



**KINGDOM OF CAMBODIA  
NATION RELIGION KING**

**MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS  
AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION**

**PRESS RELEASE**

**Outcomes of the 37<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Summit and Related Summits**

12 November 2020

On behalf of **Samdech Akka Moha Sena Padei Techo HUN SEN**, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Cambodia, **His Excellency Dr. Aun Pornmoniroth**, Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Economy and Finance, led Cambodian delegation to attend the 37<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Summit and Related Summits which were held under the theme “Cohesive and Responsive ASEAN” from 12-15 November 2020.

On 12 November, he attended a number of meetings and the main outcomes and highlights are as follows:

**37<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Summit**

ASEAN Leaders commended Viet Nam’s remarkable leadership as ASEAN Chair in steering ASEAN priorities in 2020 during the COVID-19 pandemic. They expressed commitment to double ASEAN community building efforts and the work towards achieving the ASEAN Community Vision 2025 and beyond.

Amid unprecedented challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, the Leaders emphasized their strong collective stance to maintain the ASEAN solidarity and unity to ensure peace, security and sustainable development in the region. As part of ASEAN’s immediate tasks, the Leaders reiterated their commitment to consolidate regional efforts to ensure comprehensive COVID-19 recovery efforts through the adoption of the ASEAN Comprehensive Recovery Framework and its Implementation Plan.

The Leaders agreed on the need to facilitate essential business travels and people movement among and between ASEAN Member States through the adoption of the Declaration on an ASEAN Travel Corridor Arrangement Framework.

The Leaders announced the establishment of the ASEAN Regional Reserve of Medical Supplies (RRMS) for Public Health Emergencies and encouraged contributions to the RRMS from ASEAN Member States, external partners and interested donors.



The Leaders took note of the briefings made by the H.E Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, Director General of the World Health Organisation (WHO) on the COVID-19 pandemic situation and global response. They emphasized the importance of equitable access to the COVID-19 vaccines for all countries.

The Leaders reiterated the importance of continued upholding inclusive and rules-based multilateral trading system. In this regard, the Leaders announced the completion of the substantial negotiations on the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) and looked forward to the signing of RCEP on 15 November 2020.

The Leaders underlined the importance of the principles embodied in the TAC as foundation for maintaining regional peace and stability and governing inter-state relations. The Leaders further welcomed the accession of Columbia, Cuba and South Africa to the TAC which has increased the number of High Contracting Parties to the TAC to 43.

The Leaders also shared the view that in order for ASEAN region to stay resilient and prosperous, ASEAN must continue to maintain its regionalism and multilateralism through enhancing engagements with dialogue partners to ensure an outward-looking ASEAN that is proactive.

On regional and international issues, the Leaders exchanged views on the issues of Rakhine State, the irregular movement of people in the region, climate change, Korean Peninsula and the South China Sea.

On the Rakhine State, the Leaders reaffirmed their support for a more visible and enhanced role of ASEAN to support Myanmar in providing humanitarian assistance, facilitating the repatriation process and to ensure sustainable and equitable development in Rakhine State.

On the Korean Peninsula, the Leaders called for all parties concerned to exercise their utmost self-restraint, pursue peaceful dialogue as well as respect for all relevant United Nations Security Council Resolutions.

On the South China Sea, the Leaders reaffirmed their commitment to maintaining and promoting the South China Sea as a sea of peace, stability, and prosperity. The Leaders underscored the importance of the full and effective implementation of the 2002 Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (DOC) in its entirety and look forward to the early conclusion of the Code of Conduct in the South China Sea (COC). They underscored the importance of resolving maritime disputes in the South China Sea in a peaceful manner in accordance with universally recognized principles of international law, including UNCLOS 1982, and exploring or undertaking cooperative activities that will contribute to promoting trust and confidence.

The Meeting also emphasized the importance of the ASEAN Outlook on Indo-Pacific in ASEAN's engagement with Dialogue Partners and external parties to ensure that ASEAN continues to maintain its central role in the evolving regional architecture, especially amidst the geopolitical competition and tensions between major powers.



