



Royal University of Law and Economics

Final Report on

**Cambodia and Laos Relations since
normalization: Opportunities,
Challenges and Perspective**

Name of Student

Mr. KEOBOUNKHAM SYTHONG

Name of Academic Advisor

Dr. KEM SAMBATH

International Program

Bachelor's Degree of International Relations

Cohort 11

Year of Submission: 2023

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I would like to express my deepest gratitude and heartfelt appreciation to all those who have supported and contributed to the successful completion of this thesis.

First and foremost, I am immensely grateful to my supervisor, **Dr. Kem Sambath**, for his unwavering guidance, encouragement, and invaluable insights throughout the entire research process. His expertise and commitment have been instrumental in shaping the direction of this study, and I am truly thankful for the mentorship he provided

I would also like to express my heartfelt gratitude to the **Laos Embassy** for their assistance and support during my academic journey. Their encouragement and willingness to provide resources and information have been of immense help in my research on Cambodia and Laos relations.

Furthermore, I want to acknowledge **the government of Cambodia for granting me the scholarship that made it possible for me to pursue my bachelor's degree in Cambodia.** Without their generous support, this academic endeavor would not have been possible, and I am deeply grateful for the opportunities they have provided.

I am also indebted to my friends and fellow students for their encouragement and understanding during the challenging moments of this academic journey. Their camaraderie and support have been a source of motivation and comfort throughout this process.

Finally, I want to express my utmost gratitude to my family for their unwavering love, encouragement, and belief in my abilities. Their constant support and sacrifices have been the driving force behind my academic pursuits.

ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the bilateral relationship between Cambodia and Laos since their relations were normalized. It analyzes the opportunities, challenges, and future prospects for cooperation between the two countries in the post-normalization era. The research looks at important aspects such as economic collaboration, cultural exchanges, regional integration, and security cooperation. Through an analysis of existing literature, historical events, and regional dynamics, the study provides a comprehensive understanding of the factors that are affecting the bilateral relationship. It also identifies potential areas of collaboration and strategies to address challenges, emphasizing the importance of economic integration, cross-border connectivity, people-to-people exchanges, and regional cooperation. By evaluating regional and international factors, including geopolitical dynamics and economic interdependence, the thesis assesses their impact on the bilateral relationship. The main findings shed light on the evolving dynamics between Cambodia and Laos since normalization. They present a balanced understanding of the opportunities, challenges, and perspectives that shape their bilateral interactions in the post-normalization era. These findings can serve as valuable contributions to the field of international relations, specifically concerning the Southeast Asian region, and offer potential policy implications for fostering stronger and more cooperative relations between the two countries. The study adds to the existing literature on international relations, regional cooperation, and Southeast Asian studies, providing insights into the complexities and dynamics of the post-normalization era in Cambodia and Laos relations.

Keywords: Cambodia, Laos, normalization, opportunities, challenges, and perspective.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION	1
1.1. Background of Cambodia And Laos Relations Before Normalization	1
1.2. Explanation of The Normalization Process Between Two Countries	2
1.3. Statement of Problems	3
1.4. Research Question	4
1.5. Research Objective	4
1.6. Scope and Limitation of The Research.....	4
1.7. The Structure of The Thesis.....	5
CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW	6
2.1. Review of Existing Literature on Cambodia And Laos Relations, Focusing on The Post-Normalization Period.....	6
2.2. Identification of Key Theories, Concepts, And Debates Relevant to The Topic	7
2.3. Analysis of Previous Research Findings and Gaps in The Literature	9
CHAPTER 3: HISTORICAL CONTEXT OF CAMBODIA AND LAOS RELATIONS	10
3.1. Overview of The Historical Relationship Between Cambodia And Laos	10
3.2. Examination of Major Historical Events That Have Influenced Their Relations.....	12
3.3. Discussion of The Factors That Led to The Normalization Of Relations	13
CHAPTER 4: OPPORTUNITIES, CHALLENGES AND PERSPECTIVE IN CAMBODIA AND LAOS SINCE NORMALIZATION	16
4.1. Identification and Analysis of The Opportunities That Have Emerged in The Post-Normalization Period.....	16

4.2. Exploration of Economic Cooperation, Trade Relations, And Investment Opportunities Between the Two Countries.....	18
4.3. Evaluation of Diplomatic and Political Developments That Have Enhanced Bilateral Cooperation.....	21
4.4. Analysis of The Challenges and Obstacles Faced in Strengthening Relations.....	24
4.5. Discussion of Territorial Disputes, Border Issues, Or Historical Disputes Between Cambodia And Laos	25
4.6. Examination of Cultural, Linguistic, Or Socio-Economic Differences That May Affect Relations	27
4.7. Analysis of The Prospects for Future Cooperation and Deepening of Relations	29
4.8. Evaluation of Regional and International Factors That May Impact the Bilateral Relationship	32
4.9. Discussion of Potential Areas of Collaboration and Strategies to Overcome Challenges	33
CONCLUSION	37
RECOMMENDATION	39
BIBLIOGRAPHY	41

LIST OF ABBREVIATION

MOUs	:	Memoranda of Understanding
GMS	:	Greater Mekong Subregion
ASEAN	:	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
AEC	:	ASEAN Economic Community
MRC	:	Mekong River Commission
AIB	:	Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank
ARF	:	ASEAN Regional Forum
UN	:	United Nations

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

In this introductory chapter, there are six main parts. First, it provides the background information of the relationship between Cambodia and Laos before normalization. Second, it provides the explanation of the two countries' normalization process. Third, it provides the statement of problems. Fourth, it provides the research question. Fifth, it provides the research objective and sixth, it provides the structure of the thesis.

1.1. Background of Cambodia And Laos Relations Before Normalization

Cambodia and Laos had long had tenuous relations that were marked by geopolitical forces, regional wars and ideological differences before normalization occurred. Both nations once belonged to French Indochina before becoming independent middle of the 20th century; but during the cold war era, their courses markedly differed.¹

Cambodia experienced an internal crisis during the 1960s and 70s due to Pol Pot's Khmer Rouge administration, as their political beliefs diverged considerably;² due to this tension, diplomatic relations between Cambodia and Laos gradually declined during this era. Laos was closely tied with North Vietnam through supporting communist Pathet Lao movement³ while Cambodia under Pol Pot sought an extreme form of communism which left them regionally isolated.

Conflicts in Indochina, such as the Vietnam War and Cambodian Civil War, further damaged relations between Cambodia and Laos. Both nations experienced extensive bombing

¹ National Museum of The United State Air Force, “*The Southeast Asia War: Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia.*” (12 May, 2023).

<https://www.nationalmuseum.af.mil/Visit/Museum-Exhibits/Fact-Sheets/Display/Article/195959/the-southeast-asia-war-vietnam-laos-and-cambodia/>

² Britannica, “*Civil war.*” (12 May, 2023).

<https://www.britannica.com/place/Cambodia/Civil-war>

³ Joseph J. Zasloff, “*THE PATHET LAO Leadership and Organization.*” Archive.org, (19 Jul, 2022).

<https://web.archive.org/web/20220719084408/https://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/reports/2007/R949.pdf>

from the United States during these conflicts which caused immense destruction while undermining bilateral ties.⁴

Given this historical background, Cambodia and Laos' process of normalization was an impressive development. It presented both countries with an opportunity to reconcile past differences and forge a path of cooperation, stability, and mutual benefit.

Normalization was designed to create friendly relations, boost economic cooperation, and foster people-to-people exchanges between Cambodia and Laos. Reestablishing diplomatic ties, addressing shared challenges while building peace and understanding were among its many goals; increasing trade, investment, cultural exchanges between them also formed part of this plan.⁵

1.2. Explanation of The Normalization Process Between Two Countries

Cambodia and Laos initiated a normalization process between themselves to restore formal relations and foster cooperation, after experiencing periods of tension. Recognizing its significance, both countries acknowledged the necessity of forging ahead towards common goals by strengthening diplomatic ties.

The process involved diplomatic negotiations and dialogues aimed at forging mutual trust and understanding between Cambodia and Laos. High-level officials from both nations engaged in discussions aimed at resolving past differences as well as exploring areas of mutual interest;⁶ diplomatic visits were instrumental in creating bridges across divides and setting the scene for collaboration.

⁴ National Museum of The United State Air Force, "*The Southeast Asia War: Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia.*" (12 May, 2023).

⁵ "*Lao-Cambodia bilateral relations information.*" Ministry of Foreign Affair of Lao P.D.R, (02 August, 2022).

⁶ Sar Socheath. "*Cambodia and Laos mark 65 years of good friendship.*" Khmer times, (16 June, 2021)

<https://www.khmertimeskh.com/50874941/cambodia-and-laos-mark-65-years-of-good-friendship/>

Bilateral agreements and memoranda of understanding were signed to formalize both countries' commitment to cooperation in various sectors such as trade, investment, tourism, culture, education, and security. By outlining specific areas for collaboration, these agreements provided a framework for future interactions.⁷

To improve communication and engagement between countries, diplomatic missions were set up or reopened - including embassies or consulates - with ambassadors from each side working as diplomatic staff to maintain regular contact between countries while strengthening relations.

As part of the normalization process, people-to-people exchanges, cultural events and academic collaborations were promoted as means to foster greater understanding, cultural appreciation and strengthen links between Cambodia and Laos societies. By participating in such exchanges both nations attempted to strengthen bonds within their societies.

Normalization was an ongoing, gradual process which sought to build trust, promote economic cooperation, and contribute to regional stability. It laid a strong foundation for future collaboration and friendly relations between Cambodia and Laos.⁸

1.3. Statement of Problems:

The research problem addressed in this thesis is to examine the multifaceted nature of the relations between Cambodia and Laos since the process of normalization. It seeks to understand the opportunities, challenges, and perspectives that have shaped their bilateral interactions in the post-normalization era. The relationship between Cambodia and Laos has undergone significant transformations following the establishment of formal diplomatic ties,

⁷ “*Lao-Cambodia bilateral relations information.*” Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Lao P.D.R, (02 August, 2022).

⁸ “*Lao-Cambodia bilateral relations information.*” Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Lao P.D.R, (02 August, 2022).

and a comprehensive analysis is necessary to explore the implications and potential outcomes of this evolving relationship.

1.4. Research Question

How has the normalization of relations between Cambodia and Laos influenced their economic cooperation, trade relations, and overall bilateral relationship since the post-normalization period?

