



**KINGDOM OF CAMBODIA  
NATION RELIGION KING**

**MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS  
AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION**

**Press Release**

**On the Outcomes of the ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Retreat (AMM Retreat)**

21 January 2021 via Videoconference

On 21 January 2021, His Excellency PRAK Sokhonn, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, attended the ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Retreat (AMM Retreat) via video conference.

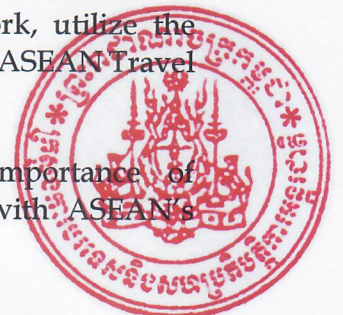
The Meeting expressed supports for Brunei's theme "We Care, We Prepare, We Prosper" and its three key priorities, which focus on building a harmonious ASEAN Community, preparing and adapting for the future to ensure the well-being of ASEAN people and their peaceful and sustainable prosperous future as well as advance ASEAN's recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.

To carry forward the momentum of the ASEAN Community Building efforts, Brunei came up with a number of initiatives to form a strategic and holistic approach to link ASEAN responses to emergencies and disasters, aiming to ensure that the whole ASEAN Community is more resilient and prepared for the future. These initiatives included the establishment of a platform to enable the peoples of ASEAN to contribute to disaster relief efforts, the enhancement of upholding multilateralism, the promotion of a greater sense of ASEAN identity through ASEAN junior officials' fellowship programme as well as the promotion of the Youth in Peace and Security agenda.

On the **ASEAN Community Building**, the Ministers discussed a number of follow-up issues from the 37<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Summits under Viet Nam's ASEAN Chairmanship to keep the momentum of our Community building efforts such as the result of Mid-Term Review of the Implementation of the three ASEAN Community Blueprints, and the development process of the ASEAN Community Vision Post-2025. The Meeting also touched on acceleration of the ASEAN integration through the implementation of the IAI Work Plan IV (2021-2025), full implementation of the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity 2025 and support for the region's recovery from the pandemic.

On regional response to **COVID-19 pandemic**, the Meeting expressed commitment to swiftly implement the ASEAN Comprehensive Recovery Framework, utilize the ASEAN COVID-19 Response Fund, and work towards establishing the ASEAN Travel Corridor Arrangement Framework.

On the **external relations**, the Meeting re-emphasized the importance of strengthening ASEAN Centrality and Unity in the engagement with ASEAN's



external partners through ASEAN led-mechanism. The ASEAN Foreign Ministers also congratulated the inauguration of the new U.S. Administration and looked forward to strengthen ASEAN-United States Strategic Partnership and enhance high level engagement to promote peace, security, stability and prosperity in the region. The Meeting also highlighted the significance of the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of ASEAN-China dialogue relations, as both sides work together on initiatives to further enhance the level of engagement for the wellbeing and peaceful development in the region.

On **regional and international development**, the Ministers shared their views and thoughts on issues such as the current regional geopolitical landscape, the development of Korean Peninsula, the Rakhine State, and the South China Sea.

In the Meeting, **His Excellency Deputy Prime Minister** raised the following points:

- On ASEAN Key Initiatives for COVID-19 Response, he suggested that ASEAN should seek to expand the ASEAN COVID-19 Response Fund by reaching out to the private sector for contribution.
- On the **ASEAN Centrality**, he emphasized that “ASEAN Way” based on consultation and consensus, non-interference and equal sovereign right have thus far served ASEAN well when it comes to the flexibility in navigating superpower rivalries.
- On the **external relations**, he reiterated that Cambodia welcomes consideration to have the United Kingdom as a Dialogue Partner of ASEAN.
- On the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) **His Excellency Deputy Prime Minister** expressed his confidence on RCEP as a key driver of regional economic recovery and integration, and encouraged all RCEP participating countries to expedite ratification process.
- On the **development in the Korean Peninsula**, he encouraged further high-level engagement with DPRK through the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) to create better understanding and possibly trigger positive developments
- On the **South China Sea**, Cambodia shares the common aspiration to see the South China Sea as a sea of peace, stability, cooperation and prosperity. Cambodia has always been consistent in encouraging the parties directly concerned to address differences amicably through peaceful dialogue based on universally recognized principle of international law, including UNCLOS 1982. He also emphasized the importance of the resumption of negotiations on the COC, including through a virtual means, to enable early conclusion of the COC that is effective and substantive, and consistent with international laws.
- On the **Rakhine State**, Cambodia is pleased with the progress made so far on implementation of the recommendations made by the Preliminary Needs Assessment (PNA) and supports the ASEAN secretariat task force to continue to take actions on and monitor closely this regional humanitarian issues.

Phnom Penh, 21 January 2021.

