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UN chief urges Asia to take up leadership on global issues



Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon addresses ASEAN summit in Bali, Indonesia

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[Secretary-General](#) Ban Ki-moon today challenged the Asian and Pacific region to assume global leadership on issues of international concern, including climate change, sustainable development, access to food and energy, human rights and the empowerment of women.

“Now is the moment for Asia, and ASEAN [Association of Southeast Asian Nations] in particular, to step into a truly global role,” Mr. Ban told a news conference on the margins of the ASEAN summit in Bali, Indonesia.

“To the assembled leaders, I said the world needs your help, your leadership. The world needs Asia to fully engage on the great challenges of our day.”

He welcomed the Joint Declaration on a Comprehensive Partnership between the United Nations and ASEAN signed today in Bali, saying it builds on a strong foundation and introduces new

avenues of cooperation, including mechanisms for more regularized communication and common action.

“We should be able to discuss the widest range of issues, including those that are difficult and most sensitive,” Mr. Ban said in his address to the ASEAN summit earlier. The UN and ASEAN have a shared stake in helping Myanmar advance towards democracy, he added.

He said sustainable development is the “number one imperative” of the partnership between the UN and ASEAN, noting that Asia understands the interconnection between climate change, water scarcity, energy shortages, global health and food and nutrition security.

Yesterday, Mr. Ban met with the Prime Minister of Cambodia, Samdech Akka Moha Sena Padei Techo Hun Sen, and two leaders discussed issues related to the border dispute between that country and Thailand, as well as human rights and good governance.

Mr. Ban voiced his hope that the UN-ASEAN partnership will continue to grow under Cambodia's leadership of the association next year.

On the UN-backed Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia (ECCC), the Secretary-General urged the Government to respect and support the independence of the judicial process, and maintain full cooperation with the court.

Set up under an agreement signed in 2003 by the UN and the Cambodian Government, the ECCC is an independent court that uses a mixture of Cambodian staff and judges and foreign personnel.

It is tasked with trying those deemed most responsible for crimes committed under the Khmer Rouge between 1975 and 1979 during which as many as two million people are thought to have died.

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