



AUSTRALIAN EMBASSY PHNOM PENH

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AUSTRALIA AND CAMBODIA DISCUSS NEW DISABILITY LAW

Today Australia's Disability Discrimination Commissioner Dr Ben Gauntlett and the Australian Embassy's Chargé d'Affaires Mr Luke Arnold held an interactive dialogue on Cambodia's proposed new Disability Law with His Excellency Em Chan Makara, Secretary of State of the Ministry of Social Affairs, Veterans and Youth Rehabilitation (MOSVY) and the Secretary General of the Disability Action Council (DAC).

During the meeting, Dr Gauntlett shared Australia's experiences in developing and implementing disability inclusive legislation. His Excellency Makara and Dr Gauntlett also discussed Australia's experience implementing the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD).

"Today's meeting was a useful opportunity for Australia and Cambodia to engage constructively on an important human rights issue," said Mr Arnold. "While Australia's development cooperation program has long provided support for people with disabilities in Cambodia, I understand this peer-to-peer dialogue was the first of its kind."

"I hope this dialogue leads to ongoing collaboration between the Australian Human Rights Commission and the Cambodian Government to achieve our shared goal of promoting the rights of persons with disabilities in line with the UNCRPD," added Mr Arnold.

Dr Gauntlett said the Australian Human Rights Commission (AHRC) welcomed the opportunity to share Australia's experience in protecting and promoting the rights of people with disability.

"I commend the Royal Government of Cambodia for its commitment to this critical human rights issue, and for taking this important step in disability rights law reform," Dr Gauntlett said. "I hope today's conversation will be the beginning of an ongoing relationship between Australia and Cambodia as we work to advance the rights of people with disabilities within our own countries and across the region."

The dialogue took place in the context of Cambodia developing a new Disability Law to align with its obligations under the UNCRPD. Prior to the meeting, the Australian Embassy and the AHRC provided technical advice to DAC on how best to incorporate a rights-based approach for the new Disability Law.

Dr Gauntlett, Mr Arnold and His Excellency Makara also explored ways to continue working together to advance disability inclusion and human rights more broadly in Cambodia.

"I am proud that we continue to build on over a decade of collaboration between the Australian and Cambodian governments to promote the rights of persons with disabilities and to ensure their full participation in Cambodian society," Mr Arnold said.

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