



THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 2023 // WWW.PHNOMPENHPOST.COM/SPECIAL-REPORTS

# On 70th anniversary of Japan-Cambodia ties, close friendship continues to flourish

I AM delighted to be able to celebrate the birthday of His Majesty the Emperor of Japan with the people of Cambodia.

This year marks the 70th anniversary of the establishment, in 1953, of diplomatic relations between Japan and Cambodia.

In 1954, a year after the establishment of diplomatic relations, Cambodia renounced its right to demand World War II reparations from Japan.

The Japanese government invited then His Royal Highness Prince Sihanouk to Japan as a state guest in 1955. During His Royal Highness's visit, Japan's House of Representatives adopted a vote of thanks to Cambodia. Moreover, the two countries signed a Treaty of Amity during Prince Sihanouk's visit to Japan.

This was the first treaty with a foreign country for both countries. For Japan, it was the first since the Treaty of San Francisco came into force, and for Cambodia it was the first since it gained independence.

Japan became actively involved in Cambodia's peace process at the end of the 1980s, and hosted the Cambodia Peace Conference in Tokyo in 1990.

After the Paris Peace Agreement was signed in 1991, Japan played an active role in building peace in Cambodia and supporting the reconstruction process. Japan dispatched personnel to the UN PKO for the first time in its history.

This year marks the 30th anniversary of the Constituent Assembly elections held under UNTAC. We hope that the general elections in July this year will be conducted in a manner that is free, fair and reflects the diverse voices from the Cambodian people.

Japan has also cooperated with Cambodia in its reconstruction and socio-economic development efforts. Japan's cooperation has not been limited



HE Ueno Atsushi, Ambassador of Japan to the Kingdom of Cambodia. SUPPLIED

to infrastructure improvement, but has also extended into public health, water supply, education, landmine clearance and human resource development.

In addition, Japan has conducted projects to strengthen governance and the rule of law that is designed to support democratic development in Cambodia.

Last year was a special and very important year for Japan-Cambodia bilateral relations.

Samdech Prime Minister Hun Sen visited Japan twice. First, to attend the Asia-Pacific Water Summit in Kumamoto, and again to attend the state funeral for former Prime Minister Shinzo Abe.

Prime Minister Fumio

Kishida also visited Cambodia twice, in March and November. The Japan-Cambodia summit meetings took place four times during the year.

In November, the two leaders agreed to upgrade bilateral relations to a "Comprehensive Strategic Partnership". It is vitally important that we develop a substantial relationship worthy of the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership title from this year.

From my perspective, under the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership, bilateral relations cannot be dependent upon one party or the other. Under the new partnership, the two countries will work more closely together in addressing the common challenges being

faced in the regional and international arena.

And in the bilateral context, the two countries will expand their cooperation into new areas.

Cambodia has given support to Japan's position on many issues, including UN Security Council Reform, the North Korea abductions issue, Japan's vision for a Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP) and Japan's new National Security Strategy issued last December.

Our shared response to the situation in Ukraine is a prime example of our cooperation on international issues.

Under Samdech Prime Minister Hun Sen's strong leadership, Cambodia expressed its firm stance against the use of force

to take territory from other countries in clear violation of the UN Charter, and joined the co-sponsorship of the UN General Assembly resolutions.

Japan and Cambodia not only share the same position on numerous issues, but also collaborate in practice. Recently, the two countries collaborated in the training of Ukrainian demining personnel on how to use a Japanese mine detector.

With regard to bilateral relations, during his visit to Cambodia last March, Prime Minister Kishida identified five priority areas of cooperation.

These include: 1. Important infrastructure development, including the Sihanoukville Port; 2. Security; 3. Economic relations; 4. Democracy and human rights; and 5. New areas of cooperation, such as digital, cyber and economic security.

As for new areas of cooperation, the two countries have already commenced cooperation on cyber security and digital technology. Examples of this cooperation include, in relation to cyber security, the provision of equipment to enhance the capacity of CamCERT (the Cambodia Computer Emergency Response Team) to deal with cyber security incidents.

With reference to digital technology, Japan is cooperating with the Cambodia-Japan Digital Manufacturing Center (CJDM) at the Royal University of Phnom Penh in the development of high-skilled human resources to work in the industrial sector.

