



AUSTRALIAN EMBASSY PHNOM PENH

MEDIA RELEASE

FOREIGN MINISTER'S VISIT TO CAMBODIA

The Hon Julie Bishop MP completed her first visit to Cambodia as Minister for Foreign Affairs today as part of a regional tour of ASEAN nations.

During Ms Bishop's brief visit to Phnom Penh, she had excellent meetings with Samdech Akka Moha Sena Padei Techo Hun Sen, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Cambodia, HE Hor Namhong, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, and HE Sar Kheng, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the Interior. She also had productive discussions with Australian and Cambodian business leaders.

Ms Bishop's meetings with Cambodian Government counterparts canvassed a broad range of bilateral priorities including:

- Cambodia's domestic political situation and Australia's longstanding and ongoing contribution to Cambodia's democratisation process
- human rights: reaffirming Australia's statement at the United Nations Universal Periodic Review in Geneva in January
- Australia's \$85.3m development cooperation program, which is helping Cambodia drive sustainable economic growth
- Cambodia's impressive economic growth and emerging opportunities for Australian businesses, including in the context of negotiations towards the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) and implementation of the ASEAN-Australia-New Zealand-Free Trade Agreement (AANZFTA)
- education cooperation, including Australia's New Colombo Plan initiative
- deep and longstanding people-to-people links
- Australia's support for the Mekong River Commission and for the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia
- the 40th anniversary of ASEAN-Australian relations, and the Leaders' Summit which will be held in the margins of the East Asia Summit in Myanmar later this year.

The Foreign Ministers also discussed the challenges to the region of people smuggling and drug trafficking, including close cooperation under the Bali Process on People Smuggling, Trafficking in Persons and Related Transnational Crime, as well as joint operations conducted under the 2002 bilateral Memorandum of Understanding. There has been a significant level of cooperation between relevant agencies on people smuggling matters, and Australia and Cambodia will continue to work through the Bali Process to manage processing of illegal maritime arrivals and returns.

The Foreign Minister appreciated the opportunity to exchange views with her Cambodian counterparts on a range of regional challenges of mutual interest, including common interest in the peaceful resolution of territorial disputes in the South China Sea, and the need for further work to address the challenge of landmines, including through the ASEAN Mine Action Centre.

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