



The Hon Peter Dutton MP

Minister for Immigration and Border Protection

MEDIA RELEASE

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REFUGEE SETTLEMENT IN CAMBODIA MOVES FORWARD

Arrangements for the first group of refugees to be settled in Cambodia under the landmark agreement announced last year are expected to be finalised in coming weeks.

The Minister for Immigration and Border Protection Peter Dutton was in Phnom Penh yesterday to meet with Cambodian Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior, His Excellency (HE) Sar Kheng, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation HE Hor Namhong, the Director General of the General Department of Immigration HE General Sok Phal, and other Cambodian officials.

“This visit provided an opportunity to reaffirm the close working relationship between my Department and its Cambodian counterpart, the General Department of Immigration, to discuss arrangements for settlement,” Mr Dutton said.

A delegation from Cambodia is expected to travel to Nauru within weeks to speak to refugees living in the Nauruan community, about settlement options in Cambodia. This follows a previous visit for the purpose of bilateral meetings between the Governments of Cambodia and Nauru.

Mr Dutton said Australia and Cambodia had reaffirmed their commitment to the voluntary and permanent nature of the agreement which meets the international obligations of both countries to offer protection and resettlement to refugees.

“I welcome Cambodia’s leadership on this vital regional issue and their commitment to finalise settlement arrangements as soon as possible,” Mr Dutton said.

“In particular, I recognise Cambodia’s progression within a single generation from a devastating civil war, through the rebuilding and reconstruction of their society, to a member of the international community taking a leadership position in protecting the vulnerable.”

Mr Dutton also met with representatives of the International Organization for Migration (IOM), who reaffirmed their support for the relocation and integration of refugees from Nauru to Cambodia. Australia will meet the costs of the resettlement programme.

“Together with IOM, Australia and Cambodia are advancing the arrangement and committed to its smooth and successful implementation,” Mr Dutton said.

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