Furthermore, defence and security cooperation between the two countries is strengthened. At the invitation of Lieutenant General Hun Manet, Commander of the Royal Cambodian Army, Yoshida Yoshihide, Chief of Staff of the Japan Ground Self-Defense Force, visited Cambodia last week. Vessels from the Japanese Maritime Self-Defense Force will make portcalls in a couple of months.

As to economic relations between the two countries, Japanese investment has gradually returned to Cambodia after Covid-19, as is evidenced by Toyota's decision to establish an assembly plant in Cambodia.

I recognise that one of my most important roles as Ambassador is to appeal to Japanese companies to invest in Cambodia.

In order to ensure that our solid bilateral relationship continues into the future, people-to-people exchanges and the building and maintaining of long-lasting trust are crucial.

Through active cultural and artistic exchanges, tourism, overseas study programmes and technical training, we hope to build trust between the people of Japan and Cambodia. From February 23-26, the Japan-Cambodia Kizuna Festival will be held at the Cambodia-Japan Cooperation Center (CJCC).

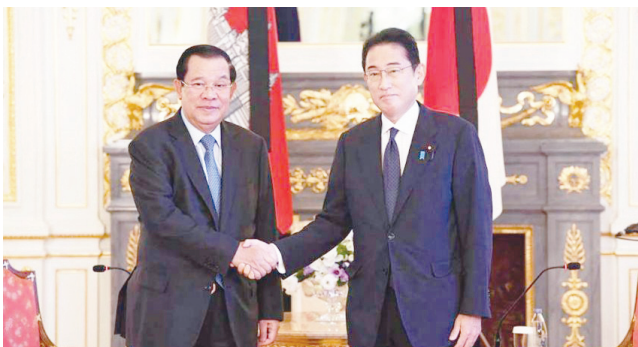
I hope the Cambodian people will take these opportunities to become even closer to Japan.

Last year, Cambodia successfully chaired ASEAN. This year Cambodia will host the South-east Asian (SEA) Games and the ASEAN Para Games, and I wish Cambodia much success with those Games.

On the occasion of our National Day, I wish Their Majesties, the Emperor and the Empress of Japan, His Majesty Preah Bat Samdech Preah Boromneath Norodom Sihanouk, King of Cambodia, Her Majesty the Queen-Mother Norodom Monineath Sihanouk and the peoples of Cambodia and Japan, good health, happiness and prosperity.

I also wish for the friendship between Japan and Cambodia to continue to flourish. ■

**HE Ueno Atsushi, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Japan to the Kingdom of Cambodia.**



Prime Minister Hun Sen meets Japanese counterpart Fumio Kishida in Tokyo on September 28. SPM



King Norodom Sihanouk and Akashi Yasushi, UN Representative for UNTAC. Japan has played an active role in building peace in Cambodia. UN



The Neak Loeung Bridge, also called the Tsubasa Bridge, linking Kandal and Prey Veng provinces was constructed with Japanese ODA. JICA





## For The Future of Japan and Cambodia

## 日本とカンボジアの未来のために

## ដើម្បីអនាគតកម្ពុជានិងជប៉ុន

### JBAC pivotal in shaping strong bilateral ties

The Japanese Business Association of Cambodia (JBAC) was established in 1992 with the primary aim of promoting Japanese companies in Cambodia and developing economic activities between the two nations.

Made up of 260 Japanese companies, the members of JBAC are mostly involved in the manufacturing, construction, real estate, trade, transport, commerce, finance, insurance and services sectors.

All its members maintain high standards, and comply with Cambodian social norms and laws, adhering strictly to new regulations and labor laws.

JBAC recognizes that the Cambodia-Japan public-private sector meeting – held in accordance with the Cambodia-Japan Investment Agreement – is an important opportunity to discuss about further improving the Kingdom's investment environment.

Meanwhile, the channel of dialogue with the Cambodian government has expanded in recent years, with greater opportunities existing for individual dialogue and discussions with relevant ministries and agencies, while JBAC's voice has been reflected in policymaking decisions.

Existing companies are expanding their investments with confidence, which has become a tailwind for Japanese investors currently considering new investment opportunities.

JBAC, with the cooperation of the Embassy of Japan in Phnom Penh, the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), the Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO) and other International Organizations, Associations and Chambers, have played a pivotal role in expanding Cambodia's economic growth as a public-private unity.

JBAC continues to contribute to Cambodia's economic development by working on business developments that meet the social needs of Cambodians, with Japanese quality every time.

