

Intervention

**His Excellency PRAK Sokhonn**, Deputy Prime Minister  
Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation

**23<sup>rd</sup> ASEAN-EU Ministerial Meeting (AEMM)**

1 December 2020 (15:00-17:30)

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**\*Omnibus intervention 3 minutes**

Agenda Item 1 and 2:

**“Review and Future Direction of ASEAN-EU Relations”**

**“Regional and International Issues”**

*Thank you Vivian,*

*Dear Colleagues,*

1. Good morning to High Representative **Josep Borrell** and colleagues from the EU side. In addition to the ASEAN Common Statement, I wish to add a few points as follows:

2. **First**, on COVID-19, I highly commend the EU’s active role in supporting the global endeavor to combat the pandemic and to mitigate its socio-economic consequences, including in our ASEAN region, under the framework of the EU’s “Team Europe” package. The fight against this global health crisis requires unity, solidarity and an effective multilateralism. With second and third waves still raging in some countries, it is extremely crucial that the EU sustain its support to ASEAN’s current initiatives to better prepared for future public health emergencies.

3. **Secondly**, ASEAN and EU have strong commitment in connecting our two regions. Cambodia encourages both sides to work on identifying practical joint activities to implement the Joint Statement on Connectivity, which is in total synergy with the MPAC 2025 and the

EU's connectivity strategy. Cambodia welcomes efforts to conclude the ASEAN-EU Comprehensive Air Transport Agreement (CATA), as this would be a step forward to promote physical, institutional and people-to-people connectivity.

4. **Thirdly**, while the EU is ASEAN's third largest trading partner, there is still much room for expansion. I believe the realization of a regionwide ASEAN-EU FTA is the ultimate key to unlock the business and investment potentials that are important building blocks for a stronger ASEAN-EU relationship.

5. **Fourthly**, we are delighted to see that ASEAN-EU dialogue relations continues to grow over the years with the elevation of our relations to that of Strategic Partnership as its peak. To capitalize on this positive momentum, we should continue to focus even more on building strategic trust and confidence and place our relationship on the principles of mutual respect, equality and fairness as we move to the next level.

6. **Lastly**, ASEAN continues to count on the EU as a reliable and active partner in promoting regional peace and stability through the EU's firm dedication to support ASEAN centrality and ASEAN leading role in the evolving regional architecture.

Thank you.