

**Joint Statement**  
**on the Establishment of a Strategic Partnership**  
**between the Republic of Korea and the Kingdom of Cambodia**

At the invitation of His Excellency Yoon Suk Yeol, President of the Republic of Korea (hereinafter referred to as the ROK), Samdech Moha Borvor Thipadei HUN Manet, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Cambodia, paid an official visit to the ROK from 15 to 18 May 2024.

During the summit meeting, the two leaders expressed satisfaction with the significant development in the relations between the ROK and Cambodia across all fields, including political, economic, social and cultural areas and people-to-people exchanges, since the re-establishment of diplomatic relations in 1997 which was initiated by Samdech Akka Moha Sena Padei Techo HUN Sen, then Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Cambodia.

With full confidence in the future of the bilateral partnership, both sides agreed to elevate bilateral relations between the ROK and Cambodia to a Strategic Partnership and decided to further strengthen exchanges and cooperation in the following areas.

**POLITICAL, SECURITY AND DEFENSE COOPERATION**

1. Both sides expressed satisfaction with frequent high-level exchanges and communications between the executive and legislative branches of the two countries. Both sides agreed to sustain and increase this positive momentum by continuing to facilitate high-level visits in various sectors, and emphasized the importance of parliamentary diplomacy for mutual support in the region and the world.
2. Both sides welcomed the successful outcomes of the Fifth Meeting of the Cambodia-Korea Joint Commission in Phnom Penh on 31 October 2023, and agreed to hold the Joint Commission on a regular basis to deepen dialogue on bilateral cooperation as well as regional and international issues of common interest.
3. Both sides highly valued close cooperation in the defense area between the ROK and Cambodia and reaffirmed their commitment to strengthening bilateral defense cooperation through various activities, including but not limited to, formulating and implementing Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs), exchanging visits by senior officials, engaging in education and training, enhancing counter-terrorism cooperation, and conducting exercises. The Cambodian side welcomed the ROK Navy's plan to conduct its first port call in Cambodia this year. Both

sides expressed hope to utilize this visit as an opportunity to strengthen cooperation between the navies of the two countries.

4. Both sides noted with satisfaction robust cooperation in the field of the United Nations Peacekeeping Operations (PKO) through the UN-ROK-Cambodia Triangular Partnership Program. Both sides agreed to continue enhancing and expanding cooperation in this field to promote international peace and security. The ROK side expressed its willingness to continue working closely with the Cambodian side to strengthen Cambodia's PKO capabilities and provide assistance to the Royal Cambodian Armed Forces, including training, technical support and equipment.
5. Both sides agreed to enhance cooperation among relevant authorities to achieve a more comprehensive and coordinated response to the growing transnational crimes, including drug trafficking, trafficking in persons, cyber crimes and scam operations, in accordance with the relevant MoUs and documents between the two countries, as applicable. Both sides also agreed to strengthen cooperation on maritime safety and security to promote peace and stability in the region.

#### **ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL COOPERATION**

6. Both sides expressed satisfaction with strong economic cooperation between the ROK and Cambodia, particularly the upward trend in Korean investment in Cambodia and the post-pandemic recovery in bilateral trade. Both sides agreed to leverage bilateral and multilateral economic cooperation mechanisms, including the Korea-Cambodia Free Trade Agreement (KCFTA), the ASEAN-Korea Free Trade Agreement (AKFTA), and the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP). Both sides welcomed the successful convening of the first meeting of the KCFTA Joint Committee, co-chaired by the Minister of Commerce of Cambodia and the Minister for Trade of the ROK, on 13 May 2024 in the ROK, and agreed to continue discussions to initiate negotiations on trade in services and investment, aiming to further enhance bilateral trade and investment. Both sides also agreed to enhance cooperation in digital trade and intellectual property for innovation-driven sustainable development.
7. Recognizing the importance of economic security and supply chain resilience for the sustainable development of both countries, both sides agreed to seek ways to deepen economic cooperation and strengthen supply chains.
8. Both sides agreed to jointly promote Korean investment in Cambodia, with a focus on small and medium-sized enterprises and export-oriented high-tech industries, such as automobile assembly, electronics, electrical equipment and machinery. In an effort to promote bilateral investment, both sides agreed to establish a regular consultation channel between the Council for the Development of Cambodia (CDC) and the ROK Embassy to Cambodia to create a more

