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THE SITUATION IN KAMPUCHEA

Letter dated 6 March 1980 from the Chargé d'Affaires a.i. of the
Permanent Mission of Viet Nam to the United Nations addressed to
the Secretary-General

I have the honour to forward herewith to you the statement issued on 28 February 1980 by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of Kampuchea on repatriation of Kampuchean refugees in Thailand and to request you to have this letter and its enclosure circulated as an official document of the General Assembly under item 22 of the preliminary list.

(Signed) NGUYEN NGOC DUNG
Ambassador
Chargé d'Affaires a.i.

* A/35/50.

ANNEX

S T A T E M E N T

*by Foreign Ministry of People's Republic of Kampuchea
on repatriation of Kampuchean refugees in Thailand*

Much attention in the West has been drawn to the repatriation of Kampuchean refugees in Thailand. The Foreign Ministry of the People's Republic of Kampuchea deems it necessary to examine the reason why a number of Kampucheans are having to live as refugees in Thailand, and explain the policy of the Kampuchean People's Revolutionary Council on this problem.

1. Why hundreds of thousands of Kampucheans, though attached to their native land and wishing to live in peace, freedom and independence in their own country, have been forced to go to a neighbouring country and live a miserable life there in refugee camps, victimized by bands of mercenaries of the imperialists and international reactionaries? This is due firstly to the U.S. imperialists' policy of intervention, subversion and aggression which led to the atrocious 1970-75 war involving carpet-bombings with napalm and toxic chemicals, destroying the homes of hundreds of thousands of people who had to seek refuge elsewhere. This was followed by the genocidal policy of the Beijing expansionists in Kampuchea from April 17, 1975, implemented by its henchmen, the Pol Pot - Ieng Sary clique. In their last days of despair, Pol Pot - Ieng Sary remnants forced hundreds of thousands of civilians to follow them to Thailand to serve as cannon-fodder and supplementary manpower to oppose the Kampuchean people. After Kampuchea's complete liberation the Beijing expansionists, the U.S. imperialists and other reactionary forces, in collusion with the Thai authorities, took advantage of and dramatized the famine they themselves had created in Kampuchea, and made use of international humanitarian relief to lure many more hapless Kampucheans to refugee camps in Thailand. These camps are in fact, accommodated for reserve forces for activities against the Kampuchean revolution. From these refugee camps, groups of commandoes of the Pol Pot - Ieng Sary clique and other traitors and spies have infiltrated Kampuchea across the Thai border for sabotage activities.

2. The existence of these refugee camps in Thailand have created a tense situation along the Thai-Kampuchea border. It not only threatens the independence and sovereignty of the People's Republic of Kampuchea, but also causes trouble and insecurity to Thai people in the border regions.

A solution to this problem, therefore, will concern not only the fates of Kampuchean refugees in Thailand, but also the relations between the two countries, and interests of both Kampuchea and Thailand.

For their part, the National United Front for the Salvation of Kampuchea and the Kampuchean People's Revolutionary Council have always advocated assistance to the victims of the Pol Pot - Ieng Sary fascist butchers to return to live in their native land and to join the rest of the Kampuchean people, in overcoming the disastrous consequences of the genocidal regime and in building an independent, peaceful and happy country. The repatriation of Kampuchean refugees or exiles in Thailand and other countries must be carried out in a manner which guarantees Kampuchean citizens' interests and conforms to the policy of peace, friendship and cooperation of the Kampuchean People's Revolutionary Council towards neighbouring countries.

It should be recalled that in June 1979, the Thai authorities ordered their troops to rob some 47,000 Kampuchean refugees of their property and drive them at gunpoint back to Kampuchea, in the province of Preah Vihear where it was known that mine-fields still existed. Many of them were thus killed or wounded. In extremely difficult and dangerous conditions, the local revolutionary administration gave emergency treatment to these people and guided them back to their native villages. Such forcible and disastrous repatriation is unacceptable.

The Kampuchean People's Revolutionary Council is ready to discuss with the Thai authorities repatriation of Kampuchean refugees in Thailand. The venue may be in Bangkok, Phnom Penh or some places at the border between the two countries, on the basis of respect for each other's independence and sovereignty, border security and in the interests of the lives and property of Kampuchean refugees and friendship and neighbourliness between Kampuchea and Thailand.

The People's Revolutionary Council welcomes all international humanitarian aid to Kampuchea to help it solve the material difficulties resulting from the repatriation of refugees.

3. As stated by President Heng Samrin, the Kampuchean People's Revolutionary Council deeply sympathizes with the plight of the bulk of the Kampucheans now taking refuge in foreign countries, especially in Thailand. It hopes that all overseas Kampucheans will heighten their patriotism and national pride, maintain their confidence in the bright future of their Motherland, increase mutual love and assistance, closely unite with local people, and guard against the enemy's scheme to take advantage of the refugee problem to harm their interests and these of their country. Those who want to be repatriated can apply to the Embassies or General Consulates of the People's Republic of Kampuchea, clearly indicating their native places and their desires. The Revolutionary Administration will consider their cases and will help them.

Phnom Penh, February 28, 1980.
