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QUESTION OF PEACE, STABILITY AND

CO-OPERATION IN SOUTH-EAST ASIA

REVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE

DECLARATION ON THE STRENGTHENING

OF INTERNATIONAL SECURITY

PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT OF DISPUTES

BETWEEN STATES

DEVELOPMENT AND STRENGTHENING OF

GOOD-NEIGHBOURLINESS BETWEEN

STATES

SECURITY COUNCIL

Forty-third year

Letter dated 1 March 1988 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the  
Permanent Mission of the Lao People's Democratic Republic to the  
United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

On instructions from my Government and further to my earlier letters concerning the situation along the Lao-Thai border in the region of Nabonoi commune, Botène district, Sayaboury Province, I have the honour to transmit herewith the text of the memorandum dated 29 February 1988 issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Lao People's Democratic Republic (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would arrange for the text of this letter and its annex to be circulated as an official document of the General Assembly, under items 42, 72, 130 and 137 of the preliminary list, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Alounkeo KITTIKHOUN  
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

\* A/41/50.

ANNEX

Memorandum of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Lao People's Democratic Republic on the Thai nibbling attacks against the Lao People's Democratic Republic's territory in the area of Nabonoi commune, Botène district, Sayaboury Province, issued at Vientiane on 29 February 1988

I. The incidents that have occurred between Laos and Thailand in the Lao area of Nabonoi commune, Botène district, Sayaboury Province, started at the beginning of June 1987, when the Thai side dispatched its troops to occupy this area and gave protection to a private company to illegally cut and send Lao wood to Thailand. Lao local border patrols during their inspection tours have issued, more than once, warnings to the offenders that have been caught red-handed, but the Thai side has not paid attention to the warnings, thus leading to confrontation. Thereafter, it has reinforced and stationed its armed forces in this area and unilaterally declared that Nam Huong Nga River is the border area between the two countries, which is contrary to the 1907 Protocol that stipulates that Nam Huong River constitutes the borderline. This is the reason why this incident has gradually developed into a large-scale aggression that has finally led the Thai soldiers to encroach upon Lao territory.

Since the beginning of August 1987, the Thai side has stationed its military forces along the Lao border in this area and on 18 August 1987, sent three small battalions, seven companies with the support of heavy artillery across the border into Lao land, in the area of Phu Soi Dao mountain, for the purpose of unleashing nibbling attacks against Nabonoi commune, Botène district, of the Lao Province of Sayaboury, which is situated 8 kilometres deep inside Lao territory. Then, on 29 August 1987, the Lao Ministry of Foreign Affairs urged the Thai side to withdraw its troops and to seek ways and means for a settlement of the problem through negotiation (aide-mémoire of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Lao People's Democratic Republic handed to the Thai Ambassador in Vientiane, on 29 August 1987). The Thai side did not in any way respond to the Lao proposals.

Since then, the Thai troops have continued to encroach upon the Lao territory in this area and have launched a large scale offensive against the positions held on different hills by Lao local troops which are safeguarding the territorial integrity of their fatherland.

Since the beginning of December 1987, the Thai side has purposely provoked the worsening of the situation. It has continued to make wide use of its troops being sent from many regions in continuous attacks on Lao territory in this area. These troops, having been provided with aerial support and protection, as well as with support of short and long range heavy artillery, where using chemical and phosphorous tipped shells as well as fragmentation bombs. Their jet fighters have dropped bombs and heavy artillery shells on Lao territory without discrimination sometimes reaching 30 kilometres deep inside it, causing heavy loss of lives and damage to the local population's properties. The escalating military activities

led by the Thai aggressors constitute a trampling of the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Lao People's Democratic Republic. This has led to the most serious tension ever brought about over the past 12 years of relations between Laos and Thailand, undermines the relation of friendship and good-neighbourliness between the two countries, and is detrimental to the interests and fervent aspirations of the two peoples, thus violating the content of the 1979 Lao-Thai joint communiqués. These activities are running counter to the general trend towards a peaceful settlement of disputes which are firmly gaining momentum in South-East Asia and throughout the world.

Thanks to the creativity of the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Lao People's Democratic Republic, to which the Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Thailand has responded positively, both Lao and Thai military delegations have led consultations among themselves and have concluded an agreement for a cease-fire and for its extension until a solution to the border problem in this area is reached through political negotiations between the governmental delegations of the two sides to be started on 3 March 1988.

