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REPORT OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

Meeting on Humanitarian Assistance and Relief to the Kampuchean People

Note by the Secretary-General

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SUMMATION BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE MEETING

\* A/35/50.

## I. INTRODUCTION

1. At its 21st plenary meeting on 1 May 1980, the Economic and Social Council adopted resolution 1980/23, entitled "Humanitarian assistance and relief to the Kampuchean people", which read as follows:

"The Economic and Social Council,

"Recognizing that there is a grave and urgent need to increase humanitarian assistance to the Kampuchean people and to improve the practical measures to ensure that food and medical supplies reach the needy,

"Noting that the financial target for the period extending from April to December 1980 has not yet been attained and that there are still serious unresolved practical problems concerning the distribution of aid,

"Noting with grave concern the large number of refugees in the region and their urgent need of further prompt and effective international assistance, in pursuance of General Assembly resolution 34/62 of 29 November 1979, which was adopted without a vote,

"Convinced of the urgent need to hold an international meeting on humanitarian assistance and relief to the Kampuchean people,

"1. Decides that an international meeting, at the ministerial level, shall be held in the latter part of May 1980 to consider humanitarian assistance and relief to the Kampuchean people;

"2. Requests the Secretary-General to convene the Meeting on Humanitarian Assistance and Relief to the Kampuchean People at Geneva and to invite it to those States which were invited to attend the meeting held at Geneva on 20 and 21 July 1979, as well as the socialist States of Eastern Europe and the States members of the Economic and Social Council not otherwise included;

"3. Decides that, to the extent relevant and applicable, the proceedings of the Meeting shall be governed by the rules of procedure for United Nations pledging conferences adopted by the General Assembly on 15 December 1978. 1/"

2. In compliance with the request of the Council, the Secretary-General invited the 99 States referred to in paragraph 2 of the resolution to participate in the Meeting. He also invited the six organizations and bodies having operational programmes of assistance to Kampuchea as well as the European Economic Community.

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1/ A/33/580 (United Nations publication, Sales No.E.79.I.17).

## II. ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS

### A. Attendance

3. The following 59 States participated in the Meeting: 2/

Argentina	Luxembourg
Australia	Malaysia
Austria	Mexico
Belgium	Morocco
Bolivia	Nepal
Canada	Netherlands
Chile	New Zealand
China	Nigeria
Colombia	Norway
Costa Rica	Pakistan
Cyprus	Peru
Denmark	Philippines
Ecuador	Portugal
Finland	Qatar
France	Saudi Arabia
Germany, Federal Republic of	Senegal
Ghana	Singapore
Greece	Spain
Holy See	Sweden
Honduras	Switzerland
Iceland	Thailand
Indonesia	Tunisia
Ireland	Turkey
Israel	United Arab Emirates
Italy	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
Japan	United States of America
Jordan	Venezuela
Kuwait	Yugoslavia
Lebanon	Zaire
Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	

4. The following organizations and bodies also participated in the Meeting:

United Nations Children's Fund  
International Committee of the Red Cross  
Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees  
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations  
World Food Programme  
United Nations Development Programme

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European Economic Community

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2/ For the list of participants, see E/CONF.73/INF.1/Rev.1.

5. A number of States and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations attended the Meeting as observers.

B. Election of officers

6. At its 1st meeting, on 26 May 1980, the Meeting elected by acclamation the following officers:

President: The Honourable Andrew Peacock, Minister for Foreign Affairs  
of Australia

Vice-President: Chief Patrick Bolokor, Minister of State, Ministry of  
External Affairs of Nigeria

C. Agenda

7. At its 1st meeting, the Meeting adopted the provisional agenda (E/CONF.73/1) on the understanding that there would be only one vice-president. The agenda read as follows:

- "1. Opening of the Meeting by the Secretary-General
2. Election of the President
3. Organizational matters:
  - (a) Adoption of the agenda;
  - (b) Election of the Vice-President;
  - (c) Organization of work.
4. Humanitarian assistance and relief to the Kampuchean people:
  - (a) Review of the programme of humanitarian assistance and relief;
  - (b) Refugees and displaced persons;
  - (c) Contributions."

D. Organization of work

8. Also at the 1st meeting, the Meeting decided, inter alia, that:

- (a) Statements should be limited to 15 minutes to the extent possible;
- (b) Observers from Member States should not address the Meeting but could, if they so wished, submit written statements reflecting their views for distribution to the participants;

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(c) Given the humanitarian character of the Meeting and the limited time available, if any representative felt obliged to reply to the remarks of a speaker, the Secretariat would distribute such a reply in writing if a sufficient number of copies had been provided.

#### E. Documentation

9. The Meeting had before it the following documents:

E/CONF.73/1	Provisional agenda
E/CONF.73/2 and Add.1 and Add.1/Corr.1	Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Co-ordinator of the programme on humanitarian assistance and relief to the Kampuchean people
E/CONF.73/INF.1/Rev.1	List of participants

#### III. DEBATE

10. At its 1st to 4th meetings, on 26 and 27 May, the Meeting held a debate on agenda item 4 (see para. 7), in the course of which the representatives of the following States took the floor: Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, China, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Federal Republic of, Indonesia, Israel, Italy, Japan, Malaysia, Morocco, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, Singapore, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Tunisia, Turkey, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America and Yugoslavia.

