







**KINGDOM OF CAMBODIA**  
**NATION RELIGION KING**

**MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS  
AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION**

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**PRESS RELEASE**

**Endeavors of the Royal Government of Cambodia  
for the Release and Repatriation of 18 Detained Soldiers**

Samdech Thipadei Prime Minister HUN Manet has placed the highest priority on securing the safe release and repatriation of the 18 Cambodian soldiers detained by Thai forces following the 28 July 2025 ceasefire. He has directly guided the Royal Government's institutions to pursue every possible channel—bilateral, regional, and international—to ensure their swift return, emphasizing that the welfare of the detained soldiers is a matter of national dignity and urgent humanitarian concern. His personal engagement reflects Cambodia's steadfast determination to protect its people, uphold national sovereignty, and resolve the issue peacefully in a spirit of good neighborliness and mutual trust.

In support of the Prime Minister's leadership, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, H.E. PRAK Sokhonn, has undertaken sustained diplomatic initiatives, consistently raising the matter with key bilateral, regional, and international partners, as well as with the Diplomatic Corps in Phnom Penh and visiting foreign dignitaries, including Japan's Special Envoy for Mekong Cooperation, to advocate for the soldiers' immediate release. Acting under his instructions, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation has intensified these efforts by issuing Note Verbales, organizing diplomatic briefings, engaging with ASEAN mechanisms, and maintaining close coordination with friendly countries and international organizations. These endeavors underscore Cambodia's commitment to defending the rights of its nationals, promoting de-escalation, and upholding international humanitarian principles.



The Ministry of National Defense has actively coordinated with its Thai counterpart through the existing bilateral military mechanisms to press for the safe return of the 18 detained soldiers, while simultaneously ensuring strict adherence to the ceasefire on Cambodia's side. Complementing this, the Cambodian Human Rights Committee has engaged with regional and international human rights bodies to highlight the humanitarian dimension of the case, emphasizing the rights and dignity of the detained soldiers and calling for full respect of international humanitarian and human rights law. Together, these efforts reinforce the Royal Government's unified approach to securing the soldiers' repatriation through legal, humanitarian, and diplomatic means.

The Cambodian Diplomatic Missions abroad, particularly the Permanent Missions to the United Nations in New York and Geneva, have been at the forefront of international advocacy. In New York, the Mission has formally raised the issue before the United Nations and ASEAN partners, urging the soldiers' repatriation and ensuring the matter remains on the international agenda. In Geneva, the Mission has actively mobilized humanitarian and human rights institutions, including the ICRC and OHCHR, to monitor detention conditions and press for compliance with the Geneva Conventions.

Cambodia approaches the ICRC in good faith—seeking humanitarian protection, not political confrontation. Its urgent priorities are clear: prisoners of war must be granted access, monitoring, and repatriation; civilians must be safeguarded from forced transfer, unlawful land seizures, and the militarization of their homes; and hostilities must be conducted in accordance with international law—ending indiscriminate attacks, preserving cultural heritage, and prohibiting outlawed weapons.

The ICRC reaffirmed its recognition of the 18 detained soldiers as prisoners of war and confirmed that follow-up visits would be conducted in early September to verify their conditions and ensure family contact. The ICRC committed to working closely with Cambodian authorities to conduct field assessments, monitor humanitarian conditions, and address concerns related to displaced civilians and the alleged use of prohibited weapons, in line with the ICRC's neutral mandate.



Phnom Penh, 7 September 2025