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THE SITUATION IN KAMPUCHEA

QUESTION OF PEACE, STABILITY AND CO-OPERATION IN SOUTH-EAST ASIA

Letter dated 22 September 1982 from the Permanent Representative
of the Lao People's Democratic Republic addressed to the
Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit to you herewith a letter dated 15 September 1982 from His Excellency Mr. Phoune Sipaseut, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Lao People's Democratic Republic, addressed to Their Excellencies the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the five member countries of ASEAN concerning measures for solving the problems of South-East Asia (annex I) and a statement by His Excellency Mr. Hun Sen, Vice-President of the Council of Ministers and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of Kampuchea (annex II).

I should be grateful if you would have this letter and its attachments circulated as an official document of the General Assembly under items 20 and 35 of the provisional agenda.

(Signed) Soubanh SRITHIRATH
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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ANNEX I

Letter dated 15 September 1982 from the Vice-President of the Council of Ministers and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Lao People's Democratic Republic to the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the five member States of the Association of South East Asian Nations

I have a great pleasure to inform you, on behalf of the Foreign Ministers of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam, the People's Republic of Kampuchea and in my capacity as Foreign Minister of the Lao People's Democratic Republic, that an atmosphere of dialogue and detente has been setting in the relations between our countries owing to the efforts of the countries in the area and many peaceloving nations in the world. The proposals for peace put forward by the conference of Vietnamese, Lao and Kampuchean Foreign Ministers on July 7, 1982 and the withdrawal of a part of Vietnamese troops from Kampuchea are welcomed by world opinion. What is heartening for us is that the Asean countries also find there new elements and express their intention to carry on studying these proposals.

With the desire to boost conciliation and cooperation between the two groups of countries, I wish to expatiate on the recent proposals of the three Indochinese countries.

I. China's policy of hegemony is the major threat to the three Indochinese countries, and at the same time the major threat to peace and stability in South-East Asia. The realities of the past three years have shown that China strives

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to oppose dialogue and reconciliation between the Asean and Indochinese countries, it is determined to resort to military means - through the Pol Pot clique - to oppose the revival of the Kampuchean people, and at the same time, it is mustering its troops along the border to put pressure to bear on Vietnam and Laos; it is fostering Vietnamese, Lao and Kampuchean reactionary elements for interventionist and subversive activities with a view to overthrowing the legal governments of those three countries; it is urging other countries to encircle and isolate them and striving to maintain tension in South-East Asia.

The presence of Vietnamese troops in Kampuchea is aimed at countering this threat by China. A number of Asean countries also realise that the Kampuchean problem is essentially one between China and the Indochinese countries, and not between the Asean and Indochinese countries.

The three Indochinese countries clearly understand the concern of the Asean countries for the withdrawal of all Vietnamese troops from Kampuchea. The concern of the three Indochinese countries is to end China's threat to them. We hold that the three Indochinese and the five Asean countries should heed the concern and legitimate interests of each other side. In the past three years the Asean countries only asked for the unilateral withdrawal of Vietnamese troops from

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Kampuchea, but did not heed the security interests of the three Indochinese countries. We are ready to meet the concern of the Asean countries of the withdrawal of Vietnamese troops from Kampuchea, should the interests of the three Indochinese countries in ending China's threat be met. The three Indochinese countries have proposed to China to sign treaties of non-aggression and non-intervention. However so far there has been no positive response on the part of China.

2. The Thai side regards the presence of units of the Vietnamese army near the Kampuchea-Thailand border as a threat to Thailand's security. Meanwhile, Kampuchea, Vietnam and Laos consider the use of Thai territory by China and the Pol Pot clique together with other reactionary Khmer forces against the revival of the Kampuchean people a constant threat to the security of Kampuchea and other Indochinese countries.

The realities of the past three years have shown that the presence of Vietnamese troops in Kampuchea does not threaten in any way Thailand's security. Many a time the Thai side has stated that there is no need to sign non-aggression treaties between Thailand and the three Indochinese countries since there is no danger of aggression by Vietnam against Thailand. On the contrary, the activities of the Pol Pot clique and other Khmer reactionaries based in Thailand have seriously threatened Kampuchea's security, causing a continually explosive situation on

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the Thailand - Kampuchea border. The recent founding of a so-called tripartite coalition government is aimed at helping the Pol Pot clique and other Khmer reactionaries step up activities against the People's Republic of Kampuchea, undermining the revival of the Kampuchean people, and aggravating the tension on the Kampuchea-Thailand border. To maintain and to give it their support, the Asean countries cannot avoid running further counter to their objective of "founding a political solution" as declared by themselves. This will create a dangerous antecedent for foreign intervention against independent and sovereign nations and violating the principles of the U.N. Charter and the Non-Aligned Movement.

We deem it necessary to heed the security interests of Thailand, and at the same time to heed the security interests of Kampuchea. To this end, there should be effective measures to check the use of the territory of one country against the other. Proceeding from this basic stand, the People's Republic of Kampuchea proposed in July 1980 to establish a demilitarised zone along the Kampuchea - Thailand border, but the Thai side did not agree, saying that it cannot withdraw its troops from a part of its own territory.

