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THE SITUATION IN KAMPUCHEA

CHEMICAL AND BACTERIOLOGICAL (BIOLOGICAL) WEAPONS

Letter dated 9 November 1981 from the Permanent Representative
of Democratic Kampuchea to the United Nations addressed to the
Secretary-General

Upon instructions from my Government, I have the honour to inform you that, at the present time, the Hanoi authorities are stepping up their chemical war in Kampuchea in the most criminal way possible, causing numerous casualties among the population. For the period from the beginning of September to 27 October 1981, the authorities of Democratic Kampuchea have already recorded 467 deaths and 94 serious cases of poisoning as a result of the use of that weapon, which has been outlawed by mankind.

Recently, on 13 October 1981, 16 inhabitants of Sautnikum district in Siemreap province died in unspeakable pain after consuming food-stuffs which had been poisoned by the enemy and had then been purchased at the market in Kompong Kdei district on highway No. 6 approximately 50 kilometres from the town of Siemreap. The stomachs and intestines of the victims were completely decomposed. The tragedy sowed terror among those inhabitants who had witnessed it.

The dry season which has just begun promises to be a severe trial for the people of Kampuchea, more than 2,500,000 of whom have already died since their territory was invaded by the Vietnamese aggressors on 25 December 1978.

The Government of Democratic Kampuchea has on numerous occasions denounced that crime, which has been condemned by the international community, as well as the array of weaponry used by the enemy to perpetrate its heinous acts: conventional weapons, the weapon of hunger and those now being wielded with increasing savagery, chemical weapons.

The chemical war was already raging in Kampuchea in 1979 and 1980, causing thousands of casualties among the population, with people killed or seriously poisoned by the firing of shells which released poison gas, the spreading of toxic

chemical powder by planes and helicopters and the poisoning of the sources from which the population derives its water supply (ponds, pools, wells). The areas singled out for attack were, however, confined to those under the control of the Government of Democratic Kampuchea or those temporarily under the control of the enemy and located in isolated areas of the country, far from the population centres of provinces, districts or communes. Today, the chemical war is increasing in scale and intensity. The enemy is widening his sights to include population centres - in other words, even the civilian population temporarily under his control. Enemy agents belonging to specialized units trained in chemical warfare, numbering in certain cases between 60 and 80, are infiltrating the provincial and district capitals and communes and villages. Mingling with the population, they strive to divert its attention at the slightest opportunity in order to spread toxic chemicals over vegetables, fruit, meat or other common food-stuffs. Vietnamese agents arrested by the people when carrying out their criminal activities in the major towns of Oudong (some 40 kilometres from Phnom Penh), Thpong (Kompong Speu province) and Chamcar Loeu (Kompong Cham province) have disclosed that their most common technique is to distract the attention of the vendors and customers under the pretext of purchasing food while their accomplices surreptitiously contaminate the food-stuffs within their reach with the poison that they carry.

The reason for this desperate activity is that the Hanoi authorities are more bogged down than ever in their war of aggression in Kampuchea and, unable to put an end to the resistance of the entire population, they are now attacking the people themselves, men, women, children and old people without distinction.

Faced with this situation, the Government of Democratic Kampuchea urgently appeals to you and to the United Nations for prompt steps to be taken to check the criminal deeds of the Hanoi authorities by preventing them from pursuing and intensifying their chemical war against the people of Kampuchea. As part of those steps, the Government of Democratic Kampuchea requests that a committee of inquiry should be set up and sent to Kampuchea itself as quickly as possible to collect evidence of the crimes committed by the Hanoi authorities and of the chemical weapons they are employing to exterminate the people of Kampuchea, in flagrant violation of international conventions and in complete contempt of the rules of simple humanity.

Please find attached for your information a list of the heinous crimes committed by the Vietnamese enemy in its chemical war in Kampuchea together with the number of casualties for the period from the beginning of September to 27 October 1981. This list, although not an exhaustive one in view of the present state of information possessed by the authorities of Democratic Kampuchea, will give some idea of the scale of the chemical war at present raging in Kampuchea.

