



**KINGDOM OF CAMBODIA
NATION RELIGION KING**

**MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION**

**Press Release
on the Outcomes of the Special ASEAN-U.S. Foreign Ministers Meeting and
Related Meetings**

4th May 2017, Washington D.C., USA

His Excellency Prak Sokhonn, Senior Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of the Kingdom of Cambodia led a Cambodian delegation to attend the Special ASEAN-U.S. Foreign Ministers Meeting and related meetings in Washington D.C., United States on 4 May 2017. The Meeting was the first-ever gathering between the Foreign Ministers of ASEAN Member States and the U.S. Secretary of State, Rex Tillerson since the new administration of President Donald Trump took office in January 2017.

The Meeting demonstrated the strong commitment of policy continuity of President Donald Trump toward ASEAN and provided a renewed opportunity to pursue the various initiatives agreed by ASEAN and the U.S. over the past years.

The Meeting also took note of the ongoing and planned commemorative activities by ASEAN Member States and the U.S. to celebrate the 40th Anniversary of Strategic Partnership.

The ASEAN Ministers welcomed the announcement that President Donald Trump will attend the forthcoming 5th ASEAN-U.S. Summit and the 12th East Asia Summit in the Philippines this November which reaffirmed the U.S.'s continued commitment to the region and to deepening ASEAN-U.S. Strategic Partnership. The ASEAN Ministers also expressed appreciation to the U.S.'s respect and support of ASEAN Centrality and ASEAN-led mechanisms in the evolving regional architecture of the Asia-Pacific.

The Meeting also had a candid exchange of views on regional and international issues of common concerns, including the counter-terrorism, Korean Peninsula and South China Sea.

During the meeting, H.E. Senior Minister stressed on the importance and the need to continue strengthening ASEAN-U.S. Strategic Partnership for the sake of peace, security and prosperity in the region.

On the issues of Korean Peninsula, H.E. Senior Minister reiterated Cambodia's commitment to join international community in expressing grave concern over the escalation of the tensions in the Korean Peninsula and strongly urged the DPRK to fully comply with obligations arising from all relevant United Nations Security Council (UNSC) Resolutions. H.E. Senior Minister stressed that all parties involved have to seriously consider turning wheel of the current vicious circle backward to avoid a possible nuclear tragedy for the whole region and the world.

On the issue of the South China Sea, H.E. Senior Minister welcomed the recent positive developments and expressed support for the ongoing process of dialogue between parties concerned in order to resolve their disputes by peaceful means, in accordance with international law including the UNCLOS, with the shared goal of maintaining peace, security, stability and prosperity in region.

On the sidelines of the Special ASEAN-U.S. Foreign Ministers Meeting, H.E. Prak Sokhonn also held a bilateral meeting with the **Honorable, John F. Kelly**, U.S. Secretary of the Homeland Security on 4th May 2017. The Ministers had a candid and frank exchange of views on how to further foster mutually beneficial cooperation in key areas, among others, border security cooperation, combating child sex tourism, and Cooperation on Repatriations. Concerning the cooperation on repatriation issue, H.E. Senior Minister reaffirmed to the U.S. side that Cambodia proposed to amend the 2002 Memorandum of Understanding on Repatriation and its 2003 addendum. H.E. Senior Minister also expressed commitment to working closely with the U.S. toward the early conclusion of a new agreement on the basis of mutual respect and understanding. H.E. Senior Minister also requested the U.S. side to consider exploring the possibility to set up a **transit and reception center** where the returnees may stay for a period of time to learn Khmer language, tradition and receive vocational training.

In addition, H.E. Senior Minister also held a bilateral meeting with the **Honorable Thomas A. Shannon Jr.**, Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs of the United States of America. During the meeting, both sides discussed the efforts to further increase trade cooperation between two countries to a higher level. H.E Senior Minister requested the U.S. to consider providing additional Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) and quotas to promote trade and further enhance labor opportunity. During the discussion, H.E. Senior Minister also requested the U.S. to further invest in Cambodia and to promote two-way exports. Moreover, the two sides agreed that the partnership between Cambodian and the U.S. should be strengthened through open and frank dialogues to avoid misunderstanding.

Phnom Penh, 08 May 2017