favorable investment environment for Korean businesses. In this connection, both sides concurred to foster a close collaboration between the CDC and the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Energy of the ROK, the ROK Embassy to Cambodia and the Korea Trade-Investment Promotion Agency to explore the possibility of setting up the Cambodia-ROK Special Economic Zone to further facilitate and attract investment projects from the ROK to Cambodia.

9. Both sides expressed satisfaction with robust financial cooperation between the ROK and Cambodia including Korean investments in 15 financial institutions in Cambodia and agreed to pursue additional cooperation in this sector focusing on the application of digital finance.
10. Both sides took note of the significant progress of the securities market in Cambodia whereas the Cambodia Securities Exchange is a joint venture between the Ministry of Economy and Finance of Cambodia and the Korea Exchange. Both sides agreed to enhance the cooperation between the securities regulators of the two countries, especially in the area of digital securities, fintech and sustainable bonds.
11. Both sides highly appreciated strong cooperation in the agricultural sector with numerous projects ongoing in Cambodia. Both sides agreed to continue the cooperative partnership in this field, to foster agri-trade as well as to enhance the transfer of farming techniques and technology, improvement of agricultural infrastructure and fostering the food processing industry. Both sides expressed satisfaction with the progress of the establishment of the TASK Center for Food Processing Sector.
12. Both sides commended the successful operation of the Employment Permit System and Seasonal Worker Program and agreed to further strengthen labor cooperation. The Cambodian side conveyed deep appreciation to the ROK government for recruiting and providing support for Cambodian workers in the ROK, as well as the technical support for the establishment of Occupational Safety and Health Training (OSH) Centre in Cambodia. The Cambodian side also looked forward to the continued support from the ROK, including the increase in quota and job opportunities for Cambodian workers. The ROK side expressed gratitude for the valuable contributions of Cambodian workers to the Korean economy.
13. Both sides expressed their commitment to cooperating and collaborating for the mutual development of the digital sector in both countries, particularly in the fields of advanced and emerging technologies, through various means. In this regard, both sides welcomed the establishment of the National Incubation Center of Cambodia (NICC) in March 2024, funded by the Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA), which will contribute to the acceleration of Cambodia's digital economy and digital transformation.
14. Both sides emphasized the importance of cultivating the development of future generation equipped with industrial and digital skills to drive industrial transformation and innovation.

Against this backdrop, both sides welcomed the launch of KOICA's new grant program that aims to empower young people with industrial and ICT skills through technical and vocational training, quality STEM education and fellowship programs.

15. Recognizing science, technology, and innovation (STI) as a critical and evolving sector pivotal for socio-economic advancement, both sides agreed to enhance cooperation in this sector. In particular, the Cambodian side emphasized the importance of research infrastructure development, STI parks, scholarships for graduate study in science, technology, engineering and mathematics, collaborative research and development, and technology transfer. Both sides welcomed KOICA's ongoing project in Cambodia, entitled "Building Capacity and Establishing Enabling Environment in ICT Majors of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET)."

