

Welcome Remarks

**By H.E. Dr. PHOEURNG Sackona, Minister of Culture and Fine Arts
At The 9th Meeting of the ASEAN Ministers Responsible for Culture and Arts**

Under the theme:

“Impact of Covid-19 and Way Forward for the Culture and Arts sector”

Via Video Conference, Phnom Penh, 22 October 2020,

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- **Excellencies, the ASEAN Ministers Responsible for Culture and Arts;**
- **Excellency ASEAN Secretary-General;**
- **Excellencies, Honored Guests;**
- **Dear Friends, Ladies and Gentlemen!**

First of all, on behalf of the Royal Government of Cambodia and myself, I would like to express my warm welcome to Your Excellencies, the ASEAN Ministers Responsible for Culture and Arts (AMCA) of the ASEAN Member States, and Heads of Delegations of the ASEAN Member States, participating in this 9th Meeting of the AMCA and Related Meetings with Dialogue Partners under the theme: “Impact of Covid-19 and Way Forward for the Culture and the Arts Sector”.

We meet today via video conference from Phnom Penh, the Kingdom of Cambodia, Land of Culture rich in cultural heritage, including hundreds of ancient temples and intangible art forms, legacy from one of Asia’s many majestic millennia-old historical kingdoms. The Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts has the honor to assume its turn to host this Ministerial Meeting via video conference amidst the interruption of activities due to the spread of the global pandemic Covid-19. This is the first time that the Meeting of the AMCA is held via video conference, clearly showing our adaptation to new situations while trying to build the ASEAN Community and strengthen solidarity within the bilateral and multilateral frameworks.

In the spirit of cooperation and advancement of our rich ASEAN cultures, please allow me to highlight some important principles. We, in Cambodia, follow the

implementation of our national policy on culture based on the concept of “**conservation for development and development for conservation**,” as a clear blueprint in the strategy to advance social and economic growth, while at the same time protecting our cultural heritage for sustainable and inclusive development. The Royal Government of Cambodia considers culture to be the essence of our national soul and identity, an invaluable and priceless wealth, as well as providing the solid foundation for social harmony devoid of discrimination and serving as a bridge to connect us to our neighbors.

In implementing this vision, the Royal Government has come up with the slogan, “**The state is the supporter and protector, the private partner is the practitioner**”. Cooperation in such public-private partnerships at any levels involves civil society, national-international organizations, and of course individual artists and troupes, working together to advance the promotional goal, **Cambodia: Kingdom of Culture**.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen!

We also have a range of specific important areas of cooperation and solid partnership within the bilateral and multilateral frameworks in order to realize the building of our ASEAN Community by 2025, and to achieve prosperity for all our peoples. And these will be the subject of our discussions during this meeting.

In closing, I would like to wish Your Excellencies, Ministers Responsible for Culture and the Arts of the ASEAN Member States, and Heads of Delegations of the ASEAN Member States the best of health and success, and I wish the 9th Meeting of the AMCA and Related Meetings with Dialogue Partners a pleasant experience and successful outcome.

As Minister Responsible for Culture and the Arts of the hosting ASEAN Member State, I would like to officially declare the 9th Meeting of the ASEAN Ministers Responsible for Culture and the Arts and Related Meetings with Dialogue Partners via video conference **open** from this moment on.

Thank you for your attention!

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