



**CAMBODIA'S
FOREIGN RELATIONS
IN REGIONAL AND
GLOBAL CONTEXTS**



Edited by
DETH SOK UDOM
SUN SUON
SERKAN BULUT

ENDORSEMENT

It is indeed a privilege for me to be asked to write an endorsement for Konrad Adenauer Stiftung's new book, *Cambodia's Foreign Relations in Regional and Global Contexts*. This academic publication will certainly contribute to a better understanding of the evolution of Cambodia's foreign policy in the context of fast-paced and changing regional and international landscapes.

There is no denying the fact that there are not many publications written on this subject from the perspectives of Cambodian scholars and intellectuals, many of whom I assume have witnessed the country's painful journey from the horrors of war at its worst period in the midst of the 1970s to peace, reconstruction and reintegration into the global community of nations. We must be mindful that Cambodia's foreign policy imperatives have been dictated internally by its historical, cultural, geographical and political contexts while externally shaped, to a great extent, by powerful forces of globalization, competing geopolitical multipolar rivalries, and the rising of traditional and non-traditional security threats, as well as other mega trends like climate change and food/energy security issues, to mention just the major ones.

As great advances in science and technology continue to unfold in the 21st century, bringing along innovation and improved well-being to humanity, the post-Cold War geopolitical landscape has brought, on the other hand, many uncertainties to the world. The current global and regional contexts, characterized by i) increasing likelihoods of conflicts (as in the Korean Peninsula), ii) the newly emerging trends of protectionism and populism (as embodied in President Trump's "*America First*" and now "*America Alone*" with its pullout from the "*Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP)*"), iii) the rise of China as an economic power and its grand strategy of the "*Belt and Road Initiative*" (recently counterweighted by Japan's "*Free and Open Indo-Pacific Strategy*," in tandem with India's "*Act East Policy*," and ASEAN-led "*Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP)*"), are forming multi-dimensional, cross-cutting geopolitico-economic kaleidoscopic forces that exert tremendous pressure on a small country like Cambodia.

Last but not least, Cambodia's foreign policy alignment with its regional ASEAN Community, well known for its "*ASEAN Centrality*" and "*ASEAN Way*," offers another perspective on how the country is conducting its policy coordination in a multilateral framework or in fora like the G20, the WTO, ASEM, and the UN, on global issues such as the UN peacekeeping operations and the SDGs.

In sum, and in light of the above, I can only congratulate Konrad Adenauer Stiftung and all the contributing authors for their perseverance in delivering such a quality publication that is much needed for our academia, think tanks and policy makers.

Enjoy the reading!

His Excellency Dr. SOK Siphana

Advisor to the Royal Government of Cambodia