Adding on the above points, Cambodia commended the development of the Initiative for ASEAN Integration (IAI) Work Plan IV (2021-2025), focusing on narrowing the development gap within ASEAN. In promoting trade and investment facilitation, he reiterated the need to address both tariff and non-tariff barriers, develop digital infrastructure, and further liberalize services and investment. On climate-related disasters, Cambodia urged ASEAN to constantly strengthen its capacity to respond to natural disasters through the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on Disaster Management (AHA Centre), which has played a crucial role in coordinating ASEAN's collective response to disasters.

To clear up doubts which have been made up frequently by various sources, alleging that Cambodia has entered into agreement to host foreign military base, Cambodia reaffirmed that she is committed to firmly honour the Constitution of the Kingdom and adherence to independence and neutrality in national defence and sovereignty, by absolutely not allowing the presence of any foreign military in her territory.

The 37<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Summit adopted the following documents:

- 1) Ha Noi Declaration on the ASEAN Community's Post-2025 Vision;
- 2) ASEAN Declaration on the Establishment of a Framework for ASEAN Travel Corridor Arrangement;
- 3) Ha Noi Declaration on the Adoption of the Initiative for ASEAN Integration (IAI) Work Plan IV (2021-2025);
- 4) IAI Work Plan IV (2021-2025);
- 5) Narrative of ASEAN Identity;
- 6) Ha Noi Declaration on Strengthening Social Work Towards Cohesive and Responsive ASEAN Community; and
- 7) ASEAN Declaration on Digital Tourism.

### **23<sup>rd</sup> ASEAN-China Summit**

The Leaders discussed achievements of cooperation over the past 29 years between ASEAN and China and charted future direction of strategic partnership.

The Meeting underscored the importance of continued mutual assistance, joint collaboration on scientific research, development, and production of vaccines and medicine that are safe, efficient, affordable and accessible to all. ASEAN expressed appreciation to China for the latter's contribution to the COVID-19 ASEAN Response Fund as well as supporting other ASEAN-led initiatives to address this crisis.

The Meeting also reaffirmed the commitment to promote trade and investment, build and maintain resilient, open, and connected supply chains and support a sustained



economic recovery. The Meeting also explored further cooperation to revitalize the tourism industry in the post COVID-19 pandemic.

The Meeting welcomed the proposal to designate 2021 as the ASEAN-China Year of Sustainable Development Cooperation. The Meeting also acknowledged China's proposal to establish a "Comprehensive Strategic Partnership" with ASEAN while the latter is currently studying the proposal with due consideration, noting that 2021 is the 30th Anniversary of ASEAN-China Dialogue Relations.

During the Meeting, Cambodia expressed satisfaction with the progress of the ASEAN-China Free Trade Area (ACFTA) implementation. Cambodia urged to expedite the ongoing discussions on ACFTA Upgrading Protocol in order to boost more trade and investment between ASEAN and China. Cambodia also stressed on the importance of the recently signed bilateral Cambodia-China Free Trade Agreement in complementing the revitalization of regional economy.

### **23<sup>rd</sup> ASEAN-Japan Summit**

The ASEAN Leaders congratulated H.E Mr. Yoshihide Suga on his appointment as Prime Minister of Japan. The Summit exchanges of views on achievements and way forward in shaping future direction of ASEAN-Japan Dialogue Strategic relations to reach new height in the spirit of heart-to-heart partners.

As part of the joint efforts to address the COVID-19 pandemic, the Leaders announced the establishment of the ASEAN Centre for Public Health Emergencies and Emerging Diseases for which the Japanese government pledged a support of USD 50 million.

The Meeting recognised the need to further deepen and expand trade and investment between ASEAN and Japan and agreed to strengthen cooperation in areas such as digital economy, innovation, human resource development and capacity building.

Cambodia highlighted the importance of enhancing cooperation between ASEAN and Japan in the fields of health security; trade and economic cooperation; narrowing the development gap and regional integration through the support of human capacity building, including in digital technology, and IAI Work Plan; connectivity and quality infrastructure. Cambodia applauded the readiness of Japan and others to sign the RCEP and emphasized the need to ensure that the private sector can benefit to the fullest from this economic pact.

