Rwandan President Paul Kagame and First Lady Jeannette Kagame were received by Cambodia's King Norodom Sihamoni at the Royal Palace in Phnom Penh on Friday, as the two countries seek to expand diplomatic and economic cooperation.

The royal welcoming ceremony on November 13 was followed by a private audience between the King and Kagame, formally opening the Rwandan leader's state visit to the Southeast Asian country.

The visit is expected to include talks with Cambodia's senior leaders and the signing of agreements covering trade, investment, aviation and tourism, according to Cambodia's Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Kagame is scheduled to meet Senate President Hun Sen, National Assembly President Khuon Sudary and Prime Minister Hun Manet. The meetings are expected to focus on strengthening bilateral relations and identifying areas for closer cooperation.

The visit comes as Rwanda looks to broaden its economic and diplomatic engagement in Asia. Cambodia, in turn, has identified opportunities to build closer business and institutional links with Rwanda.

The two countries have taken steps to strengthen their relationship through diplomatic and financial cooperation. In November 2025, they signed agreements providing for consultations between their foreign ministries and visa facilitation for holders of diplomatic and official passports.

The National Bank of Rwanda and the National Bank of Cambodia signed a cooperation agreement in April 2023 to support financial-sector development. In May 2026, the two central banks announced plans to facilitate digital payments between the countries.

Kagame is also expected to visit Cambodia's Independence Monument and the memorial to former King Norodom Sihanouk, father of the current monarch.

The state visit will be followed by Kagame's participation in the 20th Summit of the International Organisation of La Francophonie (OIF), scheduled for November 15–16 in Phnom Penh.

The summit will bring together leaders of French-speaking countries to discuss peace, shared prosperity and lasting stability. It will also include the selection of the OIF Secretary-General for the 2027–2030 term.

Rwanda’s incumbent Secretary-General, Louise Mushikiwabo, is seeking another term. She faces three challengers: Juliana Amato Lumumba of the Democratic Republic of Congo, Coumba Ba of Mauritania and Dacian Cioloș of Romania. The election is scheduled for November 16, with the OIF’s 53 full members eligible to vote.

Cambodia is hosting the summit for the first time. It is the first time the gathering has been held in Southeast Asia since 1997, when it took place in Hanoi, Vietnam.