The Lao and the Thai peoples, as well as the countries that are friendly to the Lao People's Democratic Republic and to the Kingdom of Thailand throughout the world that have extended large support to the said cease-fire agreement reached between Laos and Thailand, will closely follow the peaceful negotiations aiming at settling the incidents that have occurred at the border area between the two countries.

In this memorandum, the Lao People's Democratic Republic deems it necessary to give clear explanations about the truth on the area of Nabonoi commune, Botène district of the Lao Sayaboury Province and on the Lao position concerning the settlement of the current incidents that have occurred at the border area between Laos and Thailand.

II. From the legal and effective administrative standpoint, the region of Nabonoi commune, Botène district, Sayaboury Province is Lao territory.

From the legal and effective administrative standpoint, the Nabonoi commune, Botène district, Sayaboury Province lies under the sovereignty of the Lao People's Democratic Republic.

The assertion made by the Kingdom of Thailand that this area comes under Rom Klao village, Chattakarn district, Phitsanoulouk Province of Thailand is without concrete basis.

Mr. Prem Tinsulanond, Prime Minister of the Government of the Kingdom of Thailand stated during his visit to the vicinity of this area that: "It is well known that our border, in conformity with the international principles, is situated at Nam Huong Nga which is clearly shown in the maps". And, on the same day, the spokesman of the Thai Foreign Ministry stated that: "... the territory in the vicinity of Bane Rom Klao is in Thai territory following the 1907 Franco-Siamese Treaty and the Protocol ... This Treaty designates the river which is taking its

source from Phu Khao Mieng, that is the Nam Huong Nga, in conformity with the map attached to the Treaty ...".

In his telegram of 12 February 1988, responding to the urgent telegram sent by the Lao Chairman of the Council of Ministers on 11 February 1988, the Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Thailand wrote that "the acts led by the Thai side in the area of Bane Rom Klao were necessary for the safeguarding of the national sovereignty based on the widely and legally recognized Treaty and maps".

What is the truth concerning this area?

1. The Franco-Siamese Treaty concluded on 23 March 1907, and the Protocol annexed thereto are the legal and valid basis for the border demarcation between Laos and Thailand.

Clause 2 of the Protocol stipulates that "on the side of Luang-Prabang, the southern border starts at the mouth of Nam Huong on the bank of the Mekong River and follows the thalweg of this river until its source at Phu Khao Mieng ...".

The Treaty specifies clearly that the Nam Huong river is the borderline between the two countries and not the Nam Huong Nga river, as has been interpreted unilaterally by the Thai officials. The local Lao people also call the Nam Huong river Nam Huong Gnai or Nam Huong. As for the Nam Huong Nga purportedly designated by the Thai side, it is just a tributary of the Nam Huong river (Nga means tributary, branch and the local Lao people call it Nam Huong Noi just to differentiate it from the Nam Huong river). A Thai economic review of February 1988 has published that the site of confrontation is situated between the Nam Huong Gnai and the Nam Huong Noi in a surface of nearly 70 square kilometres, and the latter is called Nam Huong Nga by the Thai side and Nga means tributary, affluent.

In the Franco-Siamese Treaty of 23 March 1907, as well as in all relevant legal documents signed prior to or after it, such as the Franco-Siamese Agreement of 29 June 1907, it has clearly been stipulated that the Nam Huong river is the borderline. The interpretation to the effect that Nam Huong Nga should be the borderline is definitely without legal concrete foundation.

2. The Thai side invoked the map purportedly attached to the Treaty as proof but afterwards alleged that this map is only a similar one. The above excerpts from Clause 2 of the Protocol concerning the border delineation did not make any mention of maps or schematic sketches allegedly attached to the Treaty, while on the contrary, Clause 1 of the same Protocol mentions a schematic sketch attached thereto when speaking about the Kampuchean-Thai boundary. A Franco-Siamese Joint Commission was nominated in conformity with Article 4 of the 1907 Franco-Siamese Treaty to demarcate the borderline in this region but did not carry out its work because its main task had already been accomplished in accordance with the letter and spirit of the Treaty of 23 March 1907. This is the final solution to all problems related to the boundaries between Indochina and Siam which were agreed upon following the implementation of the border demarcation in conformity with the

Treaty of 13 February 1904. The report concerning the final meeting of this Commission sent by Mr. Monquers, Chairman of the French Commission to the General Governor of Indochina on 17 June 1908 reads as follows: The Commission did not proceed to any consultation over this area and considered that the different maps drawn by the former Franco-Siamese Commission (which was formed under the provisions of Article 3 of 13 February 1904 Treaty) has made clear recommendations concerning the Nam Huong river.