At the recent Conference of the Lao, Kampuchean and Vietnamese Foreign Ministers, the three Indochinese countries took notice of Thailand's stand on a demilitarised zone and put

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forward a new proposal to set up a safety zone along the Kampuchea - Thailand border. This proposal meets Thailand's concern that troops of the Thai Kingdom should not withdraw from a part of its territory. The new proposal only asks for the withdrawal of forces which do not belong to Thailand or the People's Republic of Kampuchea from the safety zone. The three Indochinese countries voice their readiness to discuss and reach agreement with the Thai side on such concrete matters as the width of the safety zone, the scope of Vietnamese troops withdrawal from the Kampuchea - Thailand border as well as the agreement on the transfer of the Pol-Potist and other Khmer reactionaries and refugee camps far from this border, the three Indochinese countries deem it necessary to agree on a form of international supervision of the safety zone.

To show their good-will, the People's Republic of Kampuchea and the Socialist Republic of Vietnam have of late made a first step by unilaterally withdrawing some units of Vietnamese troops from Kampuchea. If the Thai side gives a positive response to this good-will act, the People's Republic of Kampuchea and the Socialist Republic of Vietnam will withdraw more units of Vietnamese troops from Kampuchea.

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In case Thailand refuses to establish the safety zone, the three Indochinese countries are ready to discuss and reach agreement with the Thai side on any measure to strictly respect the Kampuchea - Thailand border and as well as any measure including a form of international supervision to ensure peace and stability there.

Many a time the People's Republic of Kampuchea has stated that the agreement on this question is not related to the de-jure recognition of each other. The People's Republic of Kampuchea will not let the question of mutual recognition hinder the discussion and agreement on the safety zone. The realities of the past 30 years have shown that the United States and Thailand have signed with Vietnam and China the 1961-1962 Geneva Agreement on Laos, and the United States and Vietnam have signed the Paris Agreement on Vietnam in 1973 without subsequent mutual recognition.

3. The Asean countries have stood for the convening of an international conference in the U.N.O. framework to settle the Kampuchea problem. They have unilaterally convened this conference in disregard of the three Indochinese countries' protest.

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This is an imposition from one side. The three Indochinese countries have put forward a proposal to convene a regional conference between the two groups of Asean and Indochinese countries. This has not been agreed by the Asean countries and such regional conference has not been convened.

The realities of the past three years have shown that an international conference is fruitful only when it is agreed and participated by the directly related parties. The international conference convened by the U.N.O. in July 1981 only ended in an impasse. With the goodwill to find an issue for this abnormal situation, and taking into consideration the Asean countries' proposal for an international conference and the three Indochinese countries' proposal for a regional conference, the recent conference of Vietnamese, Lao and Kampuchean Foreign Ministers put forward a proposal for an international conference on South-East Asia with the participation of nine countries inside and six others outside the area (The nine former are the three Indochinese countries, the five Asean countries and Burma; the six latter are the Soviet Union, the United States, China, France, Britain and India).

This conference will be convened only when agreement is reached between the directly related countries, i.e. the Asean and the Indochinese countries, on the composition of participants, agenda, place and time of the conference.

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Regarding the composition of participants, there may be disagreement on the countries taking part, particularly on the representation of Kampuchea. I think that this matter can be discussed and a formula acceptable to all can be found. It should not hinder the convening of the conference. The three Indochinese countries welcome the U.N.O. contribution to peace and stability in South-East Asia. But the U.N.O. maintenance of the Pol Pot genocidal clique has inhibited its positive role.

Concerning the agenda, there may be also disagreement. I think that the Conference can discuss all the problem in the region raised by each side on the principle of complete equality. For us there are many ways: an agreed agenda, an open agenda, or an agenda with agreed-upon problems and open-ended problems.

About the place, I think that the conference can meet in a South-East Asian country, a neutral country in Asia or Europe, may be Rangoon, New Delhi, Paris, Stockholm, Vienna, as agreed by the two groups of countries.

As for the time of the Conference, I think that the problems of peace and stability in South-East Asia are most urgent and need to be settled the sooner the better. Therefore I think that it should be convened in the last three months of this year or early next year.

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4. The realities of the past three years have shown that the Asean and Indochinese countries have a greatest common interest to maintain peace, stability and cooperation in this region. The disagreements between the two groups of countries can perfectly be settled through dialogue and negotiation on the following principles :

1. Mutual respect of each other's legitimate interests;
2. Equality and mutual agreement, without any imposition whatsoever and without interference from outside.

I am very glad that a dialogue has now been established between the two groups of countries in South-East Asia. I hope that the two sides will further strive to maintain and promote the present atmosphere of detente and dialogue, at least not to do anything to deteriorate the situation. I also hope that all the countries outside the area which wish to have peace and stability in South-East Asia will do likewise so as to create favourable conditions for the exchanges of views with a spirit of understanding and co-operation, and step to settle all problems in the relations between the two groups of countries and regional issues. It is also our hope that the U.N.O. will make a positive contribution to the cause of peace and stability in South-East Asia.