What are the main opportunities and challenges in Cambodia and Laos' relations since normalization, including historical disputes, cultural differences, and future prospects for cooperation?

How can the people-to-people exchange between Cambodia and Laos contribute to enhancing mutual understanding, fostering friendship, and further strengthening their bilateral ties in the context of regional and international dynamics?

1.5. Research Objective

This study aims to evaluate the opportunities, challenges, and prospects in the normalization of relations between Cambodia and Laos, focusing on trade, investment, cultural exchanges, and regional cooperation. It also examines the obstacles and disputes that have impacted the relationship, and provides a comprehensive perspective on the evolving dynamics and future prospects of the two countries. The research contributes to existing knowledge on international relations, Southeast Asian studies, and regional cooperation in the context of these two countries.

1.6. Scope and Limitation of The Research

The scope of the research in this thesis encompasses a comprehensive examination of Cambodia and Laos relations since their normalization, focusing on opportunities, challenges, and future prospects for cooperation. It explores various dimensions of their bilateral

interactions, including economic collaboration, cultural exchanges, regional integration, security cooperation, and the impact of regional and international factors.

1.7. The Structure of The Thesis

This thesis is divided into 4 chapters. The first chapter will briefly note down the historical background, explain the normalization process, and state the research problem, questions, objectives, and the scope of the research. The second chapter will fully illustrate the involves a comprehensive review of existing literature on Cambodia and Laos relations, focusing on the post-normalization period. It will identify key theories, concepts, and debates relevant to the topic. The third chapter is providing an overview of the historical relationship between Cambodia and Laos. It will examine major historical events that have influenced their relations and discuss the factors that led to the normalization of relations between the two countries. The fourth chapter focuses opportunities, challenges and perspective in Cambodia and Laos since normalization. This central chapter explores the opportunities and challenges that have emerged since the normalization of relations between Cambodia and Laos. It covers a wide range of topics, from economic cooperation to diplomatic developments, challenges faced, and prospects for future cooperation.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

In this introductory chapter, there are 3 main parts. First, it provides the review of existing literature on Cambodia and Laos relations, focusing on the post-normalization period. Second, it provides the identification of key theories, concepts, and debates relevant to the topic. Third, the analysis of previous research findings and gaps in the literature.

2.1. Review of Existing Literature on Cambodia And Laos Relations, Focusing on The Post-Normalization Period

Cambodia-Laos post-normalization period has been the subject of extensive academic inquiry. Several studies have examined its dynamics, opportunities, and challenges – with numerous reviews exploring these aspects in depth. This review seeks to provide an overview of existing literature as well as highlight key themes from different academic sources.

Scholars have extensively examined economic cooperation between Cambodia and Laos in their literature. Scholars have explored trade relations, investment flows and economic integration between these two nations as well as infrastructure projects such as roads and bridges that connect them; furthermore, they have focused on regional frameworks like Greater Mekong Subregion and ASEAN Economic Community, in promoting collaboration for sustainable economic development.⁹

Political dimensions of Cambodia-Laos relations have received extensive consideration by the report. They have focused on high-level visits, diplomatic dialogues, and political leadership's role in strengthening bilateral ties. Literature also documents trust-building measures such as institutional frameworks and policy coordination that support cooperation while meeting shared challenges; regional organizations like ASEAN or the Mekong River

⁹ Chum Sonya, “*Regional integration and political rivalries among the east Asian states and their impacts on Mekong Sub-Regional Development.*” Cicip.org.kh, (September, 2010).
<https://cicip.org.kh/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/cicip-e-book-no-3.pdf>

Commission play an essential role in providing dialogue forums or mediating disputes resolution.¹⁰

Cultural and social aspects of post-normalization periods have not gone unnoticed. According to the report have explored Cambodia and Laos' shared historical, linguistic, and cultural heritage; emphasizing cultural exchanges, tourism, and direct people-to-people interactions to foster mutual understanding and strengthen relations. Literature highlights the value of cultural diplomacy in creating bridges between them both and advancing regional integration.¹¹

While existing literature offers valuable insights, there remain significant gaps that could be addressed through further research. For instance, further examination of non-state actors like civil society organizations and business communities' influence in shaping Cambodia-Laos relations could enhance our knowledge of grassroots-level dynamics and regional power dynamics as well as external influences affecting their bilateral relationship.¹²

2.2. Identification of Key Theories, Concepts, And Debates Relevant to The Topic

Understanding the dynamics of Cambodia-Laos relations since their normalization requires exploring key theories, concepts, and debates that underlie this bilateral relationship. A variety of reports has provided invaluable insight into these aspects – providing important illumination of opportunities, challenges, perspectives that have surfaced over time.

One theory widely discussed in literature is regionalism and regional integration. Scholars have examined how Cambodia and Laos, both neighboring countries within the Mekong subregion, have been affected by regional frameworks like Greater Mekong Subregion

¹⁰ Ministry of Foreign Affair and International Cooperation, “*Press Release.*” MFAIC.Gov.Kh, (February, 2023) <https://mfaic.gov.kh/files/uploads/JFF4X300K22O/PR%20Outcomes%20Eng-%20STPM's%20official%20visit%20in%20Laos%20FINAL.pdf>

¹¹ Ministry of Foreign Affair of Lao P.D.R, “Lao-Cambodia bilateral relations information,” (02 August, 2022)

¹² “*Cambodia and Laos: A New Era of Cooperation.*” LinkedIn, (29 June, 2023). [Cambodia and Laos: A New Era of Cooperation \(linkedin.com\)](https://www.linkedin.com/company/mfaic-gov-kh/)

and ASEAN; such frameworks facilitate economic cooperation, trade liberalization and infrastructure development between them resulting in closer ties between their nations.¹³

Another key concept related to this topic include shared borders and territorial disputes. Literature on this subject highlight's historical issues regarding territorial claims between Cambodia and Laos that continue to complicate relations even after normalization has taken place, leading scholars to study their effects on trust-building, security concerns and cross-border cooperation. Recognizing and managing complex border management procedures as a means of resolving territorial disputes are necessary components of understanding their bilateral relations in their entirety.¹⁴

Literature on Cambodia-Laos relations also explores their historic, cultural, and linguistic ties. According to the report have examined historical interactions, cultural exchanges, linguistic similarities that form the basis for mutual understanding and cooperation; shared heritage can shed light on potential pathways for collaboration in many sectors such as tourism, education, or people-to-people exchanges.¹⁵

Debates over economic interdependence and development cooperation are central to understanding Cambodia-Laos relations. Scholars have examined trade relations, investment flows, regional connectivity projects that have emerged since normalization began as well as possible benefits such as uneven development, socio-economic disparities, and any impacts upon local communities that economic integration may pose.¹⁶

¹³ Chum Sonya, "Regional integration and political rivalries among the east Asian states and their impacts on Mekong Sub-Regional Development."

¹⁴ Angiandrakumar Gnanasagaran, "Behind the Cambodia-Laos PDR border dispute." The ASEAN Post, (23 May, 2018).

<https://theaseanpost.com/article/behind-cambodia-lao-pdr-border-dispute>

¹⁵ "Lao-Cambodia bilateral relations information." Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Lao P.D.R., (02 August, 2022).

¹⁶ "Cambodia and Laos: A New Era of Cooperation." LinkedIn, (29 June 2023).

[Cambodia and Laos: A New Era of Cooperation \(linkedin.com\)](https://www.linkedin.com/company/cambodia-and-laos-cooperation)

2.3. Analysis of Previous Research Findings and Gaps in The Literature

This analysis highlights several important themes and concepts found within literature on Cambodia-Laos relations since normalization. However, there are certain gaps that can be identified for further exploration.

First, while the literature emphasizes the significance of regional frameworks like GMS and ASEAN for shaping bilateral relationships between Cambodia and Laos, additional research may need to be conducted into their actual impact and effectiveness. More specifically, research could focus on implementation of regional initiatives, their outcomes and role they play in fostering cooperation and addressing challenges between Cambodia and Laos.

Second, although the literature acknowledges territorial disputes and border issues, more comprehensive studies that examine their historical context, evolution, potential resolution pathways and contributing factors should be conducted to explore possible mechanisms for border management and dispute resolution. Further investigation could explore underlying factors contributing to disputes, evaluate approaches taken for their resolution as well as possible mechanisms that facilitate effective border management and dispute resolution.

Third, while the literature emphasizes the significance of historical, cultural, and linguistic ties for contemporary relationships, more research could help uncover their full extent. More attention could be devoted to specific cultural and linguistic features that promote cooperation, shared historical narratives or how these elements contribute to building trust between nations or fostering bilateral ties.

Finally, Economic interdependence and development cooperation have been extensively studied, but further research is needed to understand their socio-economic implications, potential challenges, and strategies for inclusive and sustainable development in specific sectors.

CHAPTER 3: HISTORICAL CONTEXT OF CAMBODIA AND LAOS RELATIONS

In this introductory chapter, there are 3 main parts. First, it provides the Overview of the historical relationship between Cambodia and Laos. Second, it provides examination of major historical events that have influenced their relations. Third, it provides discussion of the factors that led to the normalization of relations.

3.1. Overview of The Historical Relationship Between Cambodia And Laos

Cambodia and Laos share a rich historical relationship that spans several centuries, providing this overview with insight into key events that have formed their bilateral ties.