3. The Thai side argues that the Nam Huong river stipulated in the Treaty must be the Nam Huong Nga because only the latter has its source in the Phu Khao Mieng. The Phu Kham Mieng is a massif. The accuracy of this fact was proved by Mr. Aime Grand, administrative commissioner of the French Government, who, after having met with the Siamese representative, Phya Ramrithi, sent a report dated 19 July 1907 to the Superior Resident in Vientiane an excerpt of which follows: "The Nam Huong river is composed of two streamlines which have their sources at the same Phu Khao Mieng and are called Nam Huong Gnai and Nam Huong Noi. I have informed the Siamese side that since there are two streamlines, the Nam Huong Gnai which is the wider must be the real source of the Nam Huong river."

4. The Thai side argues that in conformity with the international principles, the Nam Huong Nga must be the borderline.

(a) This is not correct since the Treaty and Protocol did not specify that the Nam Huong Nga is the borderline. If the Nam Huong Nga is to be considered as the borderline, following international practice, initially, the Treaty and the Protocol should clearly mention the confluence between the Nam Huong Nga and the Nam Huong river, and explain that the border traces along the Nam Huong Nga to the north until its source in the Phu Khao Mieng. Moreover, on many maps, the name Nam Huong is written in latin capital letters under the stream of the Nam Huong river with the word Nam written on the west and the word Huong on the east side of the mouth of Nam Huong Nga, some maps even mention the Nam Huong on the western side of the mouth of Nam Huong Nga. Thus, Nam Huong Nga cannot be the borderline as indicated on the map with the scale of 1/500.000 printed by the General Staff department of the Thai Army on 18 February 1909 or (18 February Rattanakosin 127).

(b) The vicinity of Nahonoi is a mountainous area, and when delimitating the border along such a chain of mountains, usually and in accordance with international practice, the watershed is considered as the borderline. The western border of Sayaboury Province, which is adjacent to Thailand, follows the watershed between the Mekong basin and the Menam basin from the north to the south. All Treaties, Agreements and Protocols concluded between France and Siam, while taking the Nam Huong river as the borderline, were in complete conformity with the above-mentioned international principles and practices. Since the Nam Huong Nga river is situated in Lao territory on the eastern side of the watershed between the Mekong basin and the Menam basin, it cannot be the borderline.

5. The Thai side has always manoeuvred and urged the reconsideration of the Lao-Thai boundaries. In 1941, the administration exerted pressure on the Vichy Government of France to sign a Franco-Siamese Treaty on 9 May 1941 in Tokyo under

the auspices of Japan to transfer the right bank of the territory of Luang-Prabang (actually Sayaboury Province) and the right bank of Muang Bassak (Champassack Province) to Thailand. After the Second World War, the conference of the Allied Forces in Washington approved the conclusion of a settlement Agreement by the French and Siamese Governments on 17 November 1946 cancelling the Treaty of Tokyo, bringing the borderline back to its former place prior to the Treaty of Tokyo.

A Commission of Conciliation was nominated as stipulated in the Agreement of 17 November 1946 and was composed of representatives of France, Siam and representatives of three neutral countries, namely, Peru, Great Britain and the United States of America with the latter's representative as Chairman, in order to study the data concerning the nationalities, the geography and economy of both the French and Siamese sides, to reconsider or reaffirm the different articles of the Treaty of 3 October 1893, of the Convention of 13 February 1904 and of the Treaty of 23 March 1907. During the meetings of the Commission, the Siamese side tried to claim that almost all Lao territory belonged to Siam. According to the report issued from the last meeting on 27 June 1947, the Commission had rejected all Siamese territorial claims as well as the proposals for re-examination of the Treaty of 3 October 1893, the Convention of 13 February 1904 and the Treaty of 23 March 1907. The Commission reaffirmed the different clauses of the Treaty of 3 October 1893, of the Convention of 13 February 1904 and of the Treaty of 23 March 1907. The Commission also clearly stressed the borderline on the right bank of the Mekong river as follows: "geographically, the Commission considers the watershed between the Mekong river and the Menam as an adequate and natural borderline, built up strongly and very clearly".