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With this spirit I sincerely hope more understanding for the three Indochinese countries' proposal. We suggest a meeting to exchange views between the countries in this area, or between representative of the two groups of countries in the immediate during the coming 37th session of the U.N.O. General Assembly.

I take this opportunity to assure Your Excellency of my highest consideration.

(Signed): Phoune SIPASEUTH,
Vice President of the Council of
Ministers Minister of Foreign
Affairs, Lao People's Democratic
Republic.

ANNEX II

HUN SEN'S INTERVIEW WITH SPK

Question 1 :

The monsoon season in Kampuchea is going to end soon. Will you please, give a general assessment of the current situation in Kampuchea ?

Answer :

In comparison with the monsoon season in 1981, the monsoon season in 1982 marked a new step of setback on the part of the Pol Pot - Ieng Sary-Khieu Samphan clique and other Khmer reactionaries supported by Beijing and Washington in their manoeuvre of sabotage and fomenting trouble. Along the Kampuchea - Thai border, all their land - grabbing raids were repelled, inside Kampuchea, a number of "underground army" groups planted by the enemies have been detected and wiped out by the Kampuchean revolutionary armed forces.

With the security and social order obviously improved, the Kampuchean people are enthusiastically boosting their production. Due to better distribution of rain, crop is expected to have a better yield than that of last year. In spite of difficulties still facing Kampuchea, hunger or starvation no longer poses any threat to our people. More than ever before, the situation in Kampuchea is irreversible.

Question 2 :

Beijing and Bangkok said that the Vietnamese withdrawal of troops in July was a fake, not a real withdrawal. Can you give some comments on this ?

Answer :

When the Peoples Republic of Kampuchea and the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam made public their decision to take a first step by withdrawing part of Vietnamese forces in Kampuchea in order to show their goodwill, they rejected this gesture even before the withdrawal did take place. Later, when we really carried out this withdrawal, on the one hand they distorted the truth in the world public opinion by saying that it was a false withdrawal with a view to maintaining the Pol Pot clique on the international arena, on the other hand they stepped up activities of psychological warfare inside Kampuchea alleging that Viet Nam was forced by international pressure to pull out its troops from Kampuchea. But as a matter of fact, to millions

of people throughout the world who have seen motion pictures of the withdrawal and to the Kampuchean people who have emotionally bid goodbye to their Vietnamese brothers, this withdrawal was a demonstration of the strength of militant solidarity between the Kampuchean and Vietnamese peoples. The Kampuchean revolutionary army enthusiastically relieved the Vietnamese fighters in the task of defending their country handed over by them. This is the truth that no slanderous allegations can blur. This partial withdrawal of troops also proved that all the attempts to reverse the situation in Kampuchea have failed, but Beijing and the Pol Pot clique are trying to distort the truth and mislead public opinion to the extent that the Pol Pot clique is winning victories, this is designed to keep its seat at the United Nations.

Question 3 :

The so-called "Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea" has come into existence for nearly three months, will you please make some comments on this "Government" ?

Answer :

The realities of the past three months, have proved that our assessment right from the beginning was correct. It is nothing but a mask designed to cover up the repugnant face of the genocidal Pol Pot - Ieng Sary - Khieu Samphan clique. Externally, the Beijing rulers, in colluding with the U.S. imperialists, made use of this "Government" to beautify the sanguinary regime of "Democratic Kampuchea" in an attempt to maintain its seat at the United Nations and other international forums. Internally, the Pol Pot - Ieng Sary - Khieu Samphan executioners make use of it to fool the Kampuchean and to seduce them into restoring the previous genocidal regime.

But the Kampuchean people who were the victims of the genocidal crimes, and have experienced over three years of living under the regime of the People's Republic of Kampuchea can, in no way, be fooled by them. Now, there are day after day more and more people who are disillusioned after being misled into following the Pol Pot - Ieng Sary - Khieu Samphan clique and clearly understanding the policy of leniency of the People's Republic of Kampuchea, have returned to the new regime and enjoyed full right of citizenship.

To all these people, I deem it necessary to reaffirm again the policy of the People's Republic of Kampuchea as follows : Those Kampuchean who are still in the ranks of the Pol Pot - Ieng Sary - Khieu Samphan clique, or collaborating directly or indirectly with them in opposing to the revival of the Kampuchean people and in serving the schemes of the Chinese hegemocrats if now leave the ranks of the Pol Pot - Ieng Sary - Khieu Samphan clique, cease collaborating with them, respect the Constitution of the People's Republic of Kampuchea, will be entitled to enjoy their right of citizenship, the right to stand for election in the free general elections as stipulated by the Constitution. Foreign observers will be invited to witness the general elections in Kampuchea.

Phnom Penh, September 18, 1982.