### Happy Japan National Day and 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Friendship Between Japan and Cambodia! !

# JBAC

## カンボジア日本人商工会

## Japanese Business Association of Cambodia

### JTI Cambodia: A Few Facts About Your Dream Company

We have employees in over 70 countries around the world

8 RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT CENTERS

48,000 EMPLOYEES

39 FINISHED GOODS AND TOBACCO-RELATED FACTORIES

119 NATIONALITIES

34 COUNTRIES WHERE WE SOURCE TOBACCO LEAF

425 OFFICES

JT International (Cambodia) Co., Ltd – known as JTI Cambodia and a member of the JT Group of Companies in Japan – has been recognised with Gold Tax Compliance for 2022 and 2023 by the Cambodian government.

And in 2020, it was acknowledged and ranked by Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen as a Top Largest Taxpayer in the Kingdom.

Significantly, it is the first and only company in Cambodia to be certified as Top Employer for three years in a row by the global Top Employers Institute based in the Netherlands. With employee wellbeing a particular focus, JTI Cambodia provides its staff members with excellent working conditions, competitive benefits, equal opportunities and equal pay, and meaningful learning and development opportunities through its world-leading initiatives.

These include the innovative New Ways of Working (NWOW) flexible remote working

model, and a global family leave policy of five months parental leave with paid 100 per cent full base salary provided to all employees regardless of gender or sexual orientation, or whether they have become parents by giving birth or through adoption or surrogacy.

Investing in communities is also a main business priority for JTI. It has supported the underprivileged, people with disabilities, seniors and the homeless, as well as communities hit by floods.

JTI further invests in environmental sustainability by installing solar water pumps and solar streetlights, and through planting trees with its partners.

As a responsible and compliant Japanese company operating in Cambodia, JTI will in the years to come continue contributing to the Kingdom's socio-economic growth.

top EMPLOYER GLOBAL 2023

top EMPLOYER ASIA PACIFIC 2023

top EMPLOYER CAMBODIA 2023

# Happy National Day of JAPAN

23 February

JT International (Cambodia) Co., Ltd

# JTI





# A double milestone for longstanding Japan-Cambodia friendship of trust

**A**S 2023 marks the 70th anniversary of the beginning of the Kingdom's official friendship with Japan – with formal diplomatic ties established back in 1953 – the JICA Cambodia Office is also celebrating 30 years since its establishment.

JICA – the Japan International Cooperation Agency – has, as an implementing agency of Japanese Official Development Assistance (ODA), been working with the Cambodian government since 1993.

For the past three decades, these efforts have ranged from the peace-building and rehabilitation process of the early 1990s to socioeconomic development activities towards achieving Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

One of the most significant projects from the 1990s, the reconstruction of the Chroy Changvar Bridge – originally built in 1963 – over the Tonle Sap river was a truly symbolic restarting of Cambodian development.

Connecting Phnom Penh with the Kingdom's northern and eastern provinces, and severely damaged during the civil war, the reopening in 1996 of the "Japanese Bridge" – *Nihon Bashi* in Japanese – represented regeneration after Cambodia had suffered prolonged periods of conflict.

Numerous infrastructure development projects have since followed, including on National Roads 1, 5, 6 and 7, the Sihanoukville Port, Kampong Cham's Kizuna Bridge, the Neak Loeung Bridge linking Kandal and Prey Veng provinces, and many more.

These have enhanced mobility and connectivity in the country, building a strong foundation for industrial and economic development.

JICA has also made huge investments in social development and the governance sector, as well as in water and sanitation.

These include the construction of schools and hospitals, and the development of civil law, teacher training projects, MCH (maternal child health) services, landmine clearance, water supply and sewerage management, among others.

Concessional loans totalled 275 billion yen (more than \$2 billion) for 30 projects, with grant aid amounting to 177.8 billion yen for 158 projects.

The foundation of Japanese cooperation with Cambodia, however, dates back almost 70 years.

The Japanese government established the Asian Cooperation Foundation in 1954, the same year that Japan participated in the Colombo Plan for Cooperative Economic and Social Development in Asia and the Pacific.



Kamei Haruko, Chief Representative at the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) Cambodia Office. HENG CHIVOAN

The Asia Cooperation Foundation, aimed at promoting economic and technical cooperation between Southeast Asian countries and Japan, eventually transferred its functions to the Overseas Technical Cooperation Agency (OCTA) in 1962, and then to JICA in 1974.

