



**KINGDOM OF CAMBODIA
NATION RELIGION KING**

**MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION**

Press Release

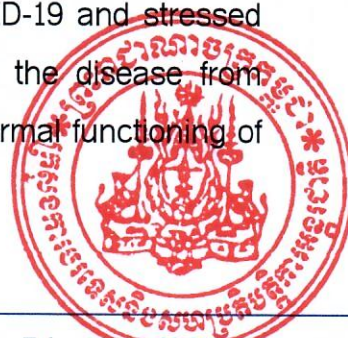
**On the Outcomes of the Special Meeting of the ASEAN Coordinating Council,
the Special ASEAN-China Foreign Ministers' Meeting
on the Novel Coronavirus Pneumonia (COVID-19) and
the Fifth Mekong-Lancang Cooperation Foreign Ministers' Meeting
20 February 2020, Vientiane, Lao PDR**

His Excellency PRAK Sokhonn, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, led a Cambodian delegation to attend the Special Meeting of the ASEAN Coordinating Council, the Special ASEAN-China Foreign Ministers' Meeting on the Novel Coronavirus Pneumonia (COVID-19) and the 5th Mekong-Lancang Cooperation (MLC) Foreign Ministers' Meeting held on 19-20 February 2020 in Vientiane, Lao PDR.

I- The Special Meeting of the ASEAN Coordinating Council (ACC) on COVID-19

The ACC Special Meeting, chaired by His Excellency Pham Binh Minh, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Viet Nam as the ASEAN Chair, was convened to coordinate ASEAN's collective response and joint efforts to address challenges deriving from the outbreak of COVID-19.

ASEAN Foreign Ministers emphasized the importance of ASEAN to stay strongly united and highly responsive in order to effectively deal with COVID-19 and stressed the resolve of ASEAN Member States to prevent the impacts of the disease from affecting the ASEAN Community building process as well as the normal functioning of ASEAN.



II- The Special ASEAN-China Foreign Ministers' Meeting on COVID-19 (SFMM)

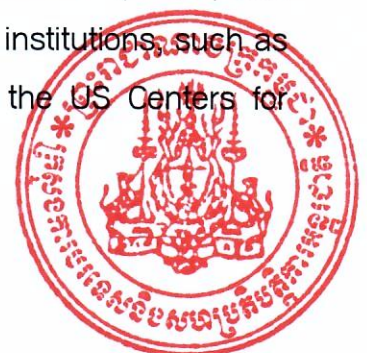
During the ASEAN-China SFMM on COVID-19, which was co-chaired by His Excellency Teodoro L. Locsin Jr., Secretary of Foreign Affairs of the Philippines, as the Country Coordinator for ASEAN-China Dialogue Relations and His Excellency Wang Yi, State Councilor and Minister of Foreign Affairs of China, ASEAN Foreign Ministers expressed full confidence in the government and people of China to overcome the epidemic and, in return, His Excellency Wang Yi extended his appreciation to ASEAN Member States for sympathy, support and assistance.

The Foreign Ministers of ASEAN and China took note with satisfaction of the ASEAN-China traditional solidarity and mutual assistance, and their joint emergency responses in times of difficulty, particularly current decisive measures to contain COVID-19 and to protect regional and global public health security.

The Ministers also discussed ways to broaden and deepen the collaboration and coordinated measures between ASEAN and China, inter alia:

- Stepping up cooperation against COVID-19 by sharing information and best practices in a timely manner;
- Promoting policy dialogue, exchanges of medical research, and the sharing of the latest developments of COVID-19, including its control and treatment; and
- Working together to enhance capacity to prevent and control emerging and re-emerging infectious and communicable diseases such as COVID-19.

H.E. Deputy Prime Minister took this opportunity to brief the Special Meeting of Cambodia's strict actions against COVID-19, particularly the Kingdom's handling of the Westerdam cruise ship that has been done with all precautions measures in accordance with all relevant regulations of the World Health Organization (WHO) and with close cooperation and collaboration with international health institutions, such as WHO, the German Center for Infection Research (DZIF) and the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).



H.E. Deputy Prime Minister reaffirmed Cambodia's commitment to continue standing firmly with the government and people of China in the fight against COVID-19 and, in collaboration with ASEAN, further enhance coordination and cooperation with China to prevent, contain and eventually eliminate this epidemic. In this regard, he lent his support for China's proposal to convene the ASEAN-China Special Summit on COVID-19 at an appropriate time.

III- The 5th MLC Foreign Ministers' Meeting

The 5th MLC Foreign Ministers' Meeting – which was co-chaired by His Excellency Saleumxay Kommasith, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Lao PDR, and His Excellency Wang Yi, State Councilor and Minister of Foreign Affairs of China, with the participation of Foreign Ministers of Cambodia, Myanmar, Thailand and Viet Nam – commended on the overall progress made in the implementation of the outcomes of the 2nd MLC Leaders' Meeting and the 4th MLC Foreign Ministers' Meeting, and the steady implementation of the Five-Year Plan of Action on MLC (2018-2022). The progress has contributed to further promoting the mutual trust, broadening cooperation, and deepening partnership among the MLC countries.

The Ministers unanimously reaffirmed their continued support for multilateralism, the UN-centered international system, and the rule-based multilateral trading system with the World Trade Organization at its core. They also agreed to further enhance dialogues among political parties, strengthen economic, cultural, and people-to-people ties and step up efforts to address non-traditional security issues, including terrorism, cybercrimes, natural disasters, epidemics, human and illicit drug trafficking, and the smuggling and trafficking of firearms and ammunition.

The Ministers welcomed the Mekong River Commission Secretariat as an observer of the MLC Joint Working Group on Water Resources Cooperation and agreed to promote the MLC's engagement with other regional and sub-regional cooperation mechanisms based on the spirit of openness, inclusiveness and complementarity.

During the Meeting, H.E. Deputy Prime Minister stressed that the MLC has been an essential solidarity framework to maintain regional peace and stability and promote



shared prosperity in the region. He also reiterated Cambodia's commitment to strengthen and deepen the bond of friendship between the Mekong countries and China to materialize the Leaders' vision in building a "Community of Shared Future of Peace and Prosperity".

While urging the MLC countries to further advance cooperation by exploring larger projects that can respond adequately to the ambitious socio-economic demand under the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, H.E. **Deputy Prime Minister** underlined the necessity to strengthen follow-up mechanisms for each MLC priority area, based on a sound monitoring and evaluation system, in order to achieve the intended goals and objectives.

H.E. **Deputy Prime Minister** expressed Cambodia's full support for China's new initiative on New International Land-Sea Trade Corridor and the realization of the Mekong-Lancang Economic Development Belt, which will further connect the Mekong sub-region as a growth pole to the landmass of China with the primary objective of energizing regional value chains, boosting investments in quality infrastructure and enhancing cultural links and people-to-people contacts across the region. In this regard, H.E. **Deputy Prime Minister** further encouraged respective MLC government agencies to study the possible synergy between the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity (2025) and the above-mentioned initiatives.

The Meeting concluded with the adoption of the Joint Press Communiqué of the 5th MLC Foreign Ministers' Meeting, noted the Progress Report of the Year 2019 on Implementing the Five-Year Plan of Action on the Mekong-Lancang Cooperation (2018-2022) and approved the list of 152 new projects financed under the MLC Special Fund 2020, out of which 20 projects (approximately USD 7.78 million) are for Cambodia. These projects mostly cover activities related to capacity building, education, poverty reduction, women empowerment, culture, tourism, media exchanges, environment, water resources and production capacity.

Phnom Penh, 23 February 2020