But in June 1984, the Thai side aggressed and occupied three Lao villages: Bane May, Bane Kang, and Bane Savang, Paklay district, Sayaboury Province. In order to give ground to its aggression, it has revised the map and claimed its validity and has sent it to the Secretary-General of the United Nations. It has removed the border marks and stressed that on the legal and effective administrative standpoint, the area of the three villages belongs to the Thai territory. It has at first rejected the Lao proposal for negotiation and set conditions for it. But, thanks to the just position and the goodwill gesture of the Lao People's Democratic Republic, world public opinion has firmly stood by the Lao side. Mr. Sith Svetsila, the Thai Minister for Foreign Affairs had to declare before the General Assembly of the United Nations on 2 October 1984 the withdrawal of Thai troops from the three Lao villages.

At present, the Thai side is again behaving in the same manner. It has revised the maps of Nabonoi area, invoking maps which do not possess any legal value, distorting the Treaty of 23 March 1907 and its Protocol relating to the delineation of the borderline. It has claimed without any sense of responsibility that this area is Thai territory under the Agreement concluded between Thailand and the Royal Government of Laos when Prince Souvanna Phouma was Prime Minister (statement made by the Spokesman of the Thai Foreign Ministry, on 31 January 1988). It has set unreasonable pre-conditions to obstruct negotiations. Moreover, it has established a village under the name of Ban Rom Klao in Lao territory in the vicinity of Nabonoi and has claimed loudly that the region of Nabonoi comes under the Thai village of Rom Klao.

Bane Rom Klao was never mentioned on the Thai map. The Thai journal "Bane Muong" issued on 3 June 1987 published a report from the police of Chattakarn district, Phitsanoulouk Province: "Our Bane Rom Klao (in Thai version) is a village ... established by the Army for security reasons. There are great numbers of Thai Hmongs and Lao refugees Hmongs living in this village ...". General Prachuab Suntrangkul, Thai Minister of Interior, said that: "They used to exchange visits ... if the Lao want us to buy goods, we'll give them what we have mutually agreed upon. If they prohibit us to cut wood, then we shouldn't do it." ("Bane Muong" journal issued on 30 December 1987). The Thai journal "Neo Na" issued on 15 January 1988, wrote that "Bane Rom Klao was established in 1982 ...". The weekly news "Khao Phiset" of 26 August-1 September 1987 wrote that: "Bane Rom Klao was established in 1984, sheltering the Hmongs forces, former members of the Thai Communist Party who have surrendered to the Government. When the Thai side built the strategic road along the frontier, they did not much skirt away from the frontier. But in this area, their strategic road is not built along Nam Huong Nga river".

It shows that it has known quite well for a long time where the borderline between the two countries in this area is situated.

It is clear that the Thai side cannot rightly claim that a village which it itself established in the 1980s in Lao territory constitutes legal evidence confirming that Thai administration has been effectively established over this area for the past 80 years since the signing of the 1907 Franco-Siamese Treaty.

From the effective administrative standpoint, Nabonoi commune, Botène district, Sayaboury Province, was formerly under French and later on under Lao administration, except for the short period between the signing of the Franco-Siamese Treaty on 9 May 1941 and 17 November 1946, when the Franco-Siamese Settlement Agreement was signed.

The inhabitants of Nabonoi commune, particularly the elders, know well where the borderline between Laos and Thailand is situated in this area.

Mr. Pong, an elderly local inhabitant who took part in the border control in 1931 (the control commission was composed of three French, seven Thais and one Lao, Grandfather Pong), has described in detail the road he took to control the border marks and affirms that the borderline traces along the stream of Nam Muong and the watershed of Phou Soi Dao or Phu Khao Mieng.

Mr. Douangchit Phetlangsy, Chairman of the Administrative Committee of Botène district, affirms that, concerning the tasks of national defence and public order in our district of Botène, in the past as well as at the present, we have posted forces to rigourously control the Franco-Siamese border established in 1907. In the past, we know about people living on the Thai bank who used to come for a living or to raise their cattle on the Lao bank. But we consider it in the context of good-neighbourliness between brotherly countries and have not made out of it a serious issue.

But later on, starting from 1986, we noticed that the Thai side built a road from Sene Tha, Lao Kohok crossing Nam Huong Paman to penetrate and illegally cut our woods in the region of Khun Houei Say and Huong Nga. In this respect, the Lao side has protested several times to the Thai authorities.