### **SOCIO-CULTURAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL COOPERATION**

16. Both sides noted with great satisfaction the steady recovery in the level of people-to-people exchanges between the two countries in the post-pandemic period. Both sides agreed to step up efforts to further enhance bilateral cooperation and partnerships in the tourism sector through various mechanisms.
17. Both sides emphasized the importance of robust cooperation in education between the two countries, which predates the resumption of diplomatic relations in 1997. The Cambodian side expressed appreciation to the ROK side for reaffirming its commitment to the continued support for human capital development in Cambodia, which is in line with Cambodia's Pentagonal Strategy-Phase I.
18. Both sides highly valued the sister-city relations between the cities and provinces of the two countries, and encouraged other cities and provinces to consider establishing similar sister-city relationships to promote economic development and people-to-people ties.
19. Both sides recognized the importance of smart cities which ensure greener, and more inclusive, livable and sustainable urban environments. To enhance people's life quality, both sides agreed to share experiences, best practices and innovative solutions in building smart, sustainable and resilient cities.
20. The Cambodian side expressed sincere appreciation to the ROK side for actively supporting cultural heritage conservation and restoration efforts in Cambodia, including the Chorm Temple in the Preah Pithu Temple Group and the Terrace of the Elephants at Angkor Thom. Both sides looked forward to engaging in joint efforts to preserve Angkor Wat under the MoU on Cooperation in the Field of Cultural Heritage, signed by the APSARA National Authority and the ROK Cultural Heritage Administration in February 2024. Both sides recognized the

importance of capacity building in cultural development and expressed their commitment to the continued cooperation in the field of cultural education and development projects, including the project for establishing arts education platform in Cambodia and the PEACE Education project.

21. Both sides reaffirmed their commitment to strengthening the protection of each other's nationals in their respective countries according to their applicable laws. Both sides encouraged the early conclusion of the Treaty on the Transfer of Sentenced Persons between the two countries and the effective implementation of the MoU on Mutual Cooperation between the Ministries of Justice of the two countries, signed on 12 December 2018.
22. Both sides expressed their willingness to further enhance cooperation in addressing environmental degradation and climate change, emphasizing collaborative efforts such as the Clean Air for Sustainable ASEAN (CASA) project. Recognizing the urgency of mitigating climate change, both sides agreed to expedite the conclusion of negotiations on an MoU between the ROK's Ministry of Trade, Industry and Energy and Cambodia's Ministry of Environment to implement Article 6 of the Paris Agreement. Both sides also agreed to strengthen cooperation through regional and global partnerships, including the Carbon Free Energy (CFE) Initiative led by the ROK.

#### **DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION**

23. Both sides expressed satisfaction with the current state of development cooperation between the two countries. The Cambodian side expressed appreciation to the people and government of the ROK for contributing to Cambodia's socio-economic development through the continuous provision of development assistance in close cooperation and consultation with the government of Cambodia.
24. The ROK side acknowledged Cambodia as an important strategic partner in development cooperation and reiterated the commitment to continuing its support by implementing the ROK's Country Partnership Strategy (CPS) for Cambodia 2021-2025. The strategy focuses on four key areas – transport, water management and health/hygiene, education and rural development – in line with Cambodia's National Strategic Development Plan and priorities in promoting inclusive and sustainable economic growth. Both sides agreed to formulate the next phase of the CPS when deemed appropriate.
25. Both sides welcomed the renewal of the Framework Arrangement Concerning Loans from the Economic Development Cooperation Fund for the years 2022 through 2030, for KRW loans not exceeding the equivalent of USD 3 billion, and agreed to continue working closely together to develop Cambodia's economic and social infrastructure. Both sides expressed satisfaction

with the ongoing Cambodia-Korea Friendship Bridge Project, a symbol of the two countries' ever-growing friendship, and agreed to expedite the implementation of the project.

26. Both sides noted with satisfaction active cooperation in the healthcare sector and looked forward to the continued mutual support to successfully implement the projects, as stated in the Agreed Minutes of the 5<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Cambodia-Korea Joint Commission, held in Phnom Penh on 31 October 2023 and other projects as agreed by both sides.
27. Both sides agreed to continue to enhance cooperation in supporting Cambodia's civil service sector management and development as well as public administration reform, under the MoU on Human Resource Management in the Civil Service signed by the Ministry of Civil Service of Cambodia and the Ministry of Personnel Management of the ROK in October 2021. Additionally, both sides agreed to enhance cooperation under ASEAN Cooperation on Civil Service Matter Plus Three (ACCSM+3) framework. The ROK side expressed its support for the Cambodia Royal School of Administration Capacity Building Project 2025-2029, which KOICA has already studied and approved.

