Cambodia opened its embassy in and the Royal Government of embassy in Phnom Penh in 1992 sumed again when the Japa- between the two countries re- ceased operations. 

the Japanese Embassy in Phnom Penh. Similarly, the Japanese Embassy in Tokyo was closed, after the Khmer Rouge seized power in 1975, when Cambodia' s Relations remained uninterrupted until April 1975, when Cambodia' s Majest y King Norodom Sihanouk. Cambodia as early as 1612. Achieved independence from France through the efforts of His Majesty King Norodom Sihamouk. Relations remained uninterrupted until as many as 44 Japanese merchant ships sailed to Cambodia with travel certificates issued by the Japanese government between 1604 and 1635, seeking to explore new opportunities in Cambodia. In addition, 14 ink inscriptions by Japanese worshippers, found on walls and pillars of Angkor Wat, reveal the historical footprint of Japanese engagement with Cambodia as early as 1612. In a modern era, Cambodia’s long-standing relations with Japan go back to 1953 when the two countries agreed to establish diplomatic relations a few months before Cambodia achieved independence from France through the efforts of His Majesty King Norodom Sihanouk. Relations remained uninterrupted until April 1975, when Cambodia's Embassy in Tokyo was closed, after the Khmer Rouge seized power in 1975, when Cambodia’s Relations remained uninterrupted until April 1975, when Cambodia's Embassies in Phnom Penh, opened in 1992. However, diplomatic relations between the two countries resumed again when the Japanese government reopened its embassy in Phnom Penh in 1992 and the Royal Government of Cambodia opened its embassy in Tokyo on 26 December 1994. Because there was no bitterness nor disputes, friendship and co-operation between the two countries has developed and strengthened every year in all the fields of Cambodia’s national reconstruction and rehabilita- tion, which is strongly supported by Japan. Japan exercised a prominent role in the preliminary negotiations that led to the Paris International Conference on Cambodia in 1989 and was co-chair of the conference which was held in Phnom Penh in 1992 and the Royal Government of Cambodia opened its embassy in Tokyo on 26 December 1994. Because there was no bitterness nor disputes, friendship and co-operation between the two countries has developed and strengthened every year in all the fields of Cambodia’s national reconstruction and rehabilitation, which is strongly supported by Japan. Japan exercised a prominent role in the preliminary negotiations that led to the Paris International Conference on Cambodia in 1989 and was co-chair of the conference which concluded with the signing of the Paris Peace agreements on Cambodia in October 1991. As a major donor to Cam- bodia, Japan’s generous aid program has brought some significant benefits to Cambodia and her people over the past 25 years, providing substantial financial and technical assis- tance to Cambodia especially for reconstruction and rehabilita- tion of the infrastructure of the country. Since 1993, Japan has helped build and rehabilitate roads, ports, bridges, electrical systems, hospitals, schools, water treatment facilities across the country. These projects are du- rable, quality constructions that promote further development of the country.

According to the MOFA Japan’s website, from 2011 to 2015, the cumulative disbursement of Japanese Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) to Cambodia stood at 1,056.80 hundred million yen in load aid, 1,865.32 hundred million yen in grant aid, and 835.41 hundred million yen in technical assistance. Japanese ODA to Cambodia has been focusing on four key priority areas compris- ing the development of social and economic infrastructure, the im- provement of basic social services such as health and medical care, the promotion of agriculture and rural development, and human resources development. Furthermore, many Japanese nongovernmental organisations and individual Japanese citizens have made important contribu- tions toward improving the liveli- hood of the rural inhabitants all over Cambodia.

With these productive achievements over the years that bring forth considerable pride and satisfaction, Cambodia-Japan relations will no doubt withstand the test of time.

AMBASSADOR POU SOTHIRAK

A long and prosperous strategic partnership

Reflections on Cambodia and Japan relations by Ambassador Pou Sothirak

Executive Director of the Cambodian Institute for Cooperation and Peace and Former Cambodian Ambassador to Japan (2005-2008)

and recipient of the Order of the Rising Sun with Gold and Silver Star from the Japanese Government on November 7, 2017

Japan will continue to imple- ment Defense Capacity Building Assistance to Cambodian person- nel, enhance assistance to improve logistics and industrial human resource development, as well as to reinforce urban functions. This support comes with a view of assisting Cambodia in becoming a middle- to-high income country by 2030 through the exchanges of notes which were signed, amount- ing to 27.4 billion yen in new assistance to Cambodia. Japan is also expected to work closely with Cambodia to improve global peacebuilding efforts and has expressed desire to collaborate with Cambodia to reinforce the free and open maritime order based on the rule of law in the Indo-Pacific region as global commons.

In response, Prime Minister Hun Sen expressed Cambodia's sincere appreciation for Japanese assistance given for electoral reform, demining and the Khmer Rouge trials, as well as for the implementation of Defense Capacity Building. Cambodia has consistently supported Japan’s efforts to play a major role in security-related fields, and stood behind Japan’s “Proactive Contribution to Peace”. It has also welcomed and expressed support for Japan’s new initiative: “Free and Open India and Pacific Strategy.”

Beside cooperating bilater- ally, Cambodia and Japan have endeavored to tackle other hot button issues such as the Korean Peninsula denuclearisation, calling on the international community to place pressure on North Korea, and the South China Sea issue, confirming the importance of the rule of law. Prime Minister Hun Sen conveyed his support for efforts towards the early resolution of the abductions issue and Prime Minister Abe expressed his sup- port for Cambodia’s role within ASEAN-led frameworks.

With these productive achievements over the years that bring forth considerable pride and satisfaction, Cambodia-Japan relations will no doubt withstand the test of time.