



KINGDOM OF CAMBODIA
NATION RELIGION KING

**MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION**

Press Release

Outcomes of the 53rd ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Meeting and Related Meetings

09 September 2020, Via Videoconference



H.E. Deputy Prime Minister PRAK Sokhonn, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, participated in the first day of the 53rd ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Meeting and a number of related meetings on 09 September 2020 via videoconference.

The 53rd ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Meeting (AMM)

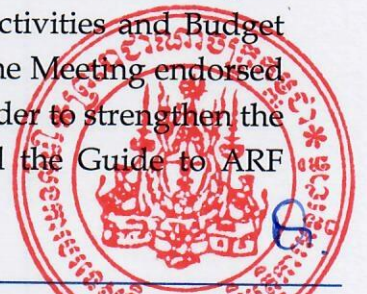
The Meeting took note of the progress made in key deliverables including the Mid-term Review of the ASEAN Community Blueprints, the review of the implementation of the ASEAN Charter, as well as the discussion for the way forward in developing an ASEAN Community Vision Post-2025.

The Meeting emphasized on the importance of the post-pandemic economic recovery, where cooperation is focused on the affordable access to the COVID-19 vaccines, supporting small and medium enterprises (SMEs), unrestricted essential travels in the region, and the early signing of the Regional Comprehensive Partnership (RCEP) Agreement this year.

The Meeting also underscored regional connectivity, particularly on maintaining supply chains, free flow of trade, essential goods and supplies, investment and movement of people between ASEAN and the Dialogue Partners.

The Meeting underlined the importance of strengthening ASEAN Centrality and unity in the engagement with ASEAN's external partners through ASEAN-led mechanisms in order to build mutual trust and confidence as well as reinforce an open, transparent, inclusive, and rules-based regional architecture with ASEAN at the centre.

The Meeting approved the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR) Five-Year Work Plan 2021-2025, Priority Programmes/ Activities and Budget of the AICHR for 2021. In promoting ASEAN's external relations, the Meeting endorsed France's and Italy's applications for Development Partnership. In order to strengthen the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) mechanism, the Meeting adopted the Guide to ARF Processes, Procedures, Practices and Protocols.



The Foreign Ministers also exchanged views on regional and international issues of common concern and interest such as maritime security, Korean Peninsula, Rakhine State, including promoting the ASEAN Community Building, peace and prosperity, and strengthening engagement with external partners utilizing the ASEAN Outlook on Indo-Pacific (AOIP), among others.

In his intervention, **H.E. Deputy Prime Minister** suggested that ASEAN should work towards the creation of “travel corridors” to facilitate business travel, in a safe and gradual manner during the Covid-19 pandemic, and it should be translated into a concrete action plan as soon as possible. He stressed that amidst the escalating tensions between major powers, and deep setback on multilateralism, ASEAN is not interested in taking sides, and ASEAN has to firmly uphold the spirit of ASEAN unity and centrality to exercise our “ASEAN Way” principles.

H.E. Deputy Prime Minister also added that the ASEAN Regional Mine Action Center (ARMAC) will have a new Executive Director in mid-October of 2020, and expressed appreciation to Viet Nam for its initiative on the “Friends of ARMAC” in order to mobilize more support for the Center.

Meeting of the Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone (SEANWFZ) Commission

The Meeting noted the progress in the implementation of the Plan of Action of the SEANWFZ Treaty (2018-2022). The Meeting agreed that it is vital to preserve the region as a Nuclear Weapon Free Zone and free of all other weapons of mass destruction and also to promote the SEANWFZ Treaty at the international fora.

The Meeting agreed to continue consultation internally and consultation between the SEANWFZ State Parties with the five Nuclear Weapon States (NWS) to address outstanding issues in order to pave the way for their signing of the Protocol to the SEANWFZ Treaty.

The 27th ASEAN Coordinating Council (ACC) Meeting

To accelerate ASEAN's effort in post- Covid-19 pandemic recovery, the Meeting adopted the Concept Note of the ASEAN Comprehensive Recovery Framework, which sets direction and guidance for ASEAN's collective actions to recover from the impacts of Covid-19 and to reopen the economy. The Meeting also tasked the ASEAN Secretariat to develop the actual framework and its implementation plan to be submitted to the 37th ASEAN Summit in November 2020. The Meeting also adopted the Terms of Reference of the ASEAN Regional Reserve of Medical Supplies for Public Health Emergencies.

H.E. Deputy Prime Minister raised the important role of external partners, which is crucial in terms of additional resources mobilization to support the ASEAN COVID-19 Fund, that has been recently established, and other regional public health emergencies arrangement.



Special Session of the ASEAN Coordinating Council Meeting on Sub-Regional Development

The Meeting acknowledged the essential role of sub-regional development for ASEAN's endeavor in narrowing the development gap, enhancing connectivity and promoting sustainable and equitable development for the benefits of people in the region. The Meeting took note of the briefings made by the Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA) and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) on the synergies and complementarities of sub-regional development.

H.E. Deputy Prime Minister emphasized the great importance on forging synergies and complementarities between and amongst these sub-regional cooperation frameworks, based on the principles of openness, inclusiveness, complementarity and local ownership. He also highlighted the importance of streamlining and reinforcing the existing sub-regional frameworks to deliver their development programs more effectively.

21st ASEAN Plus Three Foreign Ministers' Meeting

The Meeting acknowledged the support and contribution of the Plus Three countries to ASEAN's initiatives in addressing COVID-19, among others, the ASEAN COVID-19 Response Fund and the ASEAN Regional Reserve of Medical Supplies for Public Health Emergencies.

The Meeting emphasized the need to assist people and businesses affected by the impact of COVID-19, and the importance of keeping the markets open for trade and investment to strengthen the resilience and sustainability of regional supply chains and maintain necessary flow of goods and services.

