

Statement by the Royal Thai Government
Regarding the Situation at the Preah Vihear Temple World Heritage Site

The Royal Thai Government refers to the Statement by the Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts of the Kingdom of Cambodia dated 24 July 2025, accusing the Royal Thai Armed Forces of damaging the surrounding area and the structures of the Preah Vihear Temple in violation of international law, in particular the 1954 Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict, the 1999 Second Protocol to the 1954 Hague Convention, and the 1972 UNESCO Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage.

As a State Party to the 1954 Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict and the 1972 UNESCO Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage, Thailand wishes to set the record straight, as follows:

1. On 24 July 2025, Cambodian Armed Forces launched indiscriminate armed attacks on Thai territory across four provinces of Buriram, Surin, Si Sa Ket and Ubon Ratchathani. Thailand has consistently exercised utmost restraint. However, in the face of unprovoked and premeditated armed attacks by Cambodian Armed Forces, Thailand was compelled to exercise its inherent right of self-defence in accordance with international law, based on the principles of distinction, proportionality, precaution, and military necessity. All responsive actions were strictly limited to legitimate military targets.

2. None of the exchanges of fire between Thai and Cambodian Armed Forces took place anywhere near the Preah Vihear Temple. The closest sites of attacks are located around Phu Ma Khua, situated approximately 2 kilometers away from the Preah Vihear Temple. The Temple itself lies entirely outside the trajectory of any Thai military operations. The likelihood that bullets or sharpnells from gunfire exchanges at Phu Ma Khua would reach or cause significant damage to the Preah Vihear Temple is impossible.

3. The said Statement issued by the Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts of Cambodia is therefore baseless, regrettable and profoundly disappointing. It constitutes nothing more than a dissemination of disinformation.

4. Thailand remains fully committed to the protection and preservation of cultural heritage sites, including those recognised for their Outstanding Universal Value, in accordance with international conventions and legal obligations.

5. In the spirit of the Conventions, with a view to preserving the integrity of cultural heritage, Thailand calls upon Cambodia to refrain from disseminating false or misleading information that politicises or misrepresents cultural heritage. Thailand sincerely hopes Cambodia would act in good faith and uphold its international obligations to ensure the protection of cultural heritage.