In 1986, I personally wrote a protest letter to the Chief of Na Heo district and called for appropriate measures to stop all acts of intrusion and illegal cutting of Lao woods in the said region. But the Thai side not only refused to comply, but also sent companies of rangers into the region until the armed clash at hill 1273 took place.

Mr. Sounthone Pathammavong, former Supreme Commander of the National Armed Forces, ex-Defence Minister of the Lao Kingdom, and presently a member of the Lao National Education Front of Vientiane Prefecture, firmly stated that: "During the period when he was assuming these responsibilities, no border dispute has ever occurred in this region, because the Thais, themselves, recognized that this region was Lao territory."

Mr. Leuam Insixiangmay, former Deputy Prime Minister of the Government of the Kingdom of Laos, presently permanent member of the Supreme People's Assembly stated: "I will be 74 this year, and I have never heard of this region as belonging to Siam in the past or at present ..."

"When the general elections for deputies were held in the entire Laos, the citizens of Nabonoi, Nakok were regularly registered in the list of voters of the Botène legislative area and the Thais never made any protest over this. This kind of election had been organized seven times under the former régime.

"From 1948 to 1975, the year of the establishment of the Lao People's Democratic Republic, I participated in almost all the governments or at least was a deputy. I have never heard the Thai side raising a border issue with the Lao side but have always respected the border agreement signed between France and Siam. Moreover, modification of the borderline in maps has never been heard of ... The statement made by the Thai side that different maps have been modified with the former Lao Government's consent is just a lie. I also refute it. If it was true, as Deputy Prime Minister, I would have been informed about it."

It is clear, from the legal and effective administrative standpoint that the region of Nabonoi, Botène district, Sayaboury Province is the territory of the Lao People's Democratic Republic. The allegation made by the Thai side that this region comes under Bane Rom Klao of Thailand, from the legal and administrative standpoint, is without concrete basis.



III. The just position and the goodwill of the Lao People's Democratic Republic.

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After the foundation of the Lao People's Democratic Republic, the Lao Government has always implemented a policy of peace and friendship towards all countries. With regard to neighbouring countries, the Lao People's Democratic Republic has continually respected their independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity, and endeavoured to bring about close relations and to turn the common border into one of peace and friendship.

As for the neighbouring Kingdom of Thailand with whom it shares a common border of 1,650 kilometres, the Lao People's Democratic Republic has always respected the traditional brotherly friendship and neighbourly relations between Lao and Thai peoples and done its utmost to settle the differences and incidents between the two countries by peaceful means.

In this spirit, the Government of the Lao People's Democratic Republic signed two joint communiqués with the Kingdom of Thailand in January and April 1979 which clearly define the guidelines and principles that govern relations between the two countries, as follows:

Mutual respect for the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of each country;

Respect for the right of each country to exist without interference or aggression from outside;

Non-interference in the internal affairs of each other. Subversive activities, be they direct or indirect, and against each other are prohibited;

Settlement of all incidents by peaceful means in conformity with the Charter of the United Nations and on the basis of equality;

Non-use of armed forces or threat of force against each other. No permission should be granted to other countries in whatever form to use its territory as military bases with the aim of aggression, threat and interference.

The joint communiqué of April 1979 also clearly states:

"Both Governments agree to turn the entire Lao-Thai border (fluvial and terrestrial) into one of peace and friendship on the basis of respect for the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity and legitimate rights of each country, and to solve all incidents between the two countries by peaceful means.

"In this respect, both sides will consult together on ways and means of solving problems relating to military strongholds between the two countries, the exchange of visits between the peoples living near the Lao-Thai border,

necessary and efficient principles aiming at restraining all activities led by bad elements who are using this border area as a sanctuary, creating disorder which is prejudicial to peace and tranquillity of the peoples living on both sides of the border; they will strive to educate the people, the militia, the officials and the patrols from all social strata of the State, namely, the soldiers who are performing their duty along the border between the two countries by exhorting them to deeply grasp the Lao-Thai friendly relations and to correctly implement the regulations agreed upon."

This question was reaffirmed once again in the speech delivered by the Chairman of the Council of Ministers, Mr. Kaysone Phomvihane, at the annual Session of the People's Supreme Assembly, on 2 February 1988: "Towards the Kingdom of Thailand, we will continue to implement our consistent policy for the legitimate benefit of our two peoples, for peace, tranquillity, friendship and co-operation between the countries in the region. We will do our utmost to solve the incidents by negotiation on the basis of the principles formulated in the two Lao-Thai joint communiqués of 1979."