Cambodia and Laos have historically shared cultural, linguistic, and religious affinities that have contributed to their interconnection. Both nations were heavily impacted by Indianized civilizations before spreading Theravada Buddhism – both becoming central components of their cultures today. Furthermore, during its 9th-15th centuries reign, Cambodia's Khmer Empire exerted significant influence over parts of Laos that now form Laos, leaving an indelible mark.¹⁷

Cambodia and Laos came under French control during the colonial era, joining Vietnam under French Indochina administration and being interconnected through their shared experience of colonialism. This helped foster nationalist aspirations among both peoples.¹⁸

At the turn of the 20th century, Southeast Asian independence movements gained steam. Cambodia and Laos both joined the Indochinese Communist Party and participated in their

¹⁷ “*Cambodia and Laos: A New Era of Cooperation.*” LinkedIn, (29 June 2023).
[Cambodia and Laos: A New Era of Cooperation \(linkedin.com\)](#)

¹⁸ “*Indochina Wars.*” Britannica, (28 Feb, 2020)
[Indochina wars | Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia History | Britannica](#)

resistance against France; after signing Geneva Accords of 1954 which ended colonial rule both countries achieved independence.¹⁹

Over the following decades, both countries struggled with internal conflicts and political instability. Cambodia particularly felt the pain caused by Pol Pot's Khmer Rouge regime which resulted in immense suffering and deaths²⁰; Laos too struggled with political transition as well as its impact of Vietnam War.²¹

Cambodia and Laos began normalizing their relations in the 1990s as both countries sought to rebuild and strengthen ties after the end of Cold War and desire for regional stability prompted them to work toward diplomatic reconciliation and cooperation. Diplomatic missions and bilateral agreements established during this process of normalization marked significant milestones along the way.²²

Cambodia and Laos have recently focused their attention on increasing economic cooperation, encouraging trade, investment, and connectivity through infrastructure projects. The Greater Mekong Subregion, comprising both countries, has provided an effective forum for regional collaboration. Furthermore, ASEAN has played an essential role in building closer ties between Cambodia, Laos, other Southeast Asian nations as well as Cambodia itself.²³

Cambodia and Laos' relationship are marked by an intricate interweave of cultural, historical, and political factors that has led to significant challenges over time. Yet both nations have sought to develop mutually beneficial ties based on shared interests and regional integration.²⁴

¹⁹ "Indochina Wars." Britannica. (28 Feb 2020)

²⁰ David Chandler, "*Cambodia: A historical Overview.*" Asia Society, (12 May, 2023)
[Cambodia: A Historical Overview | Asia Society](#)

²¹ Wendy, "*History of Laos.*" Asiahighlights, (25 Oct, 2022)

²² "*Lao-Cambodia bilateral relations information.*" Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Lao P.D.R., (02 August, 2022).

²³ "*Lao-Cambodia bilateral relations information.*" Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Lao P.D.R., (02 August, 2022).

²⁴ "*Cambodia and Laos: A New Era of Cooperation.*" LinkedIn, (29 June, 2023).

3.2. Examination of Major Historical Events That Have Influenced Their Relations

Cambodia and Laos' bilateral relationship is defined by several major historical events that have had a profound effect on them both, shaping political dynamics, territorial boundaries, and overall cooperation between them. Let's explore some of these crucial moments together:

Khmer Empire and Lan Xang Kingdom: From the 9th to 15th centuries, Cambodia's Khmer Empire exerted considerable influence over parts of present-day Laos through cultural, linguistic, and religious exchanges that left an imprint on both societies as well as creating historical links.²⁵

French Colonial Rule: As part of French Indochina, both Cambodia and Laos came under French colonization during this era, creating an experience shared among their respective populations that fostered nationalist aspirations as well as fostered an overall sense of solidarity among its people that led them towards fighting together for independence.²⁶

Independence and Post-Colonial Challenges: Following World War II, Cambodia and Laos gained independence from French colonial rule but simultaneously experienced internal conflicts and political instability; Cambodia experienced the tragic Khmer Rouge regime while Laos experienced political transitions following Vietnam War repercussions.²⁷

The Cold War Era: Cambodia and Laos were profoundly impacted by the Cold War era, as its effects extended far into their territories from neighboring Vietnam's conflict enveloping their borders, leading to military involvement both political and otherwise - specifically Laos becoming an arena during Vietnam War battlegrounds because its Ho Chi Minh Trail passed through its territory.²⁸

²⁵ "The Kingdom of Lan Xang." Voice of the past, Voice of the future, (28 May, 2023)

<https://www.voicepf.com/kingdom-of-lan-xang>

²⁶ "Indochina Wars." Britannica. (28 Feb 2020)

²⁷ "Indochina Wars." Britannica, (28 Feb, 2020)

²⁸ Dong-Yoon Lee, "Civil War: Cambodia (1970-1975 and 1979-1991)." Omnilogos, (2007)

[Civil War: Cambodia \(1970-1975 and 1979-1991\) \(omnilogos.com\)](https://www.omnilogos.com/civil-war-cambodia-1970-1975-and-1979-1991/)

Normalization and Post-Cold War Reconciliation: As soon as the Cold War ended in 1989, Cambodia and Laos embarked on a process of normalization and reconciliation. Diplomatic relations, agreement signings, and the desire for regional stability all contributed towards gradually strengthening their bilateral ties.²⁹

Regional Frameworks and Cooperation: Cambodia and Laos have actively participated in both the Greater Mekong Subregion and ASEAN as a means of regional cooperation and integration, particularly through economic cooperation, trade, infrastructure development and people-to-people exchanges.³⁰ These frameworks have played an essential part in supporting regional integration through economic integration as well as regional trade integration.

Border and Territorial Issues: Over time, Cambodia and Laos have encountered challenges associated with border demarcation and territorial disputes that strain relations and require diplomatic efforts for peaceful resolutions.³¹

Understanding these major historical events has had a profound effect on Cambodia and Laos relations, shaping their political, cultural, and economic ties. Comprehending them is crucial in understanding their bilateral relationships.

3.3. Discussion of The Factors That Led to The Normalization of Relations

Cambodia and Laos' normalization were made possible through various key factors that have played an instrumental role in strengthening bilateral ties, including political, economic, and regional considerations. Let us consider some of these:

²⁹ “*Lao-Cambodia bilateral relations information.*” Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Lao P.D.R, (02 August, 2022).

³⁰ “*Lao-Cambodia bilateral relations information.*” Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Lao P.D.R, (02 August, 2022).

³¹ Angiandrakumar Gnanasagaran, “*Behind the Cambodia-Laos PDR border dispute.*” The ASEAN Post, (23 May, 2018).

Political Will: Political will was key in normalization efforts between Cambodia and Laos. Recognizing the benefits of increased cooperation and regional stability, leaders from both nations demonstrated a desire to put aside historical differences and develop stronger ties.³²

Regional Integration: Cambodia and Laos' interest in regional integration within Southeast Asia through organizations such as ASEAN and GMS were one of the primary motivating forces behind their efforts to normalize relations between themselves. They recognized its benefits for cooperation, economic integration, and collective security purposes - motivating them towards working on finding resolution for any differences they had between themselves.³³

Economic Interests: Economic considerations were an instrumental force in normalizing relations. Both countries realized the potential benefits of increased trade, investment, and cooperation on economic matters; hence opening cross-border trade, promoting tourism, and exploring joint development projects became key goals in normalizing economic relations between the nations.³⁴

Shared Security Concerns: Cambodia and Laos shared security challenges such as transnational crime, border security and regional stability which motivated them to cooperate on normalizing relations and address these shared worries together in order to increase regional stability while strengthening bilateral ties.³⁵

³² “Cambodia, Laos pledge to further enhance bilateral ties, cooperation.” Xinhuanet, (9 Feb, 2020)

[Cambodia, Laos pledge to further enhance bilateral ties, cooperation - Xinhua | English.news.cn \(xinhuanet.com\)](https://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2020/02/09/cambodia-laos-pledge-to-further-enhance-bilateral-ties-cooperation/)

³³ “Lao-Cambodia bilateral relations information.” Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Lao P.D.R, (02 August, 2022).

³⁴ “Cambodia, Laos pledge to further enhance bilateral ties, cooperation.” Xinhuanet, (9 Feb, 2020)

³⁵ Soth Koemsoeun. “Cambodia and Laos hold joint security meet on the border.” Phnom Penh Post (8 Sep, 2020).

[Cambodia and Laos hold joint security meet on the border | Phnom Penh Post](https://www.phnompenhpost.com/cambodia-and-laos-hold-joint-security-meet-on-the-border)

Diplomatic Efforts and Negotiations: Diplomacy was essential in normalizing relations between both countries. High-level visits, dialogue sessions and memoranda of understanding created an environment of cooperation and trust-building between them.³⁶

People-to-People Exchanges: Increased cultural exchanges, educational programs, and tourism have played an essential role in breaking down barriers between Cambodia and Laos. Such exchanges fostered mutual understanding between communities while forging personal bonds among participants that helped establish overall normalized relations.³⁷

Historical Context: Drawing upon past conflicts and shared historical experiences, Cambodia and Laos recognized the need to move towards reconciliation and cooperation. They acknowledged the significance of addressing historical disputes while prioritizing shared interests and goals as ways towards progress.³⁸

It is essential to note that the factors mentioned above are interrelated and often influenced one another. They reflect the evolving regional dynamics and the changing geopolitical landscape in Southeast Asia.

³⁶ “Lao-Cambodia bilateral relations information.” Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Lao P.D.R, (02 August, 2022).

³⁷ Ry Sochan, “Cambodia, Laos renew border co-op.” Asia News network. (16 Feb, 2023).

<https://asianews.network/cambodia-laos-renew-border-co-op/>

³⁸ “Cambodia and Laos: A New Era of Cooperation.” LinkedIn, (29 June, 2023).

CHAPTER 4: OPPORTUNITIES, CHALLENGES AND PERSPECTIVE IN CAMBODIA AND LAOS SINCE NORMALIZATION

In this introductory chapter, there are 3 main parts, such as: opportunities, challenges, and perspective. And contains 9 subheading which will explored, evaluated, and analyzed regarding to Cambodia and Laos opportunities, challenges, and perspective since normalization.

4.1. Identification and Analysis of The Opportunities That Have Emerged in The Post-Normalization Period

Since normalization between Cambodia and Laos, several opportunities have presented themselves for closer cooperation and mutual gains. These prospects can be identified and assessed across various dimensions:

Economic Cooperation and Trade: Normalizing relations has provided Cambodia and Laos with an opportunity for increased economic cooperation and trade between them, both countries recognizing mutually beneficial economic partnerships which has led to cross-border trade, investment, joint ventures, as well as growth across sectors such as agriculture, manufacturing tourism and energy production.³⁹

Infrastructure Development and Connectivity: Improvements in infrastructure have presented opportunities for increased regional integration. Efforts to establish transportation networks – roads, railways, and bridges – between countries has made movement of goods,

³⁹ “*Cambodia-Lao trade, investment up.*” Phnom Penh post, (17 Feb, 2022).
<https://www.phnompenhpost.com/business/cambodia-lao-trade-investment>

services, and people much easier and led to significant impacts in trade, tourism, and overall economic development.⁴⁰

Tourism and Cultural Exchanges: Cambodia and Laos' rich cultural heritage and natural attractions have inspired increased tourism and opened opportunities for cultural exchange. Especially post-normalization period has witnessed a marked surge in visitor arrivals at historical sites, natural landscapes, vibrant cultures; collaborative efforts in tourism promotion as well as preservation could further support this sector.⁴¹

Diplomatic and Political Cooperation: With normalization of relations comes greater diplomatic and political cooperation between Cambodia and Laos, including high-level exchanges, joint statements, and diplomatic initiatives to strengthen bilateral ties and address regional challenges. Such cooperation holds potential for increased collaboration in areas such as security, defense, and regional integration.⁴²

Cross-Border Investment: Since normalizing relations between Cambodia and Laos, cross-border investments have flourished. Investors from both nations have taken advantage of joint ventures and business partnerships between their nations to establish new industries while sharing technologies and expertise across borders, contributing to economic development as well as job creation in both nations.⁴³

Educational and Academic Exchanges: Since normalization, Cambodia and Laos have witnessed an increase in educational and academic exchanges between themselves.

