

Remarks by Excellency PRAK Sokhonn

**Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation,
Kingdom of Cambodia**

At the Asia-Pacific High-Level Conference on the Belt and Road Cooperation

**On “Promoting Cooperation on Combating the Pandemic for Sustainable
Development”
23rd June 2021**

*Excellency State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi,
Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,*

1. Let me first express my appreciation to China for hosting this timely Asia-Pacific High-Level Conference on the Belt and Road Cooperation focusing on a thematic that is so pertinent in today’s world.
2. For sure, international cooperation and partnership building are critical more than ever in our collective efforts to restore the vibrancy in our economies and societies to pull them out of the pandemic-induced economic and social recession.
3. China’s leading efforts in vaccine multilateralism have been widely recognized and highly appreciated. To date, China has distributed more than 350 million doses of vaccines to global cooperative partners. Committing to make vaccines a global public good, China continues to support its vaccine companies in conducting technology transfer and joint production with other developing countries. With all these strong commitments, the future of a more secure world is indeed in sight.

Excellencies,

4. I truly believe that international cooperation and connectivity are the catalyst of our recovery. Our regional cooperation needs to focus on ensuring that our supply chain remain resilient. We are doing quite well in that respect thanks to a large extent on the many Belt and Road Initiative projects that are thriving across the region.
5. In Cambodia, we have a massive Sihanoukville SEZ, the construction of the Phnom Penh- Sihanouk expressway, the new international airports

in Phnom Penh and in Siem Reap, just to name a few. These infrastructure projects are progressing smoothly and they will certainly contribute to boosting Cambodia's economic recovery.

Excellencies, and Dear Colleagues,

6. As to the prospect for the Belt and Road Cooperation in our Asia Pacific region, allow me to share a few thoughts:

7. *First*, we need to deepen international cooperation and collaboration on vaccine production and distribution in order to make it more inclusive and equitable and avoid politicizing the pandemic. Equally important, regional cooperation is imperative to strengthen disease surveillance for future pandemics.

8. *Second*, building a "community of shared future for mankind" is not just a political slogan but an action-oriented international cooperation that will help us realize the Sustainable Development Goals.

9. *Third*, we need to sustain an open, inclusive, and rules-based multilateral trading and investment system. In this connection, the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) will play a crucial role in promoting this "inclusive and open regionalism" and supporting our inclusive and sustainable recovery.

10. *Fourth*, we need to put more resources in social protection. This social protection, *Ladies and Gentlemen*, is not a cost or a drag on our prosperity, but instead an investment in our people that help promote a more dynamic, inclusive and robust economy. And I believe that is the true spirit behind all the BR projects.

11. While supporting the two initiatives proposed by China on vaccine cooperation and on Partnership on Green Growth, I am optimistic that the BR cooperation spirit will continue to deliver on our SDGs for many years to come.

Thank You!