In reality, after two rounds of negotiations between Laos and Thailand in November 1986 and March 1987, even though many issues still remained pending, the relations between the two countries were improved in many fields.

At the sixtieth birthday anniversary of the Thai King, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Lao People's Democratic Republic informed the newly-arrived Thai Ambassador that the Acting President of the Republic, Mr. Phoumi Vongvichit, wished to personally present his greetings on the King's anniversary. And it was also on this important occasion that the Acting President of the Lao People's Democratic Republic and many members of the Lao Government attended the reception hosted by the Thai Embassy in Vientiane.

In the face of the current incident, from the very first day, the Lao side has exercised self-restraint as much as possible and has tried to avoid all confrontation and has, in earnest, put forward proposals for negotiations with the aim of settling together the present incident on the basis of equality without any pre-conditions. As for the Thai private companies' five workers who penetrated Lao territory in this area to exploit wood, they were arrested and handed over to the local people's court for judgement but, in the end, those offenders were granted amnesty and freedom to go back to their families. While the Thai side has mobilized the armed forces in a great number in order to attack and encroach upon the Lao territory in this area, the Lao side, in the aide-mémoire of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs handed to the Thai Ambassador in Vientiane, on 29 August 1987 made the following appeal: "the Thai side, responsible for the situation, has the duty to withdraw its troops from Lao territory and find ways to settle this problem through negotiation in order to avoid any unwanted development in relation to the present situation".

While the Thai side has launched continuous offensives with numerous military forces and has strained the situation as much as possible, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Lao People's Democratic Republic issued a statement on 27 December 1987, proposing that both sides hold negotiation in order to together

settle this incident. Thereafter, in the aide-mémoire of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Lao People's Democratic Republic sent to the Thai Ministry of Foreign Affairs as well as in the different statements made by the spokesman of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Lao People's Democratic Republic, the Lao side has reiterated several times its proposals for negotiation on the basis of equality and without any pre-conditions with the aim of settling the present incident in a brief period of time.

On 25 January 1988, in view of the violent and most dangerous situation which has occurred presently, keeping in mind its responsibility towards the Lao as well as the Thai people and towards the expectations for the cessation of bloodshed and killing of Lao and Thai families, and in view of such a serious undermining of the friendly relations of the Lao and Thai peoples, which is contrary to the tendency for dialogue prevailing in the region, the Government of the Lao People's Democratic Republic issued a statement calling for negotiations aiming at settling the present incident by peaceful means. The statement clearly indicated that: "the Lao Government stands ready to nominate a delegation to Bangkok at the beginning of February 1988 to negotiate with the Thai side, or if for any reason, the Thai side would not be able to receive the Lao delegation, the Lao People's Democratic Republic is ready to invite a Thai delegation to Vientiane during that same period of time.

It is most regretful that the proposals filled with goodwill put forward by the Lao side have only received rigid answers from the Thai side, such as: "We must shuffle out the aggressors from our territory without taking into account the casualties. This is a normal fact in fighting" (the speech of the Thai Prime Minister Prem Tinasulanond of 5 February 1988); "Thailand is ready to have important negotiation on the condition that not one single Lao soldier would remain in our territory"; "The Thai Ministry of Foreign Affairs has no compromising policy over this problem" (Thai Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Sith Savetsila, in his speech of 27 January 1988 at the Press Conference at Bangkok).

With the deep conviction that the military escalation opted for by the Thai side will not only bring resentment and death to the Lao and Thai peoples but will also undermine the atmosphere for dialogue between the ASEAN and Indochinese countries, for the benefit of peace and security in this region, on 11 February 1988, the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Lao People's Democratic Republic took the initiative of sending an urgent telegram to the Prime Minister of Thailand proposing

"that the Armies from both sides ... lead consultation to settle the problem and the Lao People's Democratic Republic stands ready to nominate its military delegation in Bangkok or to receive the Thai military delegation in Vientiane for the purpose of holding consultation over the following proposals:

- "1. Both sides should instantly engage in a cease-fire and move their troops away from each other, establish a joint military commission aiming at supervising the cease-fire and the troops removal.

2. Both sides nominate a technical survey team to inspect the field, to search for a solution of the border problem in this region and to submit it to their respective Governments.

3. Both sides appeal to the good offices of the Secretary-General of the United Nations for the implementation of agreements reached by both sides."