### **21<sup>st</sup> ASEAN-ROK Summit**

The Meeting expressed satisfaction with the effective implementation of the Leaders' Joint Vision Statement for Peace, Prosperity and Partnership, and welcomed the adoption of the ASEAN-ROK Plan of Action (2021-2025).



The ASEAN Leaders welcomed H.E. President Moon Jae-In's announcement of ROK's commitment to further strengthen relation with ASEAN under the New Southern Policy Plus initiative, which contains seven key areas of cooperation namely medical cooperation, sharing of Korea's education and human resource development models, promotion of cultural exchanges, trade and investment, development of farming and urban infrastructure, cooperation in future industries, and cooperation in non-conventional security.

ASEAN Leaders also welcomed the ROK's strong support for ASEAN Community building, trade and economic cooperation and regional integration, including through sub-regional mechanism framework such as the ASEAN-ROK Mekong. The Meeting welcomed the contribution of USD 1 million from the ASEAN-Korea Cooperation Fund (AKCF) to the COVID-19 ASEAN Response Fund and noted the ROK's proposal to establish an "ASEAN-ROK Health Ministers' Meeting".

Cambodia voiced the support to ROK's New Southern Policy Plus. Cambodia emphasized the importance of promoting awareness on potential opportunities under the ASEAN-ROK Free Trade Area (AKFTA), and asked to expedite the Cambodia-ROK FTA negotiation. Cambodia also proposed enhancing people-to-people linkages so as to stimulate greater flow of tourism, trade and other cultural activities. Cambodia stressed that human resources development and reskilling should be made as an integral part of our economic cooperation and requested the ROK to provide more professional trainings in the area of ICT and digital economy.

### **17<sup>th</sup> ASEAN-India Summit**

The Meeting expressed satisfaction with the progress in ASEAN-India dialogue relations including the adoption of the new ASEAN-India Plan of Action (2021-2025). The Meeting emphasised the importance of strengthening ASEAN-India connectivity cooperation to advance the implementation of the MPAC 2025.

The Meeting encouraged the ASEAN-India Business Council to further enhance its role in promoting business-to-business and economic cooperation between ASEAN and India more specifically in the area of Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) and digital transformation of micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs).

Cambodia commended India's Act East Policy in playing a big role in strengthening political, economic and socio-cultural cooperation bond between ASEAN and India. On regional integration and narrowing of development gap, Cambodia encouraged India's continued support for the CLMV countries, in particular through the IAI Work Plan IV. Cambodia urged for more efforts be directed toward implementation of India-Myanmar-Thailand Trilateral Highway Project with an extension to Cambodia, Lao PDR and Viet Nam.



**ASEAN Women Leaders' Summit:**

The first ASEAN Women Leaders' Summit was held to promote women's voice, leadership, and their participation in post Covid-19 recovery efforts and in building a cohesive, dynamic, sustainable and inclusive ASEAN Community. The Summit was attended by Leaders of ASEAN Member States, ASEAN Women Leaders representatives, Her Majesty Queen Maxima of the Netherlands, Vice-President of World Bank, and United Nation representative.

**His Excellency Dr. Aun Pornmoniroth** was among ASEAN leaders who addressed the Summit, while **Her Excellency Dr. Ing Kantha Phavi**, Minister of Women Affairs made an intervention as an ASEAN woman leader from Cambodia.

The Leaders acknowledged women's increasingly indispensable role and contributions to the socio-economic development and maintenance of peace and security throughout the world and in the ASEAN region.

ASEAN Leaders urged all relevant stakeholders to consciously mainstream the need of women and girls' concerns in their efforts and place women's leadership and contributions at the heart of the COVID-19 response.

ASEAN Leaders also agreed to further advance the Women, Peace, and Security agenda in ASEAN Community building process and directed ASEAN sectoral bodies across the three ASEAN Community Pillars to integrate gender perspectives in their works. ASEAN Leaders encouraged women's active contribution to global and regional cause of peace, security and sustainable development.

Phnom Penh, 13 November 2020

