anniversary of ASEAN-New Zealand Dialogue Relations later this year.

Interface with AICHR Representatives at the 53rd ASEAN Foreign Ministers’ Meeting (AMM)

The Meeting noted the 2020 ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR)’s Annual Report and adopted the Five-Year Work Plan of the AICHR 2021-2025 and the budget for Priority Programmes/Activities of the AICHR for 2021.

H.E. Deputy Prime Minister joined others in commending AICHR on its significant advancement in promoting and protecting the basic human rights in ASEAN. He stressed



that human rights must be understood and approached in a holistic manner, with sincerity, consistency and without double standards. Human rights should not be used as a geopolitical tool to mask the interference into the domestic affairs of sovereign states. Next year, Cambodia will host AICHR Youth Debate on Human Rights 2021 in Phnom Penh.

ASEAN Ministerial Dialogue on Strengthening Women’s role for Sustainable Peace and Security

The Meeting noted ASEAN’s concerted efforts to promote the implementation of the UNSC Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security (WPS) during the 20th anniversary of its adoption this year. The Meeting discussed how to intensify the role and joint actions of ASEAN women so as to strengthen sustainable peace, security and prosperity in the region, and reaffirmed the important role of women not only in political-security but also in socio-economic fields.

H.E Deputy Prime Minister highlighted Cambodia’s diligence in implementing the WPS Agenda, as a country that has first-hand knowledge on the misery that wars and conflicts can do to a nation and its people, particularly women and children. He cited Cambodia’s contribution to WPS as evident from the growing participation of Cambodian women in humanitarian, de-mining, and peacekeeping operations in various parts of the world.

He informed the Meeting that Cambodia will host an event on WPS on the sideline of the 13th Asia-Europe Summit (ASEM13) in order to strengthen cooperation on women empowerment between the two regions.

Phnom Penh, 11 September 2020