For that reason the military delegation of the two countries held talks at Bangkok on 16 and 17 February 1988, issued a joint communiqué and concluded a cease-fire agreement which provides for the separation of the antagonizing armed forces from each other in the disputed area, the setting up of a joint military committee that was charged with the task of controlling and monitoring the mutually agreed cease-fire, issuing the orders to their respective armed forces stationed in the border area between the Lao People's Democratic Republic and the Kingdom of Thailand to absolutely refrain from using weapons and armed forces against each other, in the spirit of mutual understanding. At the talks held at Vientiane on 23 and 24 February 1988, between them the military delegations of both sides highly praised the result of the implementation of the cease-fire agreement and unanimously agreed to "extend the implementation of the cease-fire until the border problem in this area is settled through peaceful means by the governmental delegations of both sides".

By the terms of the aforesaid agreement, the Lao side withdrew its forces away from the embattled area, while the armed forces of Thailand were still stationed in the area of the Lao commune of Nabonoi. This testified to the goodwill of Laos aimed at generating an atmosphere of mutual understanding and at creating favourable conditions for negotiations for the purpose of peacefully settling the current armed clashes. This does not mean in any way that the Lao side forgoes its sovereignty over the piece of land in this area.

The Lao Government and people are satisfied with the outcome of the talks held between the military delegations of both countries and highly praise the sense of responsibility and endeavours exerted by both delegations to bring to an end the armed conflict in this area and to reach an agreement under which the use of armed forces will be indefinitely banned along the Lao-Thai border.

The Lao Government and people wish to thank the fraternal Thai people as well as social strata that have, with high sense of responsibility, contributed directly or indirectly to the ending of the recent useless bloodshed which was mourned by the two fraternal Lao-Thai peoples.

The political talks between the governmental delegations of Laos and Thailand will be held on 3 March 1988. The Government of the Lao People's Democratic Republic pledges to do its utmost to make this important negotiation a brilliant success. It hopes that the Government of the Kingdom of Thailand will hold business-like negotiations with it with a view to judiciously settling the incident that has occurred in this area of the Lao People's Democratic Republic border, in conformity with the Franco-Siamese Treaty of 23 March 1907 which both sides have consistently and unceasingly acknowledged and implemented, thus attending to the

earnest interests and aspirations of the two Lao-Thai peoples, in accordance with the principles set forth in the 1979 Lao-Thai joint communiqués, international law and the Charter of the United Nations.

IV. The correct position and goodwill of the Lao People's Democratic Republic have enjoyed praise and encouragement from international public opinion and friendly countries. The fraternal socialist States, the friendly countries and the Secretary-General of the United Nations have extended strong support to the Lao People's Democratic Republic's policy aimed at peacefully settling the dispute. Wide international opinion has praised and supported the fact that both sides agreed to sit at the negotiating table so as to settle peacefully the present situation and to create an atmosphere propitious to mutual understanding so as to promote the negotiating process aimed at peacefully settling the conflict situation for the benefit of restoring the strong relations of friendship that have existed between the Lao People's Democratic Republic and the Kingdom of Thailand.

But it is regrettable that, through their impudent utterances, reactionary forces have yet shown themselves to be hostile towards the two Lao-Thai peoples by attempting to protract the armed confrontation and to review bygone resentment and bitterness which augur ill for mutual understanding.

