

# VISIONS of CAMBODIA

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## CAMBODIA EMPHASISES KEY ROLE OF FEMALE PEACEKEEPERS



Cambodian Deputy Prime Minister H.E. Prak Sokhonn, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation has highlighted the key role of women in peacekeeping operations under the UN umbrella.

"The significant role that women have played in the area of peacekeeping operations is certainly noteworthy. Since 2006, more than 8,000 Cambodian Blue berets served in 9 countries under the umbrella of the United Nations. Currently, 801 Cambodian troops, out of which 118 are women, are serving in South Sudan, Lebanon, Central African Republic and Mali," he pointed out in his remarks at the Gender, Law and Armed Conflict: At the Intersection of International Humanitarian Law and the WPS Agenda Workshop, held at Raffles Hotel Le Royal in Phnom Penh on 06 December 2022.

In terms of women peacekeepers, he underlined, Cambodia ranks number 2 in ASEAN and number 12 among all troops contributing countries. The ASEAN Defense Ministers have expressly recognised women's role when they adopted the Concept Paper on Enhancing Supporting Mechanism for ASEAN Women Peacekeepers, said H.E. Prak Sokhonn, adding that more recently, at the ADMM Plus that was held in Siem Reap, they have expressed their commitment to strengthen meaningful participation of women in peace and security cooperation, in line with the UN Security Council Resolution 1325.

"In my view, the approach we have taken on WPS is not limited nor restricted only to peace and conflict issues. We have engaged in other dimensions, the like of human security and sustainable development. We all can appreciate the devastating impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the job prospect and well-being of

## CAMBODIAN PM HIGHLIGHTS POTENTIAL AREAS FOR FUTURE ASEAN-EU COOPERATION



Samdech Akka Moha Sena Padei Techo Hun Sen, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Cambodia and Chair of ASEAN 2022, has emphasised key areas for intensifying future cooperation between ASEAN and EU.

Priority areas of cooperation will include, among others: transport, connectivity and quality infrastructure development; trade and investment; strengthening of MSMEs; energy transition; digital economy and technology; food and agriculture; science, technology, and innovation; people-to-people exchanges; and the attainment of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030, Samdech Techo Hun Sen told EURACTIV Media in a written interview ahead of the ASEAN-EU Commemorative Summit to celebrate the 45th Anniversary of ASEAN-EU Dialogue Relations.

After the establishment of a Strategic Partnership last year, the two regional bodies have enhanced their cooperation encompassing all areas. "We have developed the ASEAN-EU Plan of Actions (2023-2027), which reaffirms our mutual belief in an open,

inclusive, and rules-based international order, reiterates our commitment to regional integration, and bolsters our regional cooperation aimed towards achieving peace, stability and prosperity," he underlined.

ASEAN and EU are natural partner as they are the two most important regional groupings that have exemplified how multilateralism still remains the best solution to regional and global issues affecting all of us, the Cambodian Prime Minister said.

ASEAN and EU mark this year the 45th anniversary of the establishment of their Dialogue Partnership, highlighting the enduring friendship built on shared values, principles and interests.

Established in 1999 and headquartered in Brussels, Belgium, EURACTIV is an independent pan-European media network specialised in EU affairs.

## CAMBODIA EMPHASISES KEY ROLE...

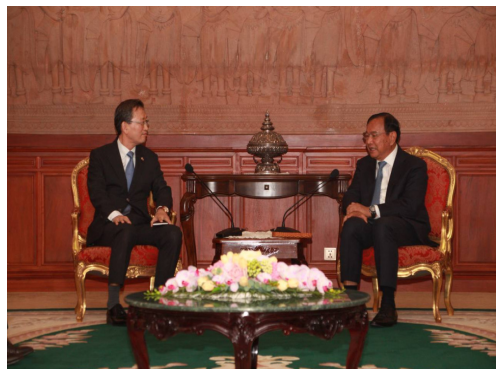
women and children even during peacetime. This is an integral aspect of security as well," he said.