The Meeting reiterated commitment to the signing of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) this year, which would serve as a good stimulation to revitalize the economy after this unprecedented health-related crisis.

The Meeting issued the Chairman's Statement of the 21st APT FMM.

H.E. Deputy Prime Minister underlined the need for the establishment of the APT Reserve of Essential Medical Supplies and thanked APT for their contribution to the COVID-19 ASEAN Response Fund. He also thanked Japan for supporting the establishment of the ASEAN Centre for Public Health Emergencies and Emerging Diseases. He stressed the urgency to get the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) Agreement signed later this year.

H.E. Deputy Prime Minister encouraged more collaboration with the Plus Three to advance on digital transformation and connectivity to support ecosystem of e-government, e-business, and e-learning in the region. He also encouraged the APT to put more efforts in developing regional guidelines and frameworks on cybersecurity.



10th East Asia Summit Foreign Ministers' Meeting

The Meeting reiterated commitments to further strengthening and streamlining the EAS as the Leaders-led forum for dialogue and cooperation on broad strategic, political, and economic issues of common concern. This year marks the 15th anniversary of the EAS.

The Meeting acknowledged the progress made under the Manila Plan of Action to Advance the Phnom Penh Declaration on the EAS Development Initiative (2018-2022).

The Meeting also discussed regional and international issues pertaining to peace, stability and prosperity in the region as well as the world at large. The Meeting emphasized the importance of upholding multilateralism and rule-based international order to maintain peace and stability in the region. The Meeting also noted the need to work together to address non-traditional challenges such as healthcare emergency responses and the need for equitable access to vaccines.

The Meeting issued the Chairman's Statement of the 10th EAS FMM.

H.E. Deputy Prime Minister reaffirmed the importance of strengthening mutual support and assistance in joint effort to fight against the COVID-19 pandemic in a timely and effective manner including fostering cooperation on global health issues and pandemic diseases and in promoting post COVID-19 economic recovery.

ASEAN PMC10+1 Session with the People's Republic of China

The Meeting took note with satisfaction of the full implementation of the Plan of Action to Implement the ASEAN-China Strategic Partnership for Peace and Prosperity (2016 - 2020). The Meeting welcomed the designation of 2021 as the year of Sustainable Development, and the launching of ASEAN-China Year of Digital Economy in June 2020.

The Meeting expressed appreciation for China's support for the COVID-19 ASEAN Response Fund, and encouraged China's continued support for the implementation of the ASEAN comprehensive recovery framework in the post-COVID-19 era. The Meeting commended China for making COVID-19 vaccine a public goods for all.

The Meeting recognized the importance of deepening regional connectivity by, inter alia, enhancing link and synergies between the MPAC 2025 and the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and looked forward to the implementation of the ASEAN-China Joint Statement on Synergies between the MPAC 2025 and the BRI.

H.E. Deputy Prime Minister encouraged China to further support ASEAN common endeavours to realize the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals. He thanked China for rendering support for the implementation of the Initiative for ASEAN Integration (IAI) Work Plans. **H.E. Deputy Prime Minister** highlighted the salience of Cambodia-China Free Trade Agreement and encouraged the full and effective implementation of agreements under the ASEAN-China Free Trade Area (ACFTA). For way ahead, he encouraged China to further enhance cooperation in the field of agriculture and agro-industry, through the exchange of best practices and technologies.



ASEAN PMC10+1 Session with Japan


The Meeting welcomed synergies between the implementation of the MPAC 2025 and Japan's Expanded Partnership for Quality Infrastructure, and looked forward to concrete cooperation activities and projects to strengthen cooperation in enhancing connectivity and promoting quality infrastructure.

H.E. Deputy Prime Minister emphasized the importance of economic partnership as both sides have shared common values and vision in enhancing an open, inclusive and rule-based multilateral economic system. He underscored Japan's vital role in supporting ASEAN member states in the field of public health through the "Japan-ASEAN Health Initiative" and the "Asia Health and Well-being Initiative" mechanisms. He expressed appreciation for Japan's Expanded Partnership for Quality Infrastructure and the Mekong-Japan Cooperation initiative and encouraged the synergies between these initiatives and those of ASEAN's priorities. He also reiterated Cambodia's support for Japan's Free and Open Indo-Pacific Strategy for peace and prosperity and believes that it could complement the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific. **H.E. Deputy Prime Minister** thanked Japan for supporting the implementation of IAI Work Plan and the ASEAN Regional Mine Action Centre (ARMAC).

ASEAN PMC10+1 Session with the Republic of Korea (ROK)

The Meeting appreciated the ROK for following through its New Southern Policy with new initiatives and projects to strengthen the ASEAN-ROK relations. The Meeting adopted the ASEAN-ROK Plan of Action (2021-2025).

The Meeting underscored the significance of economic cooperation, including through ASEAN-ROK Free Trade Agreement (FTA).

Cambodia expressed hope for enhanced cooperation with ASEAN's National Tourism Organisations (NTOs) and other stakeholders to effectively implement and manage a sustainable and inclusive tourism in the aftermath of the pandemic. As ASEAN is embracing the 4th Industrial Revolution, Cambodia proposed that the ROK should support the implementation of the ASEAN Plan of Action on Science, Technology and Innovation (APASTI) 2016-2025 and the ASEAN Digital Master Plan (ADMP) 2025. Cambodia also looked forward to the ROK's plan to establish "ASEAN-ROK ICT Convergence Village" in Busan, and "ASEAN-ROK Science and Technology Cooperation Centre". Cambodia also commended the recent launch of official negotiations for a bilateral Free Trade Agreement between Cambodia and the ROK. 

Phnom Penh, 10 September 2020