11. Statements were also made by the representative of the European Economic Community, the representative of the World Food Programme, the representative of the United Nations Children's Fund, the President of the International Committee of the Red Cross, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the representative of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and the Co-ordinator of the programme on humanitarian assistance and relief to the Kampuchean people.

#### IV. CLOSING STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT

12. At the 4th meeting, the President delivered a closing statement in the course of which he made a summation of the work of the Meeting.

13. At the same meeting, it was decided that the statement by the President would be transmitted to all the Members of the United Nations and submitted, through the Economic and Social Council, to the General Assembly at its thirty-fifth session. The text of the statement is reproduced in the annex to the present document.

AnnexSummation by the President of the Meeting

1. We have heard the last speaker and I would like at this stage of our deliberations to make a summing up of our work and an evaluation of the conclusions we have reached.
2. We have gathered at Geneva in pursuance of resolution 1980/23, which the Economic and Social Council adopted on 1 May 1980, requesting the Secretary-General to convene a meeting at the ministerial level. It is a measure of the deep concern felt by the international community at the plight of the Kampuchean people that at short notice 59 countries are represented at this Meeting, including many at minister and high official level.
3. The Secretary-General, in his opening statement, has presented us with a frank and balanced assessment of the progress achieved so far in the implementation of the programme of humanitarian assistance and relief to the Kampuchean people. He also called our attention to a number of important points which should be constantly kept in mind in our future efforts and appealed for a new reaffirmation of human solidarity on behalf of the Kampuchean people. We had also at our disposal an analytical report by the Co-ordinator of the Programme, Sir Robert Jackson, retracing the background of the programme and underlining the present problems and future prospects.
4. The invariable theme in all statements was the profound distress and concern at the disaster which has befallen the Khmer people, and full moral support to all efforts from every quarter to save the lives of innocent Khmers and relieve their suffering. Despite our awareness of the political causes underlying the present situation, the problem of the Kampuchean population has been and remains humanitarian. Hundreds of thousands of Khmers are afflicted by starvation, malnutrition and disease. Hundreds of thousands have been displaced from their homes, have lost or been separated from their nearest family members, and have bleak prospects for a normal, healthy and stable existence. It is a human tragedy on a massive and heartrending scale.
5. We concentrated our attention on a well defined and urgent task: to save the Kampuchean people from starvation and widespread disease in 1980 and to enable them to restore their agricultural production in order to avoid a repetition of the same tragedy in future years. This task is being carried out both through the international agencies concerned and with the invaluable efforts of the voluntary organizations. We are aware also of the bilateral assistance programmes, and therefore regret the fact that Viet Nam and some Eastern European countries have declined to attend this meeting.
6. The full and unqualified co-operation of all concerned - multilateral and bilateral donors, international and voluntary agencies, the Governments of Thailand and Viet Nam and the Phnom Penh authorities - is essential if the second phase of the international relief programme is to succeed.

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7. I feel extremely gratified that our discussions have revealed a clear convergence of views. I believe indeed that a large measure of consensus has emerged on the following propositions:

(a) The programme of humanitarian assistance to the Kampuchean people, in conjunction with assistance provided bilaterally, has limited the extent of the tragedy in Kampuchea;

(b) Nevertheless the situation remains grave and precarious, and a further crisis could occur if adequate and timely measures are not taken;

(c) A principal stumbling block to implementing a large-scale programme is in the field of logistics. The deficiencies in this field have to be remedied urgently if our efforts to prevent a new catastrophe in these coming months are to be successful;

(d) Widespread concern has been expressed over the inadequacy of the distribution system. Fuller measures should be adopted to ensure that available supplies reach those in greatest need by the most expeditious routes from Thailand and Viet Nam;

(e) The delivery of rice seeds and basic agricultural requisites in time for the monsoon crop is essential in order to reduce the dangers of a food deficit in 1981;

(f) A fundamental objective of the humanitarian operation is to encourage the establishment of conditions in which Kampucheans in holding centres in Thailand, or in encampments along the border, can return to their homes and resume their livelihood.

8. I turn now to the specific suggestions put forward to improve the effectiveness of the operation. Most of these suggestions relate to the need to improve delivery arrangements, the transportation system and the distribution process.

9. The Meeting stressed the urgency of providing more entry points to overcome port congestion and bottle-necks.

10. The opening up of provincial airports for international and domestic flights carrying relief supplies and the trans-shipment of supplies across the Thai border would greatly facilitate the smoother flow and distribution of aid.

11. The agreement by the Phnom Penh authorities to allow international relief flights to fly into Phnom Penh along the most direct route has been welcomed.

12. There is a need for further improvement to the infrastructure and logistics of Kampuchea to the extent needed to enable supplies to reach the intended recipients more rapidly, efficiently and economically.

