

CAMBODIA, AUSTRALIA REACH MOU RELATING TO SETTLEMENT OF REFUGEES IN CAMBODIA

August 16, 2014



The Royal Government of Cambodia and the Government of Australia signed here this afternoon a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) Relating to the Settlement of Refugees in Cambodia.

The MoU was inked by Cambodian Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior H.E. Sar Kheng and visiting Australian Minister of Immigration and Border Protection, the Hon. Scott Morrison MP, during his two-day visit in Cambodia from Sept. 26 to 27, 2014 .

According to a joint press statement released after the signing ceremony, the MoU will offer settlement of refugees in Cambodia on a voluntary basis and in conformity with the Refugees Convention. But, the number and timing of refugee settlement will be determined by Cambodia, it underlined.

"Cambodia is a signatory to the 1951 Refugees Convention and 1967 Protocol related to Refugees and also it has a sub-decree No. 224 on Procedure for Recognition as a Refugee or Providing Asylum Rights to Foreigners in the Kingdom of Cambodia dated Dec. 17, 2009," said H.E. Sar Kheng in the statement, adding that offering the settlement of refugees in Cambodia is considered a humanitarian activity which will help them start a new life in accordance with Cambodian laws.

"As a party to the Refugees Convention, Cambodia, while making countless efforts to develop the country after the civil war, is demonstrating its ability and willingness to contribute positively to this humanitarian issue," he stressed. "Under the MoU, Australia will use its expertise and experience to assist Cambodia strengthen settlement support provided to refugees in Cambodia. As part of this commitment, Australia will bear the direct costs of the arrangement, including initial support to refugees, and relevant capacity building for Cambodia to ensure it has the appropriate resources to receive and integrate the refugees successfully."

Both governments are working closely to ensure the smooth and successful implementation of this arrangement in cooperation with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), said the joint press statement. "In order to ensure an effective and positive implementation of the resettlement program, Cambodia and Australia have agreed to undertake an initial trial arrangement with a small group of refugees which will be followed by further resettlement in accordance with the Cambodia's capacity," it pointed out.