



AUSTRALIAN EMBASSY  
PHNOM PENH

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### ASEAN-AUSTRALIA WOMEN LEADERS' SIDE EVENT: UNLOCKING WOMEN'S ENTREPRENEURSHIP TOWARDS REGIONAL ECONOMIC GROWTH

On 11 and 12 December 2022, representative of Cambodia's Minister of Women's Affairs, HE Chan Sorey, Secretary of State, Australia's Ambassador for Women and Girls, HE Christine Clarke CSC, and Australian Ambassador to Cambodia, HE Pablo Kang, co-hosted the "**ASEAN-Australia Women Leaders' Side Event: Unlocking Women's Entrepreneurship Towards Regional Economic Growth**". The side event formed part of the official program for the Second ASEAN Women Leaders' Summit, which Cambodia successfully hosted on 12 October 2022.

Australia was proud to be the key ASEAN dialogue partner to support Cambodia to host the Women Leaders' Summit, which focused on the critical issue of expanding women's entrepreneurship in ASEAN. ASEAN Leaders subsequently adopted the "Declaration on Building a more Sustainable, Inclusive and Resilient Future: Unlocking Women's Entrepreneurship in ASEAN" at the 41st ASEAN Summit on 11 November 2022.

To further the outcomes of the Summit and Declaration, Cambodia and Australia co-hosted the ASEAN-Australia Women Leaders' Side Event on 11 and 12 December 2022, which brought together 26 women entrepreneurs from Australia and every ASEAN member state. Over two days, the ASEAN and Australian entrepreneurs discussed the challenges and shared lesson learned associated with being an entrepreneur in the region. The event culminated in a ceremonial plenary session with over 100 participants from government, business, and embassies in Cambodia.

HE Secretary of State Chan Sorey and Ambassador Clarke CSC recognised the value of learning from women entrepreneurs themselves in hopes of helping to unlock women's entrepreneurship. The outcomes of the side event will contribute to concrete action towards the implementation of the declaration on "Building A More Sustainable, Inclusive and Resilient Future: Unlocking Women's Entrepreneurship in ASEAN".

Ambassador Clarke also had the opportunity to visit the National Centre for Peacekeeping Forces to speak to women peacekeepers, as well as a Cambodian female-owned business supported by the Australian development program. During her visit to Cambodia, she was able to learn about Australia's long-term investments in gender-related programs in Cambodia, including to counter gender-based violence and ensure that women and marginalised people can participate in and benefit equally from the economy.

December 2022 also marks the final month the 70th anniversary year of Cambodia-Australia bilateral relations. The ASEAN-Australia side event reflects the steadfast commitment of Cambodia and Australia to women's economic empowerment. Cambodia and Australia look forward to working together in the years to come, through ASEAN and bilaterally, to enhance women's economic equality.

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