The Cambodian DPM also mentioned about the importance of the International Humanitarian Law (IHL), the body of law that governs armed conflicts. It is designed to protect combatants and civilians of all genders

by restricting the means and methods of warfare. "If we can use the IHL to add legal force to the WPS protection pillar, I believe it would be a big step forward," he said.

H.E. Prak Sokhonn thus called for discussions on WPS-IHL linkage and some possible approaches to synergise the two elements.

## CAMBODIA, JAPAN TO UPGRADE BILATERAL RELATIONS TO COMPREHENSIVE STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP IN 2023



Cambodia and Japan highly valued the bilateral relations between the two countries and noted with satisfaction its upgrading to Comprehensive Strategic Partnership in 2023, the commemorative year of the 70th Anniversary of Diplomatic Relations, according to a press release from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation.

The satisfaction was made on 06 December 2022 during the farewell meeting between H.E. Prak Sokhonn, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, and H.E. Mikami Masahiro, outgoing Ambassador of Japan to Cambodia.

In the talk, both sides shared the view to organise some activities to further strengthen the bilateral cooperation to commemorate this 70th Anniversary and with that in mind, Deputy PM Prak Sokhonn confirmed his readiness to visit Japan by the end of January next year at his Japanese counterpart's invitation.

The Deputy PM appreciated the Ambassador's active contribution in promoting the ties and

fruitful cooperation, especially the good arrangement for the exchange of high-level visits, including the official visit to Cambodia of Prime Minister Kishida Fumio in March this year and his attendance in the ASEAN-Related Summits last November as well as the two visits of Samdech Techo Prime Minister Hun Sen to participate in the 4th Asia-Pacific Water Summit in Kumamoto, Japan in April this year and to attend the State Funeral for former PM ABE Shinzo last September. He expressed sincere thanks for Japan's Official Development Assistance that has contributed to Cambodia's socio-economic development and support in Cambodia's fight against the pandemic and post Covid-19 recovery.

Ambassador Masahiro commended Cambodia's successful ASEAN Chairmanship, particularly Samdech Techo Prime Minister Hun Sen's and H.E. Prak Sokhonn's excellent performance of the country's duties as the Chair that brought about the remarkable outcomes of the AMM and Related Meetings and the ASEAN Summits and Related Summits hosted by Cambodia at the time of many serious regional and international crises.

The outgoing diplomat also praised Cambodia for the endeavours in helping Myanmar return to normalcy, underlining that without those efforts, the situation in Myanmar would be much worse.

The Deputy PM thanked Japan for its significant support to Cambodia's ASEAN Chairmanship.

## CAMBODIA SUGGESTS TO HOST ASEAN DIGITAL ENGINEER WORKSHOP NEXT YEAR

Cambodia has sought support from the ASEAN Federation of Engineering Organisations (AFEO) to host an ASEAN Digital Engineer Workshop in March 2023.

The initiative was proposed by H.E. Ith Samheng, Cambodian Minister of Labour and Vocational Training while receiving a courtesy visit from an AFEO delegation in Phnom Penh this morning, on the sidelines of the 40th Conference of AFEO (CAFEO-40).

The AFEO delegation voiced their support for the initiative on the organisation of the workshop aiming to better share experience and information.

Besides, H.E. Minister commended the AFEO for its contribution to the development of human resources, especially in the field of engineering. The AFEO has also contributed to setting forth a number of new strategies to respond to the rapid technological and socio-economic developments, he added.

H.E. Ith Samheng also wanted to see the AFEO play a more important role in contributing to the development of the engineering sector and the number of engineers of all ASEAN countries increase.

Cambodia is hosting the 40th Conference of the ASEAN Federation of Engineering Organisation at Sokha Phnom Penh Hotel from Dec. 5 to 8 under the theme "The Changing Roles of Engineers in Industry 4.0 Era".

## SOME 270 CAMBODIAN PEACEKEEPERS DISPATCHED TO MALI

Cambodia on 05 December 2022 sent a total of 273 blue beret troops, including 34 women, to replace their counterparts who have ended their one-year peacekeeping mission in the Republic of Mali.

