



KINGDOM OF CAMBODIA
NATION RELIGION KING

**MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION**

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PRESS RELEASE

**Outcomes of the ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Interface with the ASEAN
Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights Representatives and Meeting of
the Southeast Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Commission**

On 20 July 2026, at the invitation of Her Excellency MA. Theresa P. Lazaro, Secretary of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Philippines, Chair of ASEAN, His Excellency Deputy Prime Minister PRAK Sokhonn, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, attended the ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Interface with the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR) Representatives, and the Meeting of the Southeast Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone (SEANWFZ) Commission.

At their **Interface Meeting with AICHR**, the ASEAN Foreign Ministers noted AICHR's 2026 Annual Report and welcomed the progress achieved in advancing the promotion and protection of human rights in the region. The Ministers encouraged AICHR to continue implementing its priority programmes in an effective and results-oriented manner, in line with the AICHR Five-Year Work Plan (2026-2030) and in support of the implementation of ASEAN 2045: Our Shared Future.

During the Meeting, His Excellency the Deputy Prime Minister underscored the difficult humanitarian and human rights situation facing Cambodian civilians who have become victims of the border conflict. He informed the Meeting that more than 20,000 civilians continue to reside in temporary shelters, with many children unable to attend school and the elderly and other vulnerable persons lacking adequate access to essential care despite the government's efforts to ease their hardship. In this regard, he called on ASEAN colleagues to support the calls for their return to their homes and normal livelihoods, without obstruction and in safety and dignity.

The Meeting of the SEANWFZ Commission reaffirmed ASEAN's unwavering commitment to preserving Southeast Asia as a region free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction, in accordance with the ASEAN Charter and the SEANWFZ Treaty. The Meeting discussed the way forward regarding the Protocol to the SEANWFZ Treaty, and also exchanged views on enhancing cooperation between the SEANWFZ Commission and other Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones, including the



Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (OPANAL) and the Central Asian Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone (CANWFZ).

In his Intervention, **His Excellency the Deputy Prime Minister** underscored the growing significance of the SEANWFZ Treaty as a key pillar of peace, security, and stability in Southeast Asia amid an increasingly complex global geopolitical landscape. Cambodia welcomed the steady progress made in implementing the SEANWFZ Plan of Action (2023–2027), particularly in the areas of nuclear safety, security and safeguards, the peaceful uses of nuclear technology, capacity-building and cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). In this regard, Cambodia welcomed China's continued readiness to sign and ratify the Protocol to the SEANWFZ Treaty without reservations. **His Excellency the Deputy Prime Minister** also welcomed the growing engagement between ASEAN and OPANAL and CANWFZ and proposed further strengthening ASEAN's cooperation with both through practical, project-based initiatives.

Bilateral Meetings:

His Excellency the Deputy Prime Minister and **Her Excellency Ma. Theresa P. Lazaro**, Secretary of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Philippines expressed satisfaction with the positive momentum in bilateral relations, underpinned by the high-level exchanges and growing cooperation across various sector, including defence and security, trade and investment, agriculture, tourism, education, connectivity, and people-to-people exchanges. The two Foreign Ministers also exchanged views on regional and international developments, including issues of common interest. **His Excellency the Deputy Prime Minister** expressed appreciation for the Philippines' constructive support and role for the peaceful resolution of the Cambodia–Thailand border situation as well as for the ASEAN Observation Team (AOT), which the Philippines now leads in its capacity as the ASEAN Chair.

His Excellency the Deputy Prime Minister and **His Excellency Bendito dos Santos Freitas**, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste, reiterated the close friendship and growing cooperation between Cambodia and Timor-Leste and expressed their satisfaction with the positive momentum of bilateral relations. Both sides also discussed ways to further deepen cooperation in trade, education, digital transformation, and capacity building. **His Excellency the Deputy Prime Minister** reiterated Cambodia's full support for Timor-Leste's preparations to assume the ASEAN Chairmanship in 2029 and reaffirmed Cambodia's readiness to share its experience to ensure a successful Chairmanship. **His Excellency the Deputy Prime Minister** also updated **His Excellency Bendito dos Santos Freitas**, on recent developments regarding the Cambodia-Thailand border situation.



Phnom Penh, 21 July 2026