



**KINGDOM OF CAMBODIA
NATION RELIGION KING**

**MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION**

**Department of Communication Technology
and Information**

**Press Release
on the Outcomes of the ASEAN Foreign Minister Meeting
the 15th ASEAN Political-Security Community Council Meeting and
the 19th ASEAN Coordinating Council Meeting
28 April 2017, Manila, Republic of the Philippines**

In preparation for the ASEAN Summit, H.E. Senior Minister Prak Sokhonn attended the ASEAN Foreign Ministers Meeting (AFM), the 15th ASEAN Political- Security Community Council Meeting (APSCCM) and the 19th ASEAN Coordinating Council Meeting (ACCM) that were held on 29 April 2017 and chaired by Acting Secretary Enrique Manalo.

During the AFM and APSCCM, the Foreign Ministers had fruitful discussions on further enhancing ASEAN Community Building efforts, maintaining ASEAN Centrality while further deepening ASEAN's relations with external partners, and regional developments and international issues of common interest and concern.

Among the regional and international issues discussed including the developments in the Korean Peninsula, the situation in the South China Sea, transnational crimes such as piracy and armed robbery against ships, and violent extremism and terrorism.

The ASEAN Foreign Ministers issued the Statement on the Situation in the Korean Peninsula as attached herewith.

The ACCM discussed the follow-ups to the 28th and 29th ASEAN Summits held last year, and considered the outcome documents including an ASEAN Declaration Recognizing the Role of the Civil Service As a Catalyst for Achieving ASEAN Community Vision 2025, as well as the efforts of the ASEAN Political-Security, Economic and Socio-cultural Community Councils

The ASEAN Coordinating Council Meeting also discussed the new format in the conduct of the ASEAN Summit and Post Ministerial Conferences with Dialogue Partners, which will pave the way for an effective and efficient conduct of ASEAN's meetings with Dialogue Partners later this year.

During these meetings, H.E. Senior Minister Prak Sokhonn expressed his pleasure to see the progress made to conclude the ASEAN Consensus/Instrument on the Protection and Promotion of Migrant Workers so that it can be adopted at the next ASEAN Summit in November. The Senior Minister initiated to upgrade the document from a "moral binding consensus" into a "legally binding instrument".

Talking about ASEAN Community Building, H.E. Senior Minister Prak Sokhonn called on ASEAN Foreign Ministers to pay close attention to two ASEAN initiatives, namely: the "Initiative for ASEAN Integration Work Plan III" and the "Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity 2025 (MPAC-2025)", which have a direct impact on ASEAN's efforts in narrowing the development gap.

As far as ASEAN-US relations is concerned, the Senior Minister recalled that "since our last discussions in Boracay last February, we still do not have a clear reading of the U.S.'s foreign policy vis-a-vis the Pacific region, particularly toward ASEAN". " However, I am confident that the ASEAN-US Strategic Partnership would continue to remain a priority, considering ASEAN's geo-strategic importance and our increasing economic and trading potentials in the region and beyond", stressed the Senior Minister. "In this spirit, I look forward to attend early next month in Washington DC the Special ASEAN-U.S. Foreign Ministers' Meeting, by which time hopefully both ASEAN and the U.S. can reaffirm our common and strong desire to further strengthen and deepen this strategic partnership," concluded the Senior Minister.

On ASEAN Centrality in the evolving regional architecture, H.E. Senior Minister Prak Sokhonn, after underlining that "the world is currently undergoing an important period of shifting power relations", expressed view that "we should continue to maintain our ASEAN Centrality, our unity and solidarity. For Cambodia, our position is clear: we adhere to the core principle of the ASEAN Charter, which is to maintain and enhance peace, security and stability and further strengthen peace-oriented values in the region".

With regard to the Korean Peninsula issue, H.E. Senior Minister Prak Sokhonn highlighted that " the situation in the Korean Peninsula has deteriorated dramatically with DPRK having launched more ballistic missiles and preparing to test its nuclear weapons. Similarly, the installation of the Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) in the ROK and the increasing presence of the U.S. naval strike force are exacerbating the tension in this already volatile region. The prospect of a full-scale war, however unlikely it is, poses a serious threat to peace, security, and stability, not just in the peninsula, but also in the whole Asia-Pacific region, including of course our ASEAN sub-region". "I agree with the Minister of Malaysia in trying to convey the message to the U.S. Secretary of State that the United States too have to consider taking steps to ease the tension", the Senior Minister further underlined. Cambodia reaffirms its full support for the denuclearization of the region. The ASEAN Leaders join the international community in making clear that DPRK must comply with relevant UNSC Resolutions and abandon its pursuit of nuclear weapon.

Concerning the development in the South China Sea, H.E. Senior Minister Prak Sokhonn observed that "the recent situation has been relatively stable, especially after the adoption of the Joint Statement on the Application of the Code for Unplanned Encounters at Sea (CUES), the entry into effect of the Hotline Communications, and the positive progress in the dialogue process between leaders of the parties directly concerned". The Senior Minister then called on parties directly concerned to resolve their disputes by peaceful means through consultation and negotiation and suggested to seize this positive momentum to further advance the progress in the drafting of the COC framework to lay out a robust and effective mechanism in responding to new geopolitical dynamics in the South China Sea".

29 April 2017