## **REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION**

28. Reaffirming the importance of international peace and security, free trade, rule of law, democracy, human rights and freedom of navigation and overflight, both sides agreed to continue and to expand cooperation in international fora on global and regional issues. Both sides also reaffirmed their commitment to cooperate in the United Nations and other international and multilateral organizations.
29. Both sides called on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) to abide by all relevant UN Security Council Resolutions and stressed the importance of peaceful dialogue in order to realize lasting peace and stability in the Korean Peninsula. To this end, the Cambodian side welcomed the ROK's Audacious Initiative, which aims to achieve a denuclearized, peaceful and prosperous Korean Peninsula that contributes to peace, stability, and prosperity in the region.
30. The Cambodian side expressed support for the ROK's proposal to establish the ASEAN-ROK Comprehensive Strategic Partnership (CSP) in 2024, celebrating the 35th anniversary of ASEAN-ROK Dialogue Relations. In addition, the Cambodian side welcomed the Korea-ASEAN Solidarity Initiative (KASI), and looked forward to the implementation of its eight core lines for mutual benefits, while upholding ASEAN Centrality.
31. Both sides reaffirmed their commitment to deepening ASEAN-ROK cooperation in order to foster peace, stability and prosperity in the region. The ROK side also reiterated its support for the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific (AOIP), which provides a guide for ASEAN's

engagement with external partners by undertaking practical and mutually beneficial cooperation on the four priority areas identified in the AOIP through ASEAN-led mechanisms. The Cambodian side also welcomed the ROK's commitment to a free, peaceful, and prosperous Indo-Pacific region, and noted that the AOIP and the ROK's Indo-Pacific Strategy (IPS) share relevant fundamental principles in promoting peace and cooperation.

32. The Cambodian side commended the ROK's steadfast support for ASEAN Community building efforts, particularly by increasing its annual contribution to the ASEAN-ROK Cooperation Fund from USD 16 million in 2022 to USD 32 million by 2027. The ROK side expressed its commitment to contributing to the implementation of priorities under the Initiative for ASEAN Integration (IAI) and supporting the works of the ASEAN Regional Mine Action Centre (ARMAC).
33. Both sides expressed satisfaction with the positive progress of the Mekong-ROK Cooperation, which has reinforced their commitment to promoting inclusive and sustainable development in the Mekong sub-region, and commended the successful organization of the 11<sup>th</sup> Mekong-ROK Business Forum, co-chaired by Cambodia and the ROK, last November in Seoul. The Cambodian side highly appreciated the ROK for closely collaborating with Mekong countries under the Mekong-ROK Action Plan 2021-2025, and the ROK's commitment to doubling its annual contribution to the Mekong-ROK Cooperation Fund from USD 5 million in 2022 to USD 10 million by 2027.

During the visit, both sides signed six documents, namely (1) Protocol Amending the Framework Arrangement concerning Loans from the EDCF for the years 2022 through 2026, (2) Memorandum of Understanding on Investment Cooperation, (3) Memorandum of Understanding on Reinforced Intellectual Property Cooperation, (4) Letter of Intent to Strengthen Cooperation on Narcotics Control, (5) Memorandum of Understanding on Skilled and Professional Talent Development Program, and (6) Loan Agreement for the Rural Roads Improvement Project IV.

Samdech Moha Borvor Thipadei HUN Manet expressed his sincere appreciation to the ROK government for the warm welcome and hospitality accorded to him and the Cambodian delegation, and invited President Yoon Suk Yeol to pay a state visit to Cambodia at a mutually convenient time.

Seoul, 16 May 2024