Of them, 129 are from the Airfield Engineer Unit and 144 others from the Explosive Ordnance Disposal Unit.

They were seen off at Phnom Penh International Airport by H.E. Gen. Sem Sovanny, Director General of the National Centre for Peacekeeping Forces, Mines and Explosive Remnants of War Clearance (NPMEC).

Speaking on the occasion, H.E. Gen. Sem Sovanny said Cambodia has become one of the leading countries in sending its peacekeeping forces under the UN umbrella to assist countries affected by landmines and explosive remnants of war and to participate in the construction of infrastructure and airport maintenance.

Since 2006, Cambodia has sent 8,475 peacekeepers for 11 missions in nine countries: Sudan, South Sudan, Chad, the Central African Republic, Cyprus, Lebanon, Mali, Syria, and Yemen.

Currently, some 800 Cambodian peacekeepers have been fulfilling their missions in South Sudan, Lebanon, Central African Republic, and Mali.



## ADB TO HELP DIVERSIFY CAMBODIA'S ECONOMY, BOOST COMPETITIVENESS

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has approved a US\$50 million policy-based loan under subprogramme 1 of the Trade and Competitiveness Program to support the Government of Cambodia to diversify the country's economy and boost its global competitiveness, said the bank in a press release on 06 December 2022.

The programme will support Cambodia's post-COVID-19 economic recovery by supporting government reforms to enhance the investment and business environment; foster the growth of micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs); and improve trade policy and trade facilitation, it pointed out.

"The COVID-19 pandemic severely impacted key sectors of the Cambodian economy like garment, footwear, and textile manufacturing, as well as tourism and construction," said ADB Senior Economist Sion L. Morton. "The reforms under the programme will help Cambodia's post-pandemic recovery prospects by paving the way for businesses to grow and migrate to higher value-added segments and adapt to the changing trade landscape."

According to the press release, the Trade and Competitiveness Programme will help improve the overall business climate for both domestic and foreign firms. Under the first subprogram, the government has enacted a new investment law to codify legal protections for

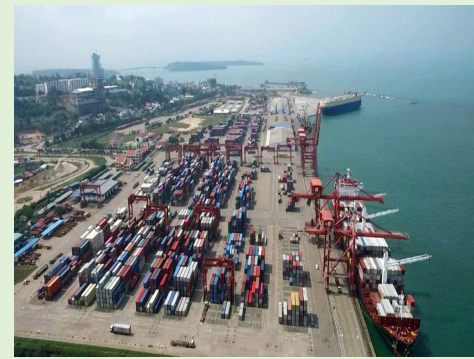
investors, including those investing in special economic zones, and upgraded an online business portal to enable the timely issuance of specialized digital business licenses.

The programme supports the development and diversification of MSMEs, improving their access to finance, and creating new markets for them. This includes simplifying the legal definition of MSMEs and rolling out a government-funded assistance package to provide grants and technical support to MSMEs in priority industries with high female participation.

The programme will also help Cambodia improve the implementation of regional trade agreements and strengthen coordination on trade facilitation to provide more opportunities for Cambodian businesses to export their goods. As part of these reforms under subprogramme 1, the government has set up the National Committee on Trade Facilitation and approved the National Road Map on Trade Facilitation.

ADB is committed to achieving a prosperous, inclusive, resilient, and sustainable Asia and the Pacific, while sustaining its efforts to eradicate extreme poverty. Established in 1966, it is owned by 68 members—49 from the region.

## CAMBODIA'S EXPORTS TO WORLD UP 18% IN ELEVEN MONTHS



Cambodia exported some US\$20,457 million worth of goods to the world market in the first eleven months of this year, an increase by 18 percent compared to the same period last year, according to a report of the General Department of Customs and Excise (GDCE) released on 13 December 2022.

The largest buyer of Cambodia's products was the U.S, followed by Vietnam, China, Japan, Canada, and Germany, read the report.

Cambodian products shipped to the world market were mostly garments, footwear, travel goods, bicycles, electrical and electronic appliances, pharmaceuticals, agriculture products, and so on.

