

# How do Cambodia's ever closer ties with China affect Southeast Asia?

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Cambodia has for decades been aligning itself ever closer to China, with substantial economic and political consequences for the Southeast Asian nation – and with geopolitical implications for its neighborhood and beyond. China's economic influence in Cambodia has been huge, with large-scale Chinese investments and infrastructure projects fueling growth and development. Meanwhile, Cambodia's neighbors, Vietnam and Thailand, who also continue to benefit economically from ties to China, maintain a more cautious stance towards the northern giant. So why does Cambodian leader Hun Sen insist on aligning so closely with Beijing? Who are the real beneficiaries from this apparent fealty? And how does this affect ASEAN, especially member states directly impacted by China's vast territorial claims in the South China Sea? Southeast Asia historian Dr Matthew Galway joins host Ali Moore to examine how Cambodia's tight bond with China affects the region and beyond.

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*Main image: Dr Matthew Galway. Listing image: Cambodia's Prime Minister, Hun Sen, 2021. Credit: Prachatai/Flickr.*