⁴⁰ "PM Hun Sen Urges for Attention to Infrastructure Connectivity Development between Cambodia and Laos." Pressocm.gov.kh, (29 Oct, 2019).

<https://pressocm.gov.kh/en/archives/59198>

⁴¹ "Laos and Cambodia agree to promote bilateral tourism." The Star, (16 Mar, 2023).

<https://www.thestar.com.my/aseanplus/aseanplus-news/2023/03/16/laos-and-cambodia-agree-to-promote-bilateral-tourism>

⁴² Torn Chanritheara. "Cambodia and Lao to Set Plans for a Long-Term Partnership" Cambodianess, (11 Feb, 2023).

<https://cambodianess.com/article/cambodia-and-lao-to-set-plans-for-a-long-term-partnership>

⁴³ "Cambodia-Lao trade, investment up." Phnom Penh post. (17 Feb 2022).

Scholarships, study programs, and collaboration between educational institutions have facilitated knowledge transfer as a means to promote human resource development as well as capacity building across a number of fields, such as science, technology, research.⁴⁴

Environmental Cooperation: Normalizing relations has opened the way to joint environmental initiatives and cooperation between Cambodia and Laos, sharing natural resources while facing similar environmental challenges. Working together on sustainable development, biodiversity conservation and climate change mitigation could yield long-term environmental gains that mutually benefit both sides.⁴⁵

4.2. Exploration of Economic Cooperation, Trade Relations, And Investment

Opportunities Between the Two Countries

Since normalizing their relations, Cambodia and Laos have engaged in proactive discussions regarding economic cooperation, strengthening trade ties and exploring investment opportunities to further mutual growth and development. Their investigation includes various sectors and initiatives:

Trade Relations: Both nations have made efforts to expand bilateral trade, increasing its volume and expanding its variety. Agreements such as the Cambodia-Laos Trade Agreement were formed to ease trading flows and reduce trade barriers; cross-border trading activities have also contributed to this growth in trade between their two nations.⁴⁶

Investment Opportunities: Cambodia and Laos have become attractive investment destinations for both businesses and investors, offering favorable business climates with investment incentives, special economic zones, regulatory reforms, and opportunities in various sectors such as agriculture, manufacturing tourism infrastructure development renewable

⁴⁴ Ministry of Foreign Affair and International Cooperation, “*Press Release*”. Mfaic.Gov.Kh. (February, 2023)

⁴⁵ “*Lao-Cambodia bilateral relations information.*” Ministry of Foreign Affair of Lao P.D.R, (02 August, 2022).

⁴⁶ “*PM Hun Sen Urges for Attention to Infrastructure Connectivity Development between Cambodia and Laos.*” Pressocm.gov.kh, (29 Oct, 2019).

energy investments. Efforts made to promote investments have resulted in both domestic and foreign investments being attracted into these nations.⁴⁷

Regional Economic Integration: Cambodia and Laos actively engage in regional economic integration initiatives such as Greater Mekong Subregion and Association of Southeast Asian Nations,⁴⁸ providing platforms for economic cooperation, trade facilitation, infrastructure development and market access expansion. Both nations seek to leverage regional integration initiatives in order to expand market access, enhance connectivity and entice investments from both neighboring nations as well as beyond.⁴⁹

Cross-Border Projects and Connectivity: Cross-border initiatives have been initiated between Cambodia and Laos to enhance connectivity, including efforts like building transportation infrastructure like roads and bridges to facilitate trade logistics and facilitate movement of goods and people across both borders. Projects such as Asian Highway Network aim to connect transport networks together while simultaneously increasing tourism development and strengthening economic ties across Southeast Asia.⁵⁰

Tourism and Hospitality: Cambodia and Laos have seen significant tourism growth, providing ample opportunity for collaboration in their tourism and hospitality sectors. Both nations boast rich cultural heritage sites, historical landmarks, natural attractions, and tourism companies from around the globe. Joint campaigns promoting joint tourism campaigns, facilitating travel arrangements, or exchanging expertise can contribute to mutual benefits and sustainable tourism development in both nations.⁵¹

⁴⁷ "PM Hun Sen Urges for Attention to Infrastructure Connectivity Development between Cambodia and Laos." Pressocm.gov.kh, (29 Oct ,2019).

⁴⁸ "Lao-Cambodia bilateral relations information." Ministry of Foreign Affair of Lao P.D.R, (02 August, 2022).

⁴⁹ "Leveraging benefits of regional economic integration." adb.org, (Dec, 2022).

https://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/publication/845061/regional-economic-integration-lao-pdr-gms_0.pdf

⁵⁰ Ry Sochan, "Cambodia, Laos agree links between border provinces." Phnom Penh Post, (13 Feb, 2023).

<https://www.phnompenhpost.com/national-politics/cambodia-laos-agree-links-between-border-provinces>

⁵¹ Ashok Patnaik, "Cambodia, Laos vow to strengthen tourism cooperation." Khmer times, (19 January, 2022).

<https://www.khmertimeskh.com/501009521/cambodia-laos-vow-to-strengthen-tourism-cooperation/>

Energy and Infrastructure Development: Cambodia and Laos have collaborated on energy cooperation and infrastructure development projects to meet growing energy demands while strengthening connectivity. Initiatives such as hydropower projects, cross-border transmission lines, road infrastructure improvements, and hydroelectric plant construction were pursued to bolster energy security, promote economic integration, facilitate trade and investment activities, as well as facilitate trade between them.⁵²

Agricultural Cooperation: Agriculture plays a pivotal role in both Cambodia and Laos economies, and joint efforts in agricultural development, knowledge sharing, and technology transfer can enhance productivity, promote sustainable farming practices, and ensure food security. Joint research projects, exchange programs and agricultural trade facilitation initiatives present opportunities for cooperation that yield mutual gains.⁵³

Cross-Border Trade: With their improved relations, Cambodia and Laos have seen increased cross-border trade flourish, creating opportunities for increased commerce and economic exchange. Both nations have taken measures such as simplifying customs procedures and setting up border checkpoints to facilitate trade facilitation measures – leading to an expansion in bilateral trade between these two nations for agricultural products, textiles, and consumer goods.⁵⁴

Investment and Joint Ventures: Since normalization, Cambodia and Laos have seen an upsurge of investment opportunities and joint ventures between themselves. Both nations

⁵² Prakash Jha, “*new Laos-Cambodia line set to expand power trade, ties.*” Khmer Times, (9 January, 2023). <https://www.khmertimeskh.com/501216024/new-laos-cambodia-line-set-to-expand-power-trade-ties/>

⁵³ “*New fodder options shared in Cambodia, Laos.*” Australian Centre for International Agriculture Research, (8 Sep, 2021).

<https://www.aciar.gov.au/media-search/news/new-fodder-options-shared-cambodia-laos>

“*Developing cassava production and marketing systems to enhance smallholder livelihoods in Cambodia and Laos PDR,*” Australian Centre for International Agriculture Research, (2014).

<https://www.aciar.gov.au/project/asem-2014-053>

⁵⁴ Ry Sochan, “*Cambodia, Laos agree links between border provinces.*” Phnom Penh Post, (13 Feb, 2023).

<https://www.phnompenhpost.com/national-politics/cambodia-laos-agree-links-between-border-provinces>

provide favorable environments with incentives for foreign investors wishing to invest in sectors like manufacturing, energy production, tourism and infrastructure development attracting investments both domestically as well as from foreign sources; collaboration within joint ventures can bring shared benefits, technology transference and job creation opportunities.⁵⁵

Connectivity and Regional Integration: Cambodia and Laos have strengthened economic ties through improved transportation infrastructure and connectivity initiatives, such as road networks, bridges, and the proposed railway link between them. Integrated into regional frameworks such as ASEAN Economic Community provides even more opportunities for trade, investment, and regional collaboration.⁵⁶

4.3. Evaluation of Diplomatic and Political Developments That Have Enhanced Bilateral Cooperation

Since restoring relations between Cambodia and Laos, notable diplomatic and political events have significantly strengthened bilateral cooperation between these two nations. These events have played an essential role in strengthening ties, developing mutual trust, and increasing collaboration across many areas. Here are some key considerations:

Exchange of High-Level Visits: High-level visits between Cambodian and Laotian officials have played a critical role in strengthening bilateral ties. These trips offer opportunities for leaders to discuss strategic issues, share perspectives on regional and international affairs, sign agreements to enhance cooperation, discuss strategic priorities and agree upon joint projects – for instance, the visit from Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen to Laos in 2020 and

⁵⁵ “Cambodia-Lao trade, investment up.” Phnom Penh Post, (17 Feb, 2022).
<https://www.phnompenhpost.com/business/cambodia-lao-trade-investment>

⁵⁶ Ry Sochan, “Cambodia, Laos agree links between border provinces.” Phnom Penh Post, (13 Feb, 2023).
<https://www.phnompenhpost.com/national-politics/cambodia-laos-agree-links-between-border-provinces>

that from Lao Prime Minister Thongloun Sisoulith visiting Cambodia the same year being examples.⁵⁷

Bilateral Agreements and Treaties: Both nations have signed several bilateral agreements and treaties to formalize their cooperation in various sectors, including trade and investment, tourism, transportation, education, and cultural exchange. These agreements serve as frameworks for collaboration as well as pave the way for joint initiatives and projects; examples of such an arrangement include Memorandum of Understanding on Tourism Cooperation as well as Agreement for Promotion and Protection of Investments.⁵⁸

Economic Cooperation and Trade Facilitation: Cambodia and Laos have worked towards strengthening economic cooperation and trade facilitation measures. They have made efforts to upgrade cross-border infrastructure, streamline customs procedures, promote trade and investment between both countries,⁵⁹ establish Special Economic Zones along their borders to increase economic engagement as both seek to increase bilateral trade volumes while exploring joint venture and investment projects.⁶⁰

Security Cooperation: Cambodia and Laos have worked closely on security issues pertaining to border security, counterterrorism, transnational crime, and law enforcement cooperation between their law enforcement agencies (such as police and customs) to address

⁵⁷ "Prime Minister of Lao PDR pays an official visit to Cambodia." Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Lao PDR, (January, 2022).

