



KINGDOM OF CAMBODIA
NATION RELIGION KING

**MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION**

PRESS RELEASE

**Outcomes of the Co-Chairing of Samdech Techo Prime Minister HUN SEN
at the ASEAN-EU Commemorative Summit
on 14 December 2022, in Brussels, Belgium**

Samdech Akka Moha Sena Padei Techo HUN SEN, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Cambodia, attended the ASEAN-European Union Commemorative Summit on 14 December 2022 in Brussels, Belgium to mark 45 years of dialogue relations between the two regions. Samdech Techo Prime Minister, in his capacity as the ASEAN Chair, co-chaired the Commemorative Summit with His Excellency Mr. Charles MICHEL, President of the European Council.

This milestone event was of deep historical meaning and strategic significance for both ASEAN and the EU, and it was attended by the President of the European Commission, the Prime Minister of the Czech Republic as President of the Council of the European Union, as well as Leaders of the EU Member States and ASEAN Member States. The Leaders took the opportunity to review the existing ASEAN-EU Cooperation and charted the course for future relations, and exchanged views on regional and international issues. Moreover, they reaffirmed their commitments to advancing the ASEAN-EU Strategic Partnership that is based on mutual respect, equality and win-win cooperation.

Cognisant of the importance of trade as the powerful engine for growth, the leaders expressed strong commitment to work toward the future ASEAN-EU Free Trade Agreement as a common long-term objective. They were also highly confident that the recently signed ASEAN-EU Comprehensive Air Transport Agreement, which is the first ever region-to-region aviation agreement, will greatly promote people mobility and create many business opportunities. In addition, they also touched on a wide range of economic priorities including supply chains, added value investment,



micro, small and medium enterprises, energy, transport, agriculture, public-private partnership, and the list goes on.

Furthermore, Samdech Techo Prime Minister underscored the importance of promoting greater synergy between the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity 2025 and the EU Strategy on Connecting Europe and Asia. He also expressed his confidence that the EU's 10 billion Euro to implement the EU Global Gateway will contribute to the ASEAN Economic Community Blueprint 2025, in particular in the area of infrastructure in the region that requires 2 trillion US dollar of investment from now until 2030, and digital economy that is estimated to add around 1 trillion US dollar to the region's GDP from 2020 to 2030.

Samdech Techo Prime Minister also urged ASEAN and the EU to spare no effort to promote inclusive, sustainable and resilient development. He emphasized that human capital is the backbone of our society, and thanked the EU for the continued support in building capacity for ASEAN member states, and providing education and 21st Century skills to our youth in order for them to thrive in the rapidly changing world of work. In addition, he underlined the need to promote gender equality in all dimensions, and especially, to put women at the centre of policy. He also shared that as the ASEAN Chair, Cambodia made Women, Peace and Security as one of its highest priorities.

On the major outcomes of the COP27 in Egypt, Samdech Techo Prime Minister welcomed the Agreement to fund for the loss and damages of poor countries due to climate change impacts. Cambodia being a low carbon emitting country, has tripled its budget for its climate actions, which accounted for 2.2% of the GDP in 2020. He also recalled Cambodia's proposal to develop "ASEAN Green Deal," which is an overarching framework that aims to help member states make gradual transition towards a green future, and he saw great potentials in the EU's role in supporting ASEAN to realise this goal.

Samdech Techo Prime Minister also took the opportunity to thank the EU for their support for ASEAN, and Cambodia in particular, by providing medical supplies, vaccines and finance to tackle the COVID-19 pandemic. The joint efforts between ASEAN and the EU to address this public health crisis was an example of cooperation that should be further promoted and emulated for other global challenges. The ASEAN leaders also acknowledged the EU's contribution as a major exporter of



vaccines and as the second largest donor to COVAX with over 5 billion Euro in grants and loans.

On regional and international issues, Samdech Techo Prime Minister noted that the world has faced the biggest test since the end of the Second World War. Geopolitical competition between major powers has shaken the international order to the core, and threatened our hard earned peace, stability and prosperity. Armed conflicts that were often thought of as a relic of the past have returned in many parts of the world as a grave concern, and ASEAN and the EU are no exception. What is worrying is that these developments have been happening at a time when multilateralism is under great strain, and nationalism and protectionism are on a rapid rise.

Against this backdrop, Samdech Techo Prime Minister highlighted that a rule-based international order has to be safeguarded, and multilateral systems have to be inclusive, transparent, fair and open. He also urged major powers to explore practical areas of cooperation that enable them to build trust and confidence in one another, and promote mutual and global interests. While acknowledging that competition is inevitable, he was of the strong view that major powers should put in place some guardrails that help them prevent their competition from becoming a zero-sum game.

On the war in Ukraine, Samdech Techo Prime Minister underscored that Cambodia, as a rule-based and responsible country, strictly upholds the United National Charter, and the universally recognized laws, norms and principles, and strongly object annexation, and the use or threat of force against another sovereign state. Cambodia's co-sporing of the United Nations resolutions on this matter is a true testimony to its commitments to international obligations.

Most importantly, Samdech Techo Prime Minister suggested that if history is any guide, war cannot end war, and a dialogue that allows relevant parties to raise their concerns and explore peaceful settlements should commence without delay. He also urged all concerned parties to refrain from actions that may escalate and increase violence in Ukraine, and create a conducive environment for humanitarian assistance to be delivered to those most in need. He also shared that Cambodia will provide training to 15 Ukrainian deminers including senior leaders of the State Emergency Service of Ukraine in January 2023 in Phnom Penh, and will dispatch a



team of experts to conduct another training for Ukrainian deminers in April 2023 in Poland with the support from Japan.

Samdech Techo Prime Minister also briefed the meeting about Cambodia's efforts and the works of its Special Envoy to help Myanmar return to normalcy. He informed the meeting that at the 41st ASEAN Summit, the leaders adopted the ASEAN's Leaders' Review and Decision on the Implementation of the Five-Point Consensus (5PC), which seeks to facilitate the expeditious implementation of the 5PC. In response, the EU commended Cambodia for the efforts, and expressed commitments to support ASEAN's Centrality and its leading role in addressing the crisis situation in Myanmar.

Samdech Techo Prime Minister expressed thanks to the President of the European Council and the leadership of the European Union for their unwavering support for Cambodia's ASEAN Chairmanship this year. Moreover, he also shared his optimism and confidence that ASEAN-EU partnership will continue to grow in strength, and look forwards to another 45 years of greater successes. The ASEAN-EU Commemorative Summit also adopted the Joint Leaders' Statement, and noted the Plan of Action to Implement the ASEAN-EU Strategic Partnership (2023-2027).

Phnom Penh, 15 December 2022

