



**Remarks
by
Samdech Techo HUN SEN,
Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Cambodia,
At the Conferment Ceremony of the Distinguished World Leader
Lifetime Achievement Award,
by Strategic Institute for Asia Pacific (KSI),
On "Enhancing ASEAN-China Relations"
Peace Palace, 19th December 2022**

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- *Mr. Tan Sri Michael Yeoh, the President of Strategic Institute for Asia Pacific (KSI);*
- *Samdech, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen!*

Today, I am greatly honored and pleased to receive the **"Distinguished World Leader Lifetime Achievement Award"** from Strategic Institute for Asia Pacific. I would like to express my profound appreciation to the Committee of the Strategic Institute for Asia Pacific for recognizing my achievements and endeavors over the past four decades. Taking this opportunity, I would also like to congratulate the successful organization of the **Global Chinese Economic and Technology Summit** on **7th December 2022**.

Truly, the conferment of this noble award is a testament of the brilliant success of the Royal Government of Cambodia's right leadership, especially through the implementation of the **"Win-Win Policy"**, which has brought about the national unification, peace, and political stability. This has become a strong driver and pillar in promoting Cambodia's economic growth to

achieve an average of 7% per annum, making Cambodia become a lower-middle income country in 2015 and is moving towards an Upper-Middle Income country by 2030 and a High-Income country by 2050.

- ***Samdech, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen!***

Since Cambodia became the 10th member of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in 1999, Cambodia has been recognized as a country that has actively integrated itself into the region and the world, developed good friendship and cooperation with other countries, and is now actively engaging in all international affairs on equal rights and equal footing, under both the regional and global frameworks. In fact, the efforts to successfully lead and organize the ASEAN Summits in 2002, 2012 and 2022 are the national pride for Cambodia in the international arena, demonstrating to the world the spirit of contributing to building the ASEAN Community and strengthening multilateral cooperation for peace, stability, security, and sustainable development in the region and world.

For 2022, Cambodia has assumed the rotating chairmanship of ASEAN for the third time, as the region and the world are facing pressures from all directions, including geo-political competition, War, COVID-19, food and energy crisis, and the global economic slowdown. Despite these many challenges, Cambodia has successfully navigated ASEAN, under the theme **"ASEAN A.C.T.: Addressing Challenges Together"** that reflects the importance on the agenda for peace and cooperation and endeavors to mobilize our joint efforts to reduce the impacts of confrontation between Superpowers, cultivate friendly relations, expand tangible social and economic cooperation, build trust with partner countries, and especially to promote regional integration and achieve the **"ASEAN Vision 2025"**.

- *Samdech, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen!*

Maintaining the prestige of ASEAN in all aspects at global stage is inseparable from the engagement of ASEAN dialogue partners, especially the People's Republic of China, which is recognized as the world's second largest economic Superpower. In fact, ASEAN-China cooperation has grown steadily over the past three decades, reflecting through establishment of the **"ASEAN-China Comprehensive Strategic Partnership"** in 2021, and now is moving towards the establishment of an upcoming **"China-ASEAN Free Trade Area version 3.0"**. For instance, China is ASEAN's the largest trading partner, with total merchandise trade between ASEAN and China increased to around **USD 669 Billion** in 2021, up 28%, while the inflow of Foreign Direct Investments (FDIs) from China to ASEAN amounted to **USD 13.6 Billion** in 2021, which almost doubled the value compared to that in 2020. With these contributions, based on the assessment and forecast of the ASEAN +3 Macroeconomic Research Office (AMRO) last October, the ASEAN region will be able to achieve growth rate of **5.3%** and **4.9%** in 2022 and 2023, respectively, which is a high rate compared to other regions of the world.

While under the bilateral framework, the cooperation between the two countries has grown politically, economically, and socially, which is reflected in the frequent mutual visits, expansion of trade, investment, and tourism as well as the increase in people-to-people exchanges. In particular, the relationship between Cambodia and China has grown with pride to the point of being recognized as an **"Iron-Clad Friend"**, along with the increase of bilateral trade to around **USD 11 Billion** in 2021, up by approximately 37% compared to that in 2020.

In addition, Cambodia has always received supports and assistances from Chinese friend, both financially and non-financially, especially in the most difficult times caused by the COVID-19 crisis, which contributed to

Unity in the evolving regional architecture and promoting mutual synergy and reinforcement among the mechanisms led by ASEAN.

At the same time, ASEAN and China must pay crucial attention to deepening cooperation in all areas, particularly such that accelerate socio-economic integration, remove trade barriers, enhance the resiliency of regional supply and production chains, embrace new opportunities arising from digital economy, green growth, energy transition, and increase the capabilities for micro, small, and medium enterprises (**MSMEs**), which is regarded as a pillar of economic growth in the new normal, and especially the adherence to multilateralism approach for resolving all issues.

Before concluding, I would like to emphasize that we will continue to make greater efforts to develop Cambodia and maintain the achievements that Cambodia has made over more than the past forty years. Meanwhile, ASEAN and China will continue to constantly build on its achievements as well as enhance various cooperations to promote peace, stability, and development in the entire region and world. I hope that the next generations will continue to hold such unity spirit to maintain peace and promote national and regional development and continue making more development on top of the present achievements.

Once again, I would like to thank the **Strategic Institute for Asia Pacific** and wish you all bright success in future tasks. Finally, I would like to wish **Samdech, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen** who are present in this ceremony good health and success in all endeavors.

Thank You!