At the same time, the Kingdom imported US\$27,747 million worth of goods, a year-on-year increase of 9.2 percent, the report pointed out.

Cambodia's major imports included raw materials, construction materials, automobiles, pharmaceutical products, electronics and electrical equipment, fertilisers and pesticides.

## MACKEREL FISHING BAN NOTIFIED



Koh Kong Provincial Administration has imposed a ban for mackerel fishing in its sanctuary located in Mondul Seima and Koh Kong districts of Koh Kong province.

Released recently, the ban is applicable for fishing zones stretching from Peam Krasoab commune, Mondul Seima district to Koh Kapi commune, Koh Kong district from 01 December 2022 to 31 Mars 2023.

The ban aims to contribute to the sustainable management of mackerel stocks in line with the National Fisheries Policy and to ensure a better mackerel sanctuary ecosystem.

## MACKEREL FISHING BAN NOTIFIED...

According to the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, fishery products in 2021 were about 930,000 tonnes – 410,000 tonnes from freshwater, 120,000 tonnes from the sea, and 400,000 tonnes from aquaculture.

## THIS YEAR'S SEA FESTIVAL ATTRACTS OVER 700,000 VISITORS

The annual Sea Festival, organised in Sihanoukville, Preah Sihanouk province from 9 to 11 December 2022, has attracted more than 700,000 visitors of them some 708,000 are national tourists and 4,000 others are foreign visitors.

The figures were shared by H.E. Thong Khon, Minister of Tourism on 12 December 2022, noting that they have enjoyed the festival both in the day and at night.

On the first two days of the festival, there were more than 400,000 visitors while the last day, up to over 300,000, he pointed out.

The festival featured many activities such as sports competitions, art performances, concerts, trade fair and food & beverage festival.

According to H.E. Thong Khon, Preah Sihanouk provincial authorities have extended the celebration for two more days – Dec. 12-13 – to bring more joys to local people and tourists as well as to cheers the 16th World Congress of the Most Beautiful Bays in the World being held in the province from 9 to 14 December 2022.

Cambodia has organised the Sea Festival since 2011 on a rotating basis in the country's four coastal provinces of Preah Sihanouk, Kep, Koh Kong and Kampot to promote the tourism potential of the coastal areas as well as to encourage the participation from the private sector, the general public as well as other stakeholders in preserving natural and cultural resources.



The celebration of Sea Festival was cancelled for two years, in 2020 and 2021, due to the COVID-19 outbreak. In 2019, the event took place in Kampot province in December with almost one million national and international tourists. Cambodia's coastline stretches about 450 kilometres in the four provinces. It became member of the Most Beautiful Bays in the World in mid-2011.

## 11 BEACHES NAMED BEAUTIFUL BEACHES FOR 2022



Cambodia has named 11 beaches in three coastal provinces as the beautiful beaches for 2022.

The award ceremony took place in Sihanoukville, Preah Sihanouk province on 8 December 2022 under the presidency of H.E. Tith Chantha,

Secretary of State at the Ministry of Tourism, during a workshop on strengthening the tourism service quality toward the 9th Sea Festival.

According to the Ministry of Tourism, the 11 beaches have been selected from 27 candidates, of which 6 in Kep province, 5 in Koh Kong province, and 16 in Preah Sihanouk province.

Six of the 11 selected beaches – Kep and Koh Tonsay in Kep, and Sokha, O' Chheu Teal, O'Tres and Thansur in Preah Sihanouk – were rated "very good" while 5 others – Koang Kang in Koh Kong, and Ekareach, Soksar, Rong and Prasat in Preah Sihanouk were classified as "intermediate".

Cambodia is organising the Sea Festival and the 2022 World Congress of the Most Beautiful Bays in the World Club (World-Bays Club) in Sihanoukville from 8 to 14 December 2022.

The Kingdom's coastline stretches about 450 kilometres in four provinces – Preah Sihanouk, Koh Kong, Kampot and Kep. It became a member of the World-Bays Club in mid-2011.