The foundation began accepting trainees from Cambodia soon after its establishment in 1954, with 230 received in Japan in the first 12 years, with this reaching 14,988 by 2021.

The first four Japanese experts were dispatched in 1955, with 6,689 having done so by 2021. The first technical cooperation project began as early as 1959 in the areas of rice production, livestock management and medical services.

Muneo Ogata – who came to Cambodia in 1960 as an expert pioneering in the first Japanese technical cooperation on livestock centres in Kampong Cham – described his experiences in a short essay.

"I had to stay in a house

where there was no fridge or air conditioning, but with a mosquito net over the bed.

"The life there was like an exile, but all the Japanese experts talked about Cambodia's development seriously and enthusiastically day and night, which was unforgettable," he said.

Following training and technical cooperation in the 1960s, the first four JOCV volunteers specialising in rice production, judo and swimming were sent to Cambodia in 1966. So far, 797 volunteers have since been dispatched to the Kingdom.

Indeed, development cooperation is about people helping people and two countries building trust.

According to an opinion poll conducted by the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 2019, Japan is ranked the number one most reliable country in Cambodia, higher than any other nation.

This trust held in Japan by the Cambodian people is an important

asset, one that has been built up over many years by many people working across the two countries.

JICA is committed to enhancing this invaluable asset of trust through the successful implementation of its projects in Cambodia, which aim to support the Kingdom's efforts in achieving Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

After 70 years of cooperation in ODA, the partnership is now not only about "JICA assisting Cambodia", but also working for solutions to development challenges in other countries and around the world.

On January 20 this year, Ukrainian deminers completed a training course conducted by the Cambodian Mine Action Centre (CMAC) with the support of JICA.

JICA and CMAC have had a longstanding partnership for nearly three decades, almost as long as the JICA Cambodia Office has been established.

Today, the world is being buffeted by a storm of challenges, with crises such as pandemics, conflicts, food insecurity and climate change, among others.

However, there remains the hope of shaping a better future with the Cambodian and Japanese people continuing to work together towards affirming universal values with mutual trust based on their 70-year history of friendship.

These include promoting the rule of law, good governance, investing in the development of human resources and developing infrastructure.

With JICA's guiding vision of "Leading the World with Trust," the JICA Cambodia Office renews its commitment to further working with the people of the Kingdom. ■

**Kamei Haruko, Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) Cambodia Office Chief Representative**



The destroyed central span of Phnom Penh's Chroy Changvar Bridge is replaced in 1993. SUPPLIED

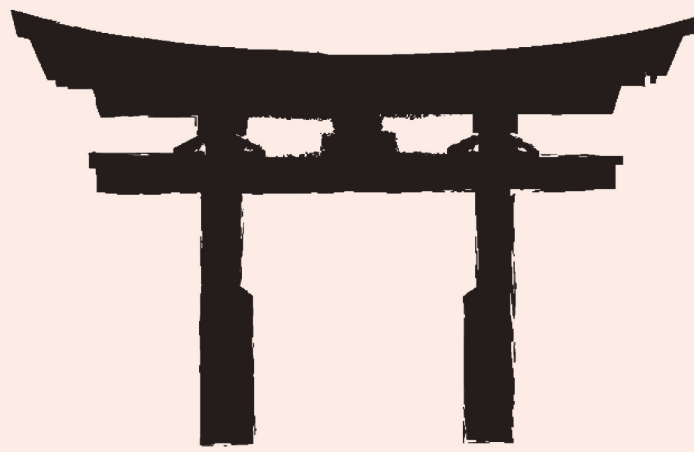


A Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers (JOCV) specialist works with rice farmers in Battambang in the 1960s. SUPPLIED



The Cambodian Mine Action Centre (CMAC), with support from JICA, provides training to Ukrainian demining officers in January this year. SUPPLIED





# EMPEROR'S BIRTHDAY

23 February

## GREETINGS TO HIS MAJESTY THE EMPEROR

We would like to extend our sincere congratulations on your birthday. **Meridian International Holding's Management Group & Team**, would like to extend our heartfelt congratulations.

天皇陛下におかれましては  
御誕生日を迎えられ、誠におめでとうございます。  
メリディアン・インターナショナル・ホールディングー同  
心よりお慶び申し上げます。



C A S A  
BY MERIDIAN  
INTERNATIONAL HOLDING

S K Y L A R  
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F L A T I R O N  
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