



**United States Department of State  
and the Broadcasting Board of Governors  
Office of Inspector General**

---

## **Inspection of Embassy Phnom Penh, Cambodia**



*Embassy Phnom Penh, Cambodia*

The Ambassador and deputy chief of mission provide active leadership to all embassy elements. High quality public diplomacy and policy promotion activities are closely targeted on key goals and objectives. In particular, the relationships the Ambassador has developed with Cambodia's leadership have enabled him to lobby assertively for democratic reforms and improved human rights performance.

In late 2005, the embassy moved into a spacious new chancery. However, approval of new direct-hire positions to expand other agency programs in Cambodia has generated some problems with funding and provision of support to serviced agencies.

High quality reporting on political and economic developments is well received by Washington policymakers and analysts. The embassy's efforts in labor affairs and the garment sector are outstanding, and they represent a case study in successful transformational diplomacy.

Public diplomacy activities are woven into all aspects of embassy programmatic interactions with the Cambodian public. Coordination with public diplomacy activities conducted by other U.S. government agencies in Cambodia is productive and mutually supportive.

The consular section is in the midst of an almost complete renewal following the recent loss of several locally employed staff due to malfeasance, plus the return of immigrant visa processing after a five-year hiatus. Consular management has taken important steps toward rebuilding its capacity but has much more to accomplish.

The management section is very well run and provides excellent support to the mission. The mission has done an exemplary job of meeting the Department of State's goals of consolidating administrative services, though the greatest savings will only be realized when American direct-hire positions are eliminated. The security and personal security awareness program at Embassy Phnom Penh is comprehensive and effective.

## Background: Cambodia

---



Slightly smaller than Oklahoma, Cambodia borders the Gulf of Thailand and is wedged between Thailand, Laos, and Vietnam. The climate is tropical, with distinct monsoon and dry seasons but little seasonal variation in temperatures. The terrain is mostly flat, though the southwest and north are marked by low mountains. Nearly four-fifths of Cambodia's work force is engaged in agriculture. Much of the nation's cultural traditions, religious practices, and its language are traceable to India. Most Cambodians consider themselves to be Khmers, descendants of the Angkor empire that ruled nearly the entirety of Southeast Asia from the 10<sup>th</sup> to the 13<sup>th</sup> centuries.

The governments of the United States and Cambodia actively cooperate on a range of important issues: counterterrorism, prisoner of war/missing in action concerns, pedophilia and trafficking in persons, health (HIV/AIDS and avian flu) efforts, and education. Military-to-military ties have been improving. The U.S. market has been crucial to Cambodia's economy, representing the largest outlet for its garment sector and accounting for 70 percent of exports as well as some 300,000 jobs. Additionally, a lion's share of the high-revenue, non-Asian tourists arriving each year to view the majestic temples of Angkor Wat come from the United States.

---

### Office of Inspector General

The Office of Inspector General conducts independent audits, inspections, and investigations to promote effective management, accountability, and positive change in the Department of State, the Broadcasting Board of Governors, and the foreign affairs community.

OIG's Office of Inspections provides systematic and independent evaluations of the operations of the Department of State, its posts abroad, and related activities. Inspections cover policy implementation, resource management, and management controls. As part of the inspection, particular attention is given to consular, security, and information technology operations.

August 7, 2007