<http://www.mofa.gov.la/index.php/activities/state-leaders/1134-prime-minister-of-lao-pdr-pay-an-official-visit-cambodia>

⁵⁸ "Lao-Cambodia bilateral relations information." Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Lao P.D.R, (02 August, 2022).

⁵⁹ Ry Sochan, "Cambodia, Laos agree links between border provinces." Phnom Penh Post, (13 Feb, 2023).

<https://www.phnompenhpost.com/national-politics/cambodia-laos-agree-links-between-border-provinces>

⁶⁰ Sok Chan, "Cambodia-Laos Central Banks committed to strengthening financial and economic cooperation." Khmer Times, (23 Dec, 2020).

<https://www.khmertimeskh.com/50796510/cambodia-lao-central-banks-committed-to-strengthening-financial-and-economic-cooperation/>

common security challenges; exchange of intelligence has helped maintain peace and stability within their regions.⁶¹

Cultural and People-to-People Exchanges: Cultural and people-to-people exchanges have played a vital role in enhancing bilateral cooperation. Both countries have organized cultural festivals, exhibitions, academic exchanges, and academic seminars designed to deepen mutual understanding as well as strengthen social ties. Through such interactions between Cambodian and Laotian citizens they create an awareness of shared history, values, traditions, which contributes to building closer relations between their populations.⁶²

Cultural and Historical Exchanges: Cambodia and Laos have engaged in extensive cultural and historical exchanges that have helped deepen mutual understanding of each other's traditions, heritage, and cultures. Through festivals, exhibitions, exchanges of art performances and performances between both nations as well as strengthened cultural diplomacy initiatives have promoted cultural tourism initiatives and promoted both countries as attractive tourist destinations. These exchanges not only strengthen cultural ties but also contribute to marketing them both as desirable tourist spots.⁶³

These examples demonstrate how diplomatic and political developments between Cambodia and Laos have enhanced bilateral cooperation and demonstrate both countries' dedication to deepening relations through high-level exchanges, bilateral agreements, economic/trade cooperation agreements, security cooperation arrangements and sharing people-to-people and historical experiences.

⁶¹ Lay Samean, "Kingdom, Laos to enhance border security cooperation." Phnom Penh Post, (21 April, 2022). <https://www.phnompenhpost.com/national/kingdom-laos-enhance-border-security-cooperation>

⁶² Ry Sochan, "Cambodia, Laos renew border co-op." Asia News network, (16 Feb, 2023). <https://asianews.network/cambodia-laos-renew-border-co-op/>

⁶³ Ry Sochan, "Cambodia, Laos renew border co-op." Asia News network, (16 Feb, 2023). <https://asianews.network/cambodia-laos-renew-border-co-op/>

4.4. Analysis of The Challenges and Obstacles Faced in Strengthening Relations

Strengthening relations between Cambodia and Laos presents multiple obstacles that must be carefully considered and resolved through concerted efforts. These difficulties stem from historical, political, cross-border issue, culture and linguistic; below is an analysis of some key ones:

Historical Disputes and Legacies: Historical disputes and unresolved conflicts between Cambodia and Laos can impede bilateral relations, including territorial claims, border issues or differing interpretations of historical events. Overcoming their legacy requires confronting these disputes head on through dialogue, mediation and seeking peaceful resolutions to these conflicts.⁶⁴

Border Disputes and Demarcation Challenges: Border disputes and demarcation challenges pose significant barriers to strengthening relationships. Disagreements over exact boundary lines, overlapped claims and different interpretations of border agreements can strain relations; effective mechanisms for demarcation and cooperation must be in place in order to overcome such challenges.⁶⁵

Cross-Border Issues and Security Concerns: Cross-border issues such as illegal activities, smuggling, transnational crimes, and their related transgressions present many difficulties to bilateral relationships. Addressing border security effectively while counteracting these challenges requires close cooperation among law enforcement officials, intelligence sharing services and joint efforts by authorities on both sides.⁶⁶ Establishing trust and

⁶⁴ Tae-Jun Kang, "Are Cambodia and Laos really any closer to resolving their border dispute?" The Diplomat, (21 May, 2018).

<https://thediplomat.com/2018/05/are-cambodia-and-laos-really-any-closer-to-resolving-their-border-dispute/>

⁶⁵ Tae-Jun Kang. "Are Cambodia and Laos really any closer to resolving their border dispute?" The Diplomat, (21 May, 2018).

<https://thediplomat.com/2018/05/are-cambodia-and-laos-really-any-closer-to-resolving-their-border-dispute/>

⁶⁶ "Laos, Cambodia reaffirm commitment to enhance cooperation on border security." English News, (20 March, 2023).

strengthening coordination mechanisms are crucial components to effectively managing security concerns.

Cultural and Linguistic Differences: Communicating across cultural lines can present communication challenges and hinder mutual understanding. Different cultural practices, languages and communication styles can lead to misinterpretations between people residing in different communities; cultural exchange programs or people-to-people interactions may help bridge any existing gaps and foster understanding between parties involved.

4.5. Discussion of Territorial Disputes, Border Issues, Or Historical Disputes Between Cambodia And Laos

Territorial disputes, border issues and historical disagreements between Cambodia and Laos have long been part of their complicated bilateral relationship. Although both nations have made efforts to address and settle these differences through diplomatic means, tensions still occasionally arise, and challenges must be faced head on. Here is an outline of some key components:

Border Demarcation: One of the key areas of contention between Cambodia and Laos has been demarcation of their shared border, which remains uncertain in certain locations, leading to occasional border disputes and conflicts. Attempts were made at resolution through bilateral negotiations as well as joint border demarcation commissions established between both nations to address these issues, with significant progress made with several border markers installed defining this boundary in recent years.⁶⁷

<https://english.neEws.cn/asiapacific/20230320/05111aae018a4f368128208c48a14b05/c.html>

⁶⁷ Ben Sokhean, “Cambodia, Laos agree to resolve border demarcation quickly.” Khmer Times, (11 July, 2022).

<https://www.khmertimeskh.com/501109915/cambodia-laos-agree-to-resolve-border-demarcation-quickly/>

Historical Disputations: Cambodia and Laos have long had an intricate relationship, which often results in disputes – sometimes over issues like border claims, territorial control or interpretation of historical events. However, both nations recognize the value of maintaining good bilateral ties,⁶⁸ so whenever disputes do arise, they usually look for solutions through dialogue or peaceful means to resolve them.

Border Incidents and Tensions: Since normalization, incidents of border tension between Cambodia and Laos have surfaced, including territorial encroachments, disputes over land use/ownership rights and occasional confrontations along the border.⁶⁹ Such events can fuel public sentiment resulting in nationalist feelings on both sides, necessitating diplomatic management of this sensitive matter.

Cross-Border Migration and Illegal Activities: The porous nature of Cambodia-Laos borders has presented challenges related to cross-border migration and illegal activities such as smuggling, drug trafficking and illegal logging that threaten border security and strain bilateral relations at times.⁷⁰ Both nations have taken steps to strengthen border controls, strengthen law enforcement cooperation and combat any unlawful activities occurring along their border regions.

Impact on Trust and Bilateral Relations: Territorial disputes and border issues can damage trust between two nations, disrupt the overall bilateral relationship, and make it more difficult to address other matters of mutual concern.⁷¹ Therefore, diplomatic negotiations become essential to maintaining stability and avoiding further escalation of tensions.

⁶⁸ Ben Sokhean, “Cambodia, Laos agree to resolve border demarcation quickly.” Khmer Times, (11 July, 2022).

<https://www.khmertimeskh.com/501109915/cambodia-laos-agree-to-resolve-border-demarcation-quickly/>

⁶⁹ Ben Sokhean, “Cambodia, Laos agree to resolve border demarcation quickly” Khmer Times, (11 July, 2022).

<https://www.khmertimeskh.com/501109915/cambodia-laos-agree-to-resolve-border-demarcation-quickly/>

⁷⁰ Lay Samean, “Kingdom, Laos to enhance border security cooperation.” Phnom Penh Post, (21 April, 2022).

<https://www.phnompenhpost.com/national/kingdom-laos-enhance-border-security-cooperation>

⁷¹ “Lao-Cambodia bilateral relations information.” Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Lao P.D.R., (02 August, 2022).

Regional and International Involvement: Regional organizations such as ASEAN have also played a pivotal role in encouraging peaceful resolution. ASEAN's principles emphasize conflict resolution through peaceful means and encourage member states to seek dialogue and cooperation when it comes to territorial disputes. Various regional forums offer platforms for discussions as well as serve as intermediaries during disputes.⁷²

Territorial disputes, border issues and historical grievances are hallmarks of Cambodia and Laos relations, yet remain challenges that impede closer ties. Yet through peaceful resolution and cooperation both nations may overcome their respective hurdles and develop more stable partnerships post-normalization era. By approaching these matters diplomatically and regionally Cambodia and Laos may pave way to greater collaboration and shared prosperity across their region.

4.6. Examination of Cultural, Linguistic, Or Socio-Economic Differences That May Affect Relations

Cambodia and Laos' bilateral relationship is heavily shaped by historical, political, cultural, linguistic, socio-economic differences which shape interactions. These variations can have an effect on levels of mutual understanding, cooperation, and the overall dynamics of their relationship – thus providing valuable insights into potential challenges or opportunities to promote cooperation and foster closer ties between both nations.