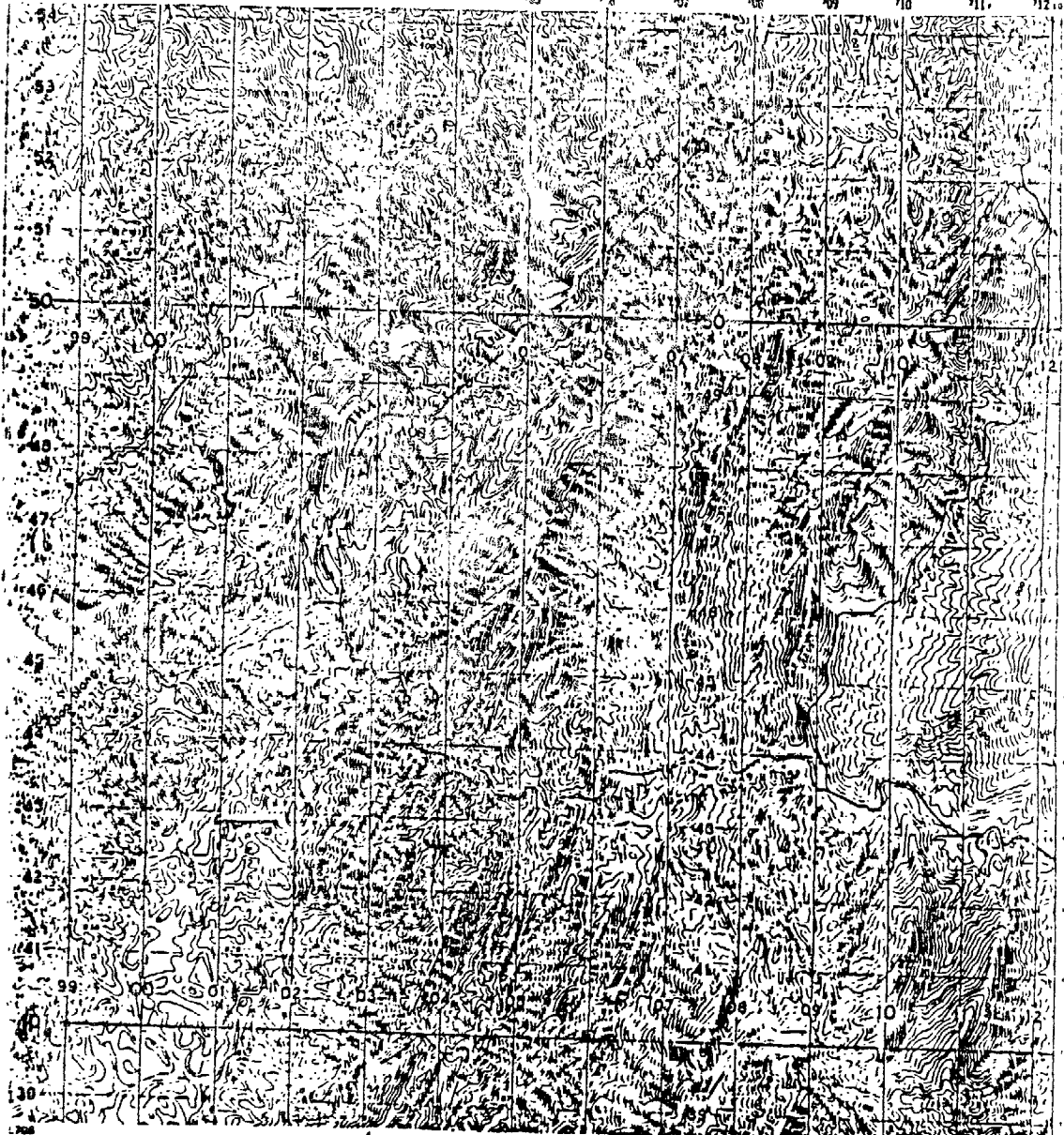
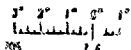
The Lao People's Democratic Republic wishes to express its gratitude to fraternal countries, friendly countries, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, international organizations, peoples from all over the world as well as all peoples from different social strata in Thailand who have sympathized with and welcomed the settling of the Lao-Thai border dispute through peaceful means. The Lao People's Democratic Republic earnestly hopes that they will contribute towards the concrete outcome of the forthcoming negotiations between Laos and Thailand aimed at correctly settling the current dispute in conformity with the Franco-Siamese Treaty of 23 March 1907 and its Protocol and the principles set forth in the two Lao-Thai joint communiqués of 1979, international law and the United Nations Charter, the interest of friendship and good-neighbourliness between Laos and Thailand as well as that of peace and stability in this region and in the rest of the world as well.

THAILAND 1:50,000  
 ประเทศไทย 1:50,000

47 0  
 EB 16

REFER TO THIS MAP AS  
 SHEET 5153  
 SERIES L709

**BAN BO PHAK**  
 บ้านบ่อภาค



1:50,000  
 Scale 1:50,000  
 (Scale 1:50,000)

**Clause II of the Franco-Siamese  
 Treaty, March 23, 1907**

On the side of Luang Prabang, the border at the south, detaches from the Mekong River at the source of the Nam Muang River and follows the thalweg until its course at the Khao Nieng Mountain. From there, the border traces along the watershed between the Mekong and the Nam Muang until the point called Leng Pha Day at the Mekong River in conformity with the delimitation recognized by the Committee for the border delimitation on January 16, 1906.

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ສາທາລະນະລັດ ປະຊາທິປະໄຕ ປະຊາຊົນ ລາວ  
LAO PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC

