

Press Release

On the Results of the 11th Plenary Session of the International Coordinating Committee for the Conservation and Enhancement of the Temple of Preah Vihear (ICC-Preah Vihear)

March 19, 2026

On March 19, 2026, the International Coordinating Committee for the Conservation and Enhancement of the Temple of Preah Vihear (ICC-Preah Vihear) organized its **11th Plenary Session** in Siem Reap province. The meeting was held with the presence of **H.E. Dr. Phoeurng Sackona**, Minister of Culture and Fine Arts and Head of the Cambodian Government Delegation, along **Honorable Li Ji**, Counsellor of the Embassy of People's Republic of China, Co-Chair representing China and **Honorable Dr. Tanu Priya**, Deputy Chief of Mission of the Embassy of the Republic of India, the Co-Chair representing India.

The session was attended by representatives from five member states—Belgium, France, Japan, Thailand, and the United States—as well as Head of Scientific Secretariat, International Adhoc Experts, national and international institutions, including the APSARA National Authority, Sambor Prei Kuk National Authority, Cambodian Mine Action Centre (CMAC), and approximately 158 national and international researchers (both in person and online). The meeting aimed to monitor and review conservation and development work at the Preah Vihear and Koh Ker sites, implemented by the National Authority for Preah Vihear and international partners.

During the morning session, following opening remarks by the Co-Chairs for China and India and activities report by the Director-General of the National Authority for Preah Vihear, the meeting reviewed reports on conservation and research at Koh Ker site. This included the conservation and restoration work conducted at Prasat Krachap and Prasat Kraham, the restoration of the Shiva dancing statue, research on ancient kilns in Koh Ker, and studies on termites at various temple sites.

In the afternoon, the meeting focused on reports on damage to Preah Vihear Temple, the impact on local communities and tourism, resulted from two incidents in 2025. The National Authority for Preah Vihear presented preliminary risk assessments and emergency conservation plan to prevent further damage to scattered art objects and the severely damaged temple structures. According to the preliminary assessment, the damage caused by the incidents in July and December 2025 accumulated 562 locations. This damage is severe, affecting the temple's structural integrity and carvings, and represents a significant impact on its Outstanding Universal Value.

Prior to this meeting, international Ad Hoc experts of ICC-Preah Vihear conducted site visit mission from March 16–17, 2026, to monitor and discuss conservation and restoration at Koh Ker and Preah Vihear sites; as well as observing impacts on tourism and the community to prepare recommendations for this ICC session.

The ICC was also informed that during the first week of March, at the invitation of the Cambodian national authorities, UNESCO and ICOMOS conducted a technical advisory mission to the Temple of Preah Vihear, in line with Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention. The purpose of this Advisory Mission was to assess the current state of conservation of the World Heritage property and to provide technical guidance to support its conservation and long-term preservation, in line with the objectives of the World Heritage Convention and its Operational Guidelines. The mission report will be transmitted to the Cambodian authorities as per the usual practice with technical Advisory Missions.

The Co-Chairs for China and India, along with member states and international experts, reaffirmed their commitment to working with the Cambodian government to safeguard the Preah Vihear World Heritage Site for future generations. The Co-Chairs will continue conservation work through consultation once the situation returns to normal.

The meeting also discussed emergency measures, including:

- Clearing unexploded ordnance (UXO) to ensure safety for daily conservation and management of the site.
- Preparing a comprehensive risk analysis document for Preah Vihear Temple and the surrounding areas.
- Documenting damaged art objects and structures to implement urgent rescue measures.

The session concluded in a spirit of close cooperation and solidarity, with the decision to organize the 11th Technical Session of the ICC-Preah Vihear on the 4th week of September 2026.

Thursday, March 19, 2026

Siem Reap Province