Cultural Differences: Both Cambodia and Laos have rich and distinct cultural histories that have developed over centuries, sharing some cultural affinities as members of Southeast Asia but with distinct traditions, customs and practices that differ significantly.⁷³ Cultural

⁷² "ASEAN Regional Forum Statement to promote peace, stability, and prosperity through confidence building measures and preventing diplomacy." Europa.eu, (5 August, 2023).

https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/asean-regional-forum-statement-promote-peace-stability-and-prosperity-through-confidence_en

⁷³ "Indochina culture: Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos." Mr. Linh's adventures, (12 June, 2023).

differences can impact communication, social norms and perceptions leading to miscommunication or even misperceptions; understanding each other's cultures is vital in building mutual respect and trust between nations.

In Cambodia and Laos respectively, Theravada Buddhism plays an essential role in shaping society values and practices; in Laos however, traditional ceremonies, festivals, and rituals reflect local animist beliefs influencing Buddhism itself as well.⁷⁴ Each country also displays distinct cultural identities through festivals that provide opportunities for exchange and collaboration between their peoples.

Linguistic Differences: Language plays an essential part in national identity and communication between nations. While Khmer is the official language in Cambodia and Lao is the official language in Laos, their linguistic differences present unique communication challenges between them – with misinterpretation or miscommunication due to language barriers potentially impeding diplomatic discussions or cooperation efforts.

However, acknowledging linguistic diversity can also serve as a foundation for mutual appreciation and collaboration between cultures. Initiatives designed to foster language learning, translation services and cultural exchange can foster better understanding between people while strengthening human connections.⁷⁵

Socio-Economic Distinction: Cambodia and Laos exhibit different levels of economic development, which affect their approach to different issues. Cambodia has seen tremendous economic expansion recently due to tourism, garment exports and agriculture;⁷⁶ Laos on the

<https://www.mrlinhadventure.com/en/vietnam/travel-blog/mrlinh-adventures/108-indochina-culture-vietnam-cambodia-and-laos.aspx>

⁷⁴ "Indochina culture: Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos." Mr. Linh's adventures, (12 June, 2023).

<https://www.mrlinhadventure.com/en/vietnam/travel-blog/mrlinh-adventures/108-indochina-culture-vietnam-cambodia-and-laos.aspx>

⁷⁵ Ry Sochan, "Cambodia, Laos renew border co-op." Asia News network, (16 Feb, 2023).

<https://asianews.network/cambodia-laos-renew-border-co-op/>

⁷⁶ "Cambodia's Economy to Accelerate on Tourism Recovery." Asian Development Bank, (04 April, 2023).

<https://www.adb.org/news/cambodia-economy-accelerate-tourism-recovery-ADB>

other hand is currently going through a period of transition and change with hydropower generation, mining development and agriculture being its focal points of focus.⁷⁷

Socioeconomic differences may impact priorities, capacities for collaboration, and responses to regional challenges. Recognizing and addressing disparities in development can promote equitable cooperation and inclusive growth – benefitting both countries through bilateral relations.

Overcoming Differences: While cultural, linguistic, and socio-economic differences present challenges for Cambodia and Laos relations, they also offer them the chance to learn from each other and deepen their ties. Initiatives focused on cultural exchange can promote mutual appreciation for each country’s traditions and histories while building bonds of respect across national borders that transcend differences and foster friendship.⁷⁸

Additionally, addressing socio-economic disparities through collaboration and inclusive development projects can foster sustainable growth while decreasing inequality between nations. Regional integration initiatives, like Greater Mekong Subregion integration efforts can serve as platforms for joint economic ventures and infrastructure projects that promote connectivity and shared prosperity.⁷⁹

4.7. Analysis of The Prospects for Future Cooperation and Deepening of Relations

Cambodia and Laos share many opportunities for future cooperation and deepening relations:

Economic Integration and Trade Facilitation: Both nations recognize the significance of strengthening economic ties, taking steps to promote trade facilitation and

⁷⁷ “Laos Country Report 2022.” B Transformation Index, (2022).

<https://bti-project.org/en/reports/country-report/LAO>

⁷⁸ Ry Sochan, “Cambodia, Laos renew border co-op.” Asia News network, (16 Feb, 2023).

<https://asianews.network/cambodia-laos-renew-border-co-op/>

⁷⁹ “Cross-border Infrastructure program.” Asia Regional Integration Center, (2022).

<https://aric.adb.org/initiative/greater-mekong-subregion-program>

remove investment-related hurdles such as setting up special economic zones, signing bilateral trade agreements and encouraging cross-border trading. Future cooperation could involve further improving trade facilitation measures while expanding market access and creating investment opportunities aimed at spurring economic growth and prosperity within both nations.⁸⁰

Connectivity and Infrastructure Development: Strengthening physical connectivity between Cambodia and Laos is central to economic cooperation and regional integration, including developing transport infrastructure such as roads, railways, and bridges that facilitate goods movement between both nations.⁸¹ Potential partnerships lie in jointly planning and implementing cross-border infrastructure projects jointly as well as capitalizing on regional initiatives like AIIB⁸² or Mekong-Japan Cooperation or exploring opportunities for public-private partnerships.⁸³

Tourism Collaboration and Cultural Exchanges: Cambodia and Laos boast rich cultural and historical heritages that form a solid basis for tourism cooperation between these two nations. Potential future initiatives for cooperation in this sector could include jointly marketing tourism packages that emphasize their unique attractions in both countries,⁸⁴ encouraging cultural exchanges to protect heritage preservation efforts, developing sustainable

⁸⁰ “Cambodia-Lao trade, investment up.” Phnom Penh Post, (17 Feb, 2022).

<https://www.phnompenhpost.com/business/cambodia-lao-trade-investment>

⁸¹ “Cambodia, Laos Discuss Railway Connectivity & Cooperation in Other Key Sectors.” Construction & Property, (14 Feb, 2023).

<https://construction-property.com/cambodia-laos-is-discussing-railway-connectivity-and-cooperation-in-a-number-of-key-areas/>

⁸² “Cambodia: Cross-border Livestock Health and Value-chain Infrastructure Improvement Project.” AIIB, (10 Nov, 2022).

<https://www.aiib.org/en/projects/details/2022/proposed/Cambodia-Cross-border-Livestock-Health-and-Value-chain-Infrastructure-Improvement-Project.html>

⁸³ “Mekong Cooperation Framework.” MFAIC.Gov.Kh, (12 June, 2023).

<https://www.mfaic.gov.kh/Page/2021-02-08-Mekong-Cooperation-Framework>

⁸⁴ “Laos, Cambodia strengthen collaboration in tourism.” Vietnam plus, (15 March, 2023).

<https://en.vietnamplus.vn/laos-cambodia-strengthen-collaboration-in-tourism/249908.vnp>

tourism practices that lead to increased visitor arrivals as well as job creation and revenue generation for local communities.

Education and Research Cooperation: Strengthening cooperation in education and research between Cambodia and Laos can encourage intellectual exchanges, knowledge transfer, capacity building and student and faculty exchanges as well as joint research projects between these two nations. Such cooperation may contribute to human resource development, knowledge production and advancement of both educational systems in both nations.⁸⁵

Regional and International Engagement: Both Cambodia and Laos take an active part in regional and international forums, creating opportunities for collaboration and networking. Future potential for cooperation lies in capitalizing on these platforms to address shared challenges, share best practices, and advocate for their shared interests. Engaging with regional initiatives like ASEAN or Mekong subregional cooperation or multilateral forums such as the UN can strengthen their voices and influences when it comes to regional or global issues.

Prospects for future cooperation and deepening relations between Cambodia and Laos are drawn from analysis of scholarly research, policy reports, and expert opinions. These reflect potential areas where both nations could join forces to maximize mutual benefits, sustainable development, and regional stability – exploring these prospects requires sustained commitment, active engagement, and an established vision for stronger relations between Cambodia and Laos.

⁸⁵ “*Lao-Cambodia bilateral relations information.*” Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Lao P.D.R., (02 August, 2022).

4.8. Evaluation of Regional and International Factors That May Impact the Bilateral Relationship

Evaluating the regional and international factors that may impact the bilateral relationship between Cambodia and Laos involves considering various dimensions. Here are some key factors to consider:

Regional Integration Initiatives: Regional integration frameworks such as ASEAN, Mekong subregion cooperation and GMS provide platforms for regional collaboration that can have an effect on Cambodia-Laos bilateral relations.⁸⁶ These initiatives seek to promote economic integration, enhance connectivity, and address common challenges; but their true effect requires understanding their goals, mechanisms, and progress.

Geopolitical Dynamics: The geopolitical landscape can have an immense influence over Cambodia-Laos relations. Factors such as great power competition, regional power dynamics and territorial disputes all play a part in shaping these bilateral relations.⁸⁷

Economic Interdependence: Cambodia and Laos' economies interdepend, as well as with those of other countries, which influences their bilateral relationship. Assessing economic factors' effects involves looking at trade patterns, investment flows, regional economic trends.⁸⁸

Political Stability and Governance: Political stability and governance systems can have significant ramifications on bilateral relationships between nations. Assessing political dynamics involves an examination of domestic politics, political institutions, and governance structures.⁸⁹

⁸⁶ "Cambodia-Lao trade, investment up." Phnom Penh Post, (17 Feb, 2022).

<https://www.phnompenhpost.com/business/cambodia-lao-trade-investment>

⁸⁷ "Same-Same but Different: Laos and Cambodia's Political Embrace of China." ISEAS, (05 Sep, 2017).

https://www.iseas.edu.sg/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/ISEAS_Perspective_2017_66.pdf

⁸⁸ Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, Victoria Kwakwa, Andrea Beckwith, and Zafar Ahmed, "Impact of Asia's Financial Crisis on Cambodia and the Lao PDR." International Monetary Fund, (September, 1999).

<https://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/fandd/1999/09/okonjo.htm>

⁸⁹ "The New ASEANS: Vietnam, Burma, Cambodia & Laos." Australian Government, (19 Jun, 2023).

<https://www.dfat.gov.au/about-us/publications/Pages/the-new-aseans-vietnam-burma-cambodia-laos>

Regional Security Concerns: Concerns over regional security can negatively impact bilateral relationships. Assessing security factors requires evaluating the regional security environment as well as efforts by both countries to meet its challenges.⁹⁰

4.9. Discussion of Potential Areas of Collaboration and Strategies to Overcome Challenges

Cambodia and Laos' post-normalization period has provided Cambodia and Laos with numerous opportunities for collaboration across sectors as well as challenges that necessitate strategic approaches. By identifying potential areas of cooperation and formulating effective strategies to overcome challenges, both countries can strengthen bilateral ties and promote shared prosperity in the region. In this discussion we examine key areas of collaboration as well as strategies to overcome challenges to form sustainable, mutually beneficial partnerships that benefit both sides.

