



**AUSTRALIAN EMBASSY
PHNOM PENH**

MEDIA RELEASE

**VISIT TO SIHANOUKVILLE CAMBODIA BY ROYAL AUSTRALIAN NAVY SHIP
HMAS DARWIN**

The Royal Australian Navy ship, HMAS DARWIN, will be visiting the Royal Kingdom of Cambodia from 22 September 2009 to 26 September 2009. This visit reinforces the close links between Cambodia and Australia through the Australian Defence Cooperation Program and follows successful visits by Royal Australian Navy vessels in previous years: HMAS Bathurst April 2009, HMAS ADELAIDE in May 2007 and August 2005, HMAS TOOWOOMBA in April 2006, HMAS DARWIN in October 2004, HMAS DUBBO and HMAS GERALDTON in September 2004, and HMAS GASCOYNE and HMAS NORMAN in May 2003.

While in Sihanoukville, Royal Australian Navy personnel will visit the Royal Cambodian Navy Marine Base at Ream and provide specialist training and support in the use of ship maintenance equipment provided by Australia. As in previous years, the Australian crew will also compete in a variety of sports against the Royal Cambodian Navy and the Cambodian National Volleyball League (Disabled). Crew members of HMAS DARWIN will also be providing light engineering support to a local orphanage in Sihanoukville and a small team will also provide support to the Royal Cambodian Armed Forces College of Social Sciences and Languages in Phnom Penh.

The Commanding Officer of HMAS DARWIN, Commander Chris Smith, will be paying courtesy calls on the Governor of Sihanoukville, His Excellency Sbaong Sarath, and the Commander of Ream Naval Base His Excellency Rear Admiral Ouk Seiha.

HMAS Darwin is an Adelaide Class Long-Range Escort Frigate that undertakes roles including air defence, anti submarine warfare, surveillance, reconnaissance and interdiction. The ship is capable of countering simultaneous threats from the air, surface, and sub-surface. The ship is 138 metres in length and has a crew of 158.

Photographs and further information on HMAS DARWIN can be obtained from the World Wide Web at <http://www.navy.gov.au>.

There will be a media briefing and photograph opportunities in Sihanoukville on 22 September 2009. Media staff interested in attending these opportunities are requested to register interest with the point of contact below.

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