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Ministry of Commerce



British Embassy  
Phnom Penh

### Joint Press Release

29 January 2026

#### **Cambodia and the UK Strengthen Economic Partnership at Third Joint Trade and Investment Forum**

**Phnom Penh** – The Ministry of Commerce of the Kingdom of Cambodia and the British Embassy in Cambodia are today co-hosting the Third Cambodia-UK Joint Trade and Investment Forum (Third JTIF).

By convening the Third JTIF under the theme "Progressive Partnerships in a Shifting Global Landscape: A Cambodia-UK Perspective", both countries are reaffirming their commitment to strengthening economic cooperation, promoting sustainable growth, and creating new opportunities for businesses.

The Forum comes at a significant moment in Cambodia's development trajectory and ambitions, following its approaches to the anticipated graduation from the LDC status by 2029 and its recent announcement of intention to apply to join the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP). Both Cambodia and the UK have underscored their shared commitment to predictable, rules-based commerce as the foundation for growth and investor confidence.

The Joint Trade and Investment Forum is the primary bilateral platform for structured policy dialogue, market access cooperation, and public-private sector engagement between Cambodia and the UK. It brings together senior officials, regulators, investors, and business leaders to advance two-way trade, reduce barriers, and foster long-term commercial and investment partnerships.

The Third JTIF will pave the way to translate opportunities into more trade and investment between the Cambodia and the UK, through regulatory cooperation, partnerships and initiatives to strengthen markets, investment, and market access utilisation. Our conversations aim to make actual trade and investment happen, by removing barriers and maximising use of frameworks such as the Developing Countries Trading Scheme (DCTS).

The Forum highlights concrete progress since the Second JTIF in November 2024, including strengthened coordination through dedicated policy working groups spanning key areas of interest, including export facilitation, taxation, investment incentivised visa regime, alongside capacity building and skills development, dialogue on capital market development and customs cooperation, and deepened engagement between British and Cambodian businesses across financial services, manufacturing, agri-processing, technology, and legal and professional services.



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**H.E. Mrs. Cham Nimul, Minister of Commerce of the Kingdom of Cambodia, said:**

*"The JTIF has established itself as a flagship platform for advancing the bilateral trade and investment partnership between Cambodia and the UK. Anchored in practicality and momentous engagements, it has brought together key policymakers, stakeholders, and the private sectors to jointly address shared challenges and opportunities, laying a strong foundation for greater and more impactful commercial and investment outcomes."*

*By taking stock of our tangible progresses and way forwards, I hold great expectation of the Third JTIF, whose outcomes, I am confident will generate new opportunities to drive the trade and investment partnership between our two countries amid an evolving global landscape."*

**Rhiannon Harries, Deputy Trade Commissioner for Asia Pacific (Southeast Asia), said:**

*"The UK-Cambodia Joint Trade and Investment Forum is a significant opportunity for our countries to strengthen our economic ties, address shared challenges, and plan for a sustainable future. It reflects our increasing engagement with the wider Southeast Asia region, with which we share a £57 billion annual trade relationship, underscoring our commitment as ASEAN's newest Dialogue Partner."*

**H.E. Dominic Williams MBE, British Ambassador to Cambodia, said:**

*"Trade and investment are a fundamental part of the relationship between the UK and Cambodia. We are both export-oriented, open economies that believe in the international rules-based trading system. We are both keen to deepen our economic partnership and deliver greater prosperity and employment to the people of both countries."*

*I am delighted with our close collaboration with the government on this agenda, and pleased that we are able to come together with our respective private sectors in the JTIF, to identify practical steps to facilitate greater trade and investment."*

#### **Notes to Editors**

- The UK-Cambodia Joint Trade and Investment Forum was established to deepen trade and investment ties between the two countries. It brings together UK and Cambodian governments and private sectors to foster sustainable, inclusive growth through long-term partnership, policy dialogue, and business collaboration.
- In 2025, two-way trade between Cambodia and the United Kingdom exceeded US\$1 billion.
- The Developing Countries Trading Scheme (DCTS) is the United Kingdom's trade preference programme designed to support developing economies. Cambodia currently benefits from the most generous tier of the DCTS as a Least Developed Country (LDC), which grants duty-free and quota-free access to the UK market for the vast majority of goods. Under the scheme, Cambodia will continue to enjoy preferential market access throughout its transition from



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LDC status, with these benefits remaining in place until 2032. Thereafter Cambodia may continue to receive tariff-free access to the UK for many goods, under the DCTS "Enhanced" tier.

- In November 2024, UK Export Finance (UKEF) and the Ministry of Economy and Finance signed a Memorandum of Understanding to expand financing options for Cambodian infrastructure and sustainable development projects.
- The UK is among the earliest partners supporting Cambodia's preparations for post-LDC graduation, including technical assistance and policy dialogue.
- Cambodia has announced its intention to apply for membership of the CPTPP, one of the most comprehensive regional trade frameworks in the Asia-Pacific.
- Currently classified by the United Nations as a Least Developed Country (LDC), Cambodia is scheduled to graduate the LDC status in 2029. LDC graduation is the process by which a country transitions out of this category, reflecting improved economic development. This transition affects trade preferences and requires careful planning to maintain competitiveness.

***End***

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