Economic Cooperation: Collaboration on economic matters is at the core of Cambodia and Laos relations. Both nations can explore joint ventures and investment opportunities that will further trade and economic ties; cross-border infrastructure projects such as road and rail networks can facilitate movement of goods and people across borders while increasing regional connectivity.⁹¹ Both nations may work collaboratively to attract foreign investments, leverage each other's resources, and create synergies that benefit both economies.

- **Strategies**

- Establish bilateral economic cooperation frameworks to facilitate investment and trade facilitation.
- Strengthen joint efforts in attracting foreign direct investment through coordinated investment promotion initiatives.

⁹⁰ Thitinan Pongsudhirak, "Cambodia and Laos in the regional mix." Bangkok Post, (30 Sep, 2022). <https://www.bangkokpost.com/opinion/opinion/2403845/cambodia-and-laos-in-the-regional-mix>

⁹¹ Heng Panha, "Cambodia, Laos to deepen economic cooperation." Khmer Times, (14 Feb, 2023). <https://www.khmertimeskh.com/501238354/cambodia-laos-to-deepen-economic-cooperation/>

- Enhance connectivity along the Cambodia-Laos border through improving and expanding transportation infrastructure.
- facilitate cross-border trade by streamlining customs and border procedures to promote seamless goods movement across borders.

Cultural and Educational Exchanges: Promoting cultural and educational exchanges can deepen mutual understanding and strengthen bonds between Cambodia and Laos, by cultivating academic collaboration, student exchange programs, joint research projects, cultural festivals, art exhibitions and language training programs that celebrate each nation's rich cultural heritage and create avenues for people-to-people connections.⁹²

- **Strategies:**

- Establish educational exchange programs from primary to tertiary education levels, from primary through tertiary, to promote student mobility and cross-cultural learning.
- Support joint research initiatives on topics of mutual interest like history, culture, and environment studies.
- Promote language learning and translation services to bridge linguistic differences and foster effective communication.

Regional Cooperation: Cambodia and Laos are active participants of several regional organizations such as ASEAN and Greater Mekong Subregion,⁹³ so strengthening regional cooperation will not only strengthen bilateral relationships but also contribute to regional stability by engaging in dialogues or initiatives across these organizations to address common regional challenges together and foster an atmosphere of trust between them.

⁹² “Lao-Cambodia bilateral relations information.” Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Lao P.D.R, (02 August, 2022).

⁹³ Asia News Network, “Cambodia-Lao trade, investment up.” Phnom Penh Post, (17 Feb, 2022).

<https://www.phnompenhpost.com/business/cambodia-lao-trade-investment>

- **Strategies:**

- Participate actively in regional forums and meetings to facilitate dialogue on common regional issues.
- Provide support for regional development projects aligning with their respective national development plans
- Coordinate regional matters to present a united front at regional forums.

Sustainable Development and Environmental Protection: Partnership in sustainable development and environmental protection is crucial to conserving their shared natural resources and meeting environmental challenges. By sharing best practices for agriculture, biodiversity conservation, eco-tourism, etc.,⁹⁴ both countries can promote responsible economic growth while protecting ecosystems.

- **Strategies:**

- Establish joint projects for eco-tourism development and conservation efforts within shared border areas. Share experiences and knowledge on sustainable agricultural practices and natural resource management.
- Join forces on initiatives designed to combat illegal logging, wildlife trafficking and other environmental crimes.

Security Cooperation: Addressing security challenges such as transnational crime, drug trafficking and border security requires joint efforts from Cambodia and Laos. By increasing information-sharing and coordination between their law enforcement agencies they can effectively combat cross-border threats while maintaining regional stability.⁹⁵

⁹⁴ “*Lao-Cambodia bilateral relations information.*” Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Lao P.D.R, (02 August, 2022).

⁹⁵ Tin Sokanvuth, “*Cambodia and Laos to create joint border-taskforce.*” Khmer times, (01 Decem, 2021).

<https://www.khmertimeskh.com/50980055/cambodia-and-laos-to-create-joint-border-taskforce/>

- **Strategies:**

- Strengthen intelligence-sharing mechanisms among their law enforcement and security agencies.
- Conduct joint exercises and training programs to build their capacity to respond quickly to security threats.
- Establish cross-border cooperation protocols to address criminal activities along shared border areas.

People-to-People Exchanges: Stress the importance of people-to-people exchanges in forging closer ties between Cambodia and Laos. Discuss their potential in terms of tourism promotion, travel facilitation and cultural exchanges between both nations.⁹⁶ Examine ways in which visa procedures could be simplified or transportation links enhanced in order to create tourism packages highlighting shared heritages and attractions of both nations.

- **Strategies**

- Promoting cultural understanding, trust, educational collaboration, and economic ties.
- As individuals from Cambodia and Laos collaborate and interact, they strengthen the greater Southeast Asian community. By forging bonds across borders, individuals from these two nations can foster a sense of regional identity which promotes cooperation in facing shared challenges together.

⁹⁶ Heng Panha, “*Cambodia, Laos to deepen economic cooperation.*” Khmer Times, (14 Feb, 2023). <https://www.khmertimeskh.com/501238354/cambodia-laos-to-deepen-economic-cooperation/>

CONCLUSION

The normalization of relations between Cambodia and Laos has brought about in a new era of opportunities and cooperation between the two neighboring nations. Throughout the post-normalization period, both nations realized the potential benefits of strengthened bilateral connections, leading to a wide range of opportunities for economic partnership and mutual growth.

Economic cooperation has been an essential element of their renewed relationship. Both countries have taken advantage of their complementary strengths by identifying areas of mutual interest to promote trade, investment, and joint development projects. Trade relations have flourished because of leveraging each other's resources and markets, resulting in increased regional competitiveness. Investment in key sectors has paved the way for economic diversification and increased business opportunities.

Infrastructure development has emerged as another crucial aspect of their economic collaboration. Joint initiatives in building road networks, railways, and border facilities have facilitated cross-border trade and connectivity, fostering the free movement of goods and people. Furthermore, investment in energy projects, including hydropower, has improved energy security and sustainability, as well as economic resilience.

Cultural exchanges have been critical in bridging gaps and deepening mutual understanding between the two countries. People-to-people connections have grown, fostering friendships and cultural diplomacy. These interactions have fostered an appreciation for shared heritage and traditions, fostering a sense of unity and solidarity among their citizens.

While there are many opportunities, there are also many challenges. Their relationship has occasionally been strained by historical conflicts and territorial disputes. However, both

countries have shown a commitment to peaceful conflict resolution mechanisms, choosing dialogue over confrontation to resolve their differences.

Furthermore, language differences and socioeconomic disparities have been recognized, resulting in efforts to promote language learning and bridge socioeconomic gaps. Education and skill development programs have been promoted, with the goal of developing a skilled workforce capable of driving economic growth.

Given the changing regional dynamics, Cambodia and Laos have recognized the importance of regional integration initiatives. Active participation in the Greater Mekong Subregion and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations has enabled them to address regional challenges and capitalize on regional opportunities.

RECOMMENDATION

Strengthen Economic Integration: Both countries should explore ways of deepening economic integration, including expanding trade relations and investment flows while encouraging cross-border connectivity. This can be accomplished through existing agreements being implemented more rapidly or streamlining trade procedures and investing in infrastructure projects that improve transportation networks for ease of moving goods and services across borders.

Strengthen Cultural and Educational Exchanges: Cambodia and Laos should prioritize cultural and educational exchanges in order to advance mutual understanding, preserve heritage, and foster people-to-people connections. This could involve supporting cultural festivals, encouraging student exchange programs and facilitating research collaborations between academic institutions. Emphasizing shared cultural heritages can foster closer ties while deepening mutual understanding between nations.

Address Challenges and Disparities: Both countries should proactively take measures to address any challenges or disparities that impede their relationship, including historical disputes through diplomatic means, language learning services that bridge linguistic differences and inclusive development policies that reduce socio-economic disparities. Regular dialogue mechanisms should also be created in order to address emerging challenges and foster mutual understanding.

Strengthen Regional Cooperation: Cambodia and Laos should actively engage in regional cooperation frameworks like ASEAN, Mekong subregion, or other relevant platforms, contributing to regional stability by engaging in initiatives designed to address common challenges while seizing opportunities for economic growth and sustainable development.

Strengthening collaboration will strengthen collective voices while simultaneously taking advantage of regional mechanisms to leverage mutual gains.

Foster People-to-People Exchanges: Promoting tourism, travel facilitation, and cultural exchanges is vital in building stronger bonds between Cambodia and Laos. Simplifying visa procedures, improving transportation links, and creating joint tourism packages will bring more visitors while simultaneously broadening cultural understanding. Strengthening people-to-people connections will foster lasting friendships while strengthening overall bilateral ties.

By implementing these recommendations, Cambodia and Laos can forge a stronger and mutually beneficial partnership. Both nations must maintain an eye toward the future by seizing opportunities, meeting challenges head on, and deepening cooperation between themselves. Through ongoing efforts and collaboration between them both, both nations may unlock the full potential of their relationship to foster shared prosperity in post-normalization times.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

“ASEAN Regional Forum Statement to promote peace, stability, and prosperity through confidence building measures and preventing diplomacy.” *Europa.eu*, (5 August, 2023).

https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/asean-regional-forum-statement-promote-peace-stability-and-prosperity-through-confidence_en

“Cambodia-Lao trade, investment up.” *Phnom Penh Post*, (17 Feb, 2022).

<https://www.phnompenhpost.com/business/cambodia-lao-trade-investment>

Chan, S. “Cambodia-Laos Central Banks committed to strengthening financial and economic cooperation.” *Khmer Times*, (23 Dec, 2020).

<https://www.khmertimeskh.com/50796510/cambodia-lao-central-banks-committed-to-strengthening-financial-and-economic-cooperation/>

Chanritheara, T. “Cambodia and Lao to Set Plans for a Long-Term Partnership.” *Cambodianess*, (11 Feb, 2023).