13. More international officials are needed in Kampuchea in order to effect improvements in distributing and monitoring relief supplies and they should be given greater mobility and access. The importance of this question cannot be over-emphasized. The donor countries have a legitimate interest in ascertaining that their contributions are effectively translated into deliveries to those who are most in need, equitably and without discrimination.
14. There is an acute shortage of doctors and other medical personnel in Kampuchea. There are many medical personnel ready and willing to enter Kampuchea freely to give their services. The willingness of the Phnom Penh authorities to welcome a Swedish medical team into Kampuchea is encouraging and the admission of more doctors and other medical personnel to Kampuchea would greatly help develop health services in the country.
15. In all of these areas consultations are proceeding between the international agencies and the relevant authorities. It is the sense of this meeting that these negotiations should be intensified and brought to an early and satisfactory conclusion.
16. No programme could succeed without the invaluable support and participation of the Government of Thailand. The world community deeply appreciates the humane policies of Thailand and its readiness to serve as a staging area for the forwarding of relief supplies to Kampuchea. We are fully aware of the heavy burden carried by Thailand and of the problem it is facing, in particular with respect to its own displaced and affected citizens.
17. The Meeting emphasized the urgent need for increased international assistance to the Thai villagers who have been uprooted and displaced by the influx of Kampuchean.
18. The importance of providing supplies along the Thai-Kampuchean border, both for the border encampments and the many thousands of Khmers in Kampuchea dependent on this source of supply, is clearly recognized. Serious problems have, however, been encountered. Immediate and determined steps are needed to regularize and improve upon the border encampments in order to enhance the safety of the civilians from all hostilities and to effect improvements in the distribution of food, seed and medical supplies to the civilians in these encampments.
19. Fuller support should also be given to the programme of assistance to Kampuchean in holding centres in Thailand.
20. In view of the pivotal position of Thailand as a host to hundreds of thousands of displaced persons and refugees from Indo-China and as a staging post for the provision of supplies to Kampuchea, and with the special problems of the encampments in the Thai-Kampuchean border area, it is suggested that Sir Robert Jackson, in his capacity as Co-ordinator of the relief programme, should be provided with a resident office in Bangkok, headed by a senior representative and consisting of a small staff in order to co-ordinate the humanitarian efforts in Kampuchea and along the Thai border.



21. There has been a proposal for the establishment of a Special Fund for Kampuchean Relief designed to ensure more effective co-ordination of assistance to the peoples affected.
22. The Secretary-General was requested to study both suggestions in view of the urgent need to review the present arrangements for co-ordination.
23. Finally an appeal has been made to all parties concerned to abide strictly by the pertinent provisions of the Geneva Conventions and to respect the principles of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights.
24. I come now to the matter of funding. The response to the request for financial contributions to the second phase of the international relief programme has been generous and encouraging. It gives me particular satisfaction to be able to announce to this Meeting that the immediate emergency funding requirement of \$39 million between now and the end of June has been fully met. Indeed the total of new pledges at this Meeting has taken us a long way to reducing the deficit of \$181 million forecast for the balance of this year.
25. The scars of the Kampuchean tragedy will take a long time to heal. The costs of the upheavals in Kampuchea over the last decade, in human and material terms, are so great that there will be a long-term requirement for assistance from the international community.
26. I have tried to analyse the consensus we have reached in this Meeting both with regard to general principles and with regard to specific proposals. I am convinced that this Meeting, despite its limitations because of the non-participation of some bilateral donors, will serve its purpose of promoting the international effort to assist the distressed Kampuchean people and to enhance the effectiveness of the international humanitarian programme. We cannot gloss over the existing constraints and obstacles nor hide the frustration we feel because of them. But again we all agree that, whatever the difficulties we face, our resolve to pursue a noble humanitarian objective must remain unshaken. Nothing will be more rewarding for each and every one of us than to see the Kampuchean people emerging from the misery and looking forward with hope to a new life which they so much deserve after suffering one of the greatest tragedies of human history.
27. We have been unanimous in expressing our appreciation to the United Nations agencies, the International Committee of the Red Cross, and the voluntary agencies for their dedicated efforts in carrying out a most difficult and challenging task. We express our gratitude to the Secretary-General for the importance he attaches to the programme, for the initiative he has taken to alert world public opinion and for the measures he has adopted to co-ordinate more effectively the work of the agencies.
28. As we all know, and as I have set out in this statement, there is a great ongoing task for the Secretary-General and his Special Representative. I believe that I speak on behalf of you all when I convey to the Secretary-General our strong desire that he use his good offices to accelerate even further the achievement of the great humanitarian objectives which we all serve.

29. Preoccupied as we are with the tragedy of the people of Kampuchea, we cannot be oblivious to the equally desperate situation of the homeless and the hungry in other regions of the world, including particularly the plight of the millions of refugees in Africa. This Meeting has evinced its strong humanitarian sentiments which are not limited only to the Khmers, but extend to the people the world over.

30. On behalf of the participants in this Meeting, I would request the Secretary-General to transmit this statement to all Members of the United Nations and to submit it, through the Economic and Social Council, to the General Assembly at its thirty-fifth session.

31. The Meeting is concluded.

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