<https://cambodianess.com/article/cambodia-and-lao-to-set-plans-for-a-long-term-partnership>

Chandler, D. “Cambodia: a historical overview.” *Asia society*, (02 June, 2023).

<https://asiasociety.org/education/cambodia-historical-overview>

“Cambodia, Laos to Deepen Economic Cooperation.” *Ministry of information*, (13 Feb, 2023).

<https://www.information.gov.kh/articles/97418>

“Cambodia, Laos pledge to further enhance bilateral ties, cooperation.” *Xinhuanet*, (9 Feb, 2020)

[Cambodia, Laos pledge to further enhance bilateral ties, cooperation - Xinhua | English.news.cn \(xinhuanet.com\)](http://English.news.cn (xinhuanet.com))

“Cambodia and Laos: A New Era of Cooperation.” *Linkedin*, (29 June, 2023).

[Cambodia and Laos: A New Era of Cooperation \(linkedin.com\)](https://www.linkedin.com/company/cambodia-laos-cooperation)

“Cambodia’s Economy to Accelerate on Tourism Recovery.” *Asian Development Bank*, (04 April, 2023).

<https://www.adb.org/news/cambodia-economy-accelerate-tourism-recovery-ADB>

“Cross-border Infrastructure program.” *Asia Regional Integration Center*, (2022).

<https://aric.adb.org/initiative/greater-mekong-subregion-program>

“Cambodia, Laos Discuss Railway Connectivity & Cooperation in Other Key Sectors.” *Construction & Property*, (14 Feb, 2023).

<https://construction-property.com/cambodia-laos-is-discussing-railway-connectivity-and-cooperation-in-a-number-of-key-areas/>

“Cambodia: Cross-border Livestock Health and Value-chain Infrastructure Improvement Project.” *AIIB*, (10 Nov, 2022).

<https://www.aiib.org/en/projects/details/2022/proposed/Cambodia-Cross-border-Livestock-Health-and-Value-chain-Infrastructure-Improvement-Project.html>

Defalco, R. “Justice and Starvation in Cambodia: The Khmer Rouge Famine.” *The Cambodia law and Policy Journal*, (December, 2014)

<https://cambodialpj.org/article/justice-and-starvation-in-cambodia-the-khmer-rouge-famine/>

Gnanasagaran, A. “Behind the Cambodia-Laos PDR border dispute.” *The ASEAN Post*, (23 May, 2018).

<https://theaseanpost.com/article/behind-cambodia-lao-pdr-border-dispute>

Hunt, L. “Cambodia and Laos: toward a new era.” *The diplomat*, (30 June, 2016).

<https://thediplomat.com/2016/06/cambodia-and-laos-toward-a-new-era/>

“Indochina War.” *Britannica*, (28 Feb, 2020)

<https://www.britannica.com/event/Indochina-wars>

Koemsoeun, S. “Cambodia, Laos discuss relations?.” *Phnom Penh Post*, (25 Feb, 2019)

<https://www.phnompenhpost.com/national/cambodia-laos-discuss-relations>

Koemsoeun, S. “Cambodia and Laos hold joint security meet on the border.” *Phnom Penh Post*, (8 Sep, 2020).

[Cambodia and Laos hold joint security meet on the border | Phnom Penh Post](#)

Lee, D.Y. “Civil War: Cambodia (1970-1975 and 1979-1991).” *Omnilogos*, (2007)

[Civil War: Cambodia \(1970-1975 and 1979-1991\) \(omnilogos.com\)](#)

“Leveraging benefits of regional economic integration.” *adb.org*, (Dec, 2022).

https://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/publication/845061/regional-economic-integration-lao-pdr-gms_0.pdf

“Laos and Cambodia agree to promote bilateral tourism.” *The Star*, (16 March, 2023).

<https://www.thestar.com.my/aseanplus/aseanplus-news/2023/03/16/laos-and-cambodia-agree-to-promote-bilateral-tourism>

“Laos, Cambodia reaffirm commitment to enhance cooperation on border security.” *English News*, (20 March, 2023).

<https://english.neEws.cn/asiapacific/20230320/051111aae018a4f368128208c48a14b05/c.html>

“Laos Country Report 2022.” *B Transformation Index*, (2022).

<https://bti-project.org/en/reports/country-report/LAO>

“Laos, Cambodia strengthen collaboration in tourism.” *Vietnam plus*, (15 March, 2023).

<https://en.vietnamplus.vn/laos-cambodia-strengthen-collaboration-in-tourism/249908.vnp>

“Lao-Cambodia bilateral relations information.” *Ministry of Foreign Affair of Lao P.D.R.*, (02 August, 2022).

Ministry of Foreign Affair and International Cooperation, “Press Release”. *Mfaic.Gov.Kh*, (February, 2023)

<https://mfaic.gov.kh/files/uploads/JFF4X300K22O/PR%20Outcomes%20Eng-%20STPM's%20official%20visit%20in%20Laos%20FINAL.pdf>

Panha, H. “Cambodia, Laos to deepen economic cooperation.” *Khmer Times*, (14 Feb, 2023).

<https://www.khmertimeskh.com/501238354/cambodia-laos-to-deepen-economic-cooperation/>

Pongsudhirak, T. “Cambodia and Laos in the regional mix.” *Bangkok Post*, (30 Sep, 2022).

<https://www.bangkokpost.com/opinion/opinion/2403845/cambodia-and-laos-in-the-regional-mix>

“Mekong Cooperation Framework.” *MFAIC.Gov.Kh*, (12 June, 2023).

<https://www.mfaic.gov.kh/Page/2021-02-08-Mekong-Cooperation-Framework>

National Museum of The United State Air Force. “The Southeast Asia War: Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia.” *Nationalmuseum.af.mil*, (12 May, 2023).

<https://www.nationalmuseum.af.mil/Visit/Museum-Exhibits/Fact-Sheets/Display/Article/195959/the-southeast-asia-war-vietnam-laos-and-cambodia/>

Patnaik, A. “Cambodia, Laos vow to strengthen tourism cooperation.” *Khmer times*, (19 January, 2022).

<https://www.khmertimeskh.com/501009521/cambodia-laos-vow-to-strengthen-tourism-cooperation/>

“Prime Minister of Lao PDR pays an official visit to Cambodia.” *Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Laos PDR*, (January, 2022).

<http://www.mofa.gov.la/index.php/activities/state-leaders/1134-prime-minister-of-lao-pdr-pay-an-official-visit-cambodia>

“President Thongloun concludes state visit to Cambodia.” *Lao News Agency*, (07 May, 2023).

<https://kpl.gov.la/En/detail.aspx?id=72879>

“PM Hun Sen Urges for Attention to Infrastructure Connectivity Development between Cambodia and Laos.” *Pressocm.gov.kh*, (29 Oct, 2019).

<https://pressocm.gov.kh/en/archives/59198>

Pongsudhirak, T. “Cambodia and Laos in the regional mix.” *Bangkok Post*, (30 Sep, 2022).

<https://www.bangkokpost.com/opinion/opinion/2403845/cambodia-and-laos-in-the-regional-mix>

Sokhean, B. “Cambodia, Laos agree to resolve border demarcation quickly” *Khmer Times*, (11 July, 2022).

<https://www.khmertimeskh.com/501109915/cambodia-laos-agree-to-resolve-border-demarcation-quickly/>

Sonya, C. “Regional integration and political rivalries among the east Asian states and their impacts on Mekong Sub-Regional Development.” *Cicp.org.kh*, (September, 2010).

<https://cicp.org.kh/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/cicp-e-book-no-3.pdf>

Sophorndara, N. “Trade and transport facilitation in Cambodia.” *Unescap.org*, (12 May, 2023)

https://www.unescap.org/sites/default/files/8-TRAD~1_0.PDF

Sochan, R. “Cambodia, Laos agree links between border provinces.” *Phnom Penh Post*, (13 Feb, 2023).

<https://www.phnompenhpost.com/national-politics/cambodia-laos-agree-links-between-border-provinces>

Sochan, R. “Cambodia, Laos to ink action plan for strategic partnership.” *Phnom Penh Post*, (12 Feb, 2023).

<https://www.phnompenhpost.com/national-politics/cambodia-laos-ink-action-plan-strategic-partnership>

Socheath, S. “Cambodia and Laos mark 65 years of good friendship.” *Khmer times*, (16 June, 2021)

<https://www.khmertimeskh.com/50874941/cambodia-and-laos-mark-65-years-of-good-friendship/>

Sochan, R. “Cambodia, Laos renew border co-op.” *Asia News Network*, (16 Feb, 2023).

<https://asianews.network/cambodia-laos-renew-border-co-op/>

Samean, L. “Kingdom, Laos to enhance border security cooperation.” *Phnom Penh Post*, (21 April, 2022).

<https://www.phnompenhpost.com/national/kingdom-laos-enhance-border-security-cooperation>

Sokanvuth, T. “Cambodia and Laos to create joint border-taskforce.” *Khmer times*, (01 Decem, 2021).

<https://www.khmertimeskh.com/50980055/cambodia-and-laos-to-create-joint-border-taskforce/>

“Same-Same but Different: Laos and Cambodia’s Political Embrace of China.” *ISEAS*, (05 Sep 2017).

https://www.iseas.edu.sg/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/ISEAS_Perspective_2017_66.pdf

“The Kingdom of Lan Xang.” *Voice of the past, Voice of the future*, (28 May, 2023)

<https://www.voicepf.com/kingdom-of-lan-xang>

“The New ASEANS: Vietnam, Burma, Cambodia & Laos.” *Australian Government*, (19 Jun, 2023).

<https://www.dfat.gov.au/about-us/publications/Pages/the-new-aseans-vietnam-burma-cambodia-laos>

Tae-Jun, K. “Are Cambodia and Laos really any closer to resolving their border dispute?” *The Diplomat*, (21 May, 2018).

<https://thediplomat.com/2018/05/are-cambodia-and-laos-really-any-closer-to-resolving-their-border-dispute/>

Wendy. “History of Laos.” *Asia highlights*, (25 oct, 2022).

<https://www.asiahighlights.com/laos/history>

Zasloff, J.J. “THE PATHET LAO Leadership and Organization.” *Archive.org*, (19 July, 2022).

<https://web.archive.org/web/20220719084408/https://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/reports/2007/R949.pdf>