I would also request you to have this letter circulated as an official document of the General Assembly under agenda items 22 and 42.

(Signed) THIOUNN Prasith
Ambassador,
Permanent Representative of
Democratic Kampuchea

ANNEX

LIST OF CRIMES COMMITTED BY THE VIETNAMESE ENEMY
IN ITS CHEMICAL WAR IN KAMPUCHEA

From September to 27 October 1981

LOCATION OF CRIMES	DATES	CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE CRIMES	NUMBER OF VICTIMS	
			DEATHS	CASES OF SERIOUS POISONING
I. <u>Siemreap province</u>				
1. Chikrèng district	17, 18 and 19 September	Spraying of toxic chemicals from helicopters and firing of poison gas shells from 105mm guns		11
	13 October	Poisoning of food-stuffs	16	3
2. Sautnikum district	17, 18 and 19 September	Spraying of toxic chemicals from helicopters and firing of poison gas shells from 105mm guns		Not yet determined
	21 October	Poisoning of food-stuffs	2	
3. Town of Siemreap	5-13 September	Poisoning of the water supply and of food-stuffs sold in the market		110
4. Pouk district	5 October	Poisoning of the water supply and of food-stuffs and medicines sold in the market		22
5. Damdèk district (district capital)	24 October	Poisoning of tobacco sold in the market	1	
6. Varin district	15 October	-id-	5	

LOCATION OF CRIMES	DATES	CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE CRIMES	NUMBER OF VICTIMS	
			DEATHS	CASES OF SERIOUS POISONING
7. Svay Loeu district	15 October	Firing of poison gas shells from 60mm mortars		Not yet determined
8. Village of Koulen	27-30 September	Poisoning of the water supply	15	20
9. Village of Thkoeuv	27-30 September	Poisoning of the water supply and of food-stuffs and medicines sold in the market		Not yet determined
II. <u>Battambang province</u>				
1. Bovel district	19 September	Poisoning of the water supply	50	
2. Commune of Thmar Kaul (Headquarters)	8 October	Poisoning of meat and other food- stuffs sold in the market		Not yet determined
3. Town of Battambang	8 October	-id-		Not yet determined
4. Sisophon district (North)	6 October	Poisoned medicines given to hospitalized sick persons		Not yet determined
5. Thmar Puok district	6 October	-id-	18	

			NUMBER OF VICTIMS	
LOCATION OF CRIMES	DATES	CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE CRIMES	DEATHS	CASES OF SERIOUS POISONING
6. Pailin district	12-22 October	Aerial spraying of toxic chemicals from Takong to Kamrieng	Not yet Determined	
III. <u>Pursat province</u>				
Maung district (district capital)	September and October	Poisoning of vegetable and other food-stuffs and of tobacco sold in the market	180	
IV. <u>Kampot province</u>				
1. Koh Sla district	September	Spraying of toxic chemicals from two helicopters		50
2. Commune of Veal Rinh (chief town)	20, 22 and 23 October	Poisoning of rice, vegetables, and palm sugar sold in the market	21	
3. Chhouk district	15 October	Poisoning of food- stuffs, including rice and palm sugar, and tobacco sold in the market	20	10
V. <u>Kompong Cham province</u>				
1. Prey Chhor district	21 October	Poisoned medicines given to the sick	7	

LOCATION OF CRIMES	DATES	CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE CRIMES	NUMBER OF VICTIMS	
			DEATHS	CASES OF SERIOUS POISONING
2. Stung Trang district	30 September	Poisoning of food-stuffs sold in the market		Not yet determined
3. Town of Kompong Cham	October	Poisoning of water reservoir		Not yet determined
4. Chamcar Leou district	October	Poisoning of food-stuffs sold in the market		Not yet determined
5. Commune of Speu (chief town)	October	-id-		Not yet determined
VI. <u>Kompong Speu province</u>				
1. Oudong district	18 October	The population seized several Vietnamese agents who were attempting to add toxic chemicals to food-stuffs		
2. Thpong district	18 October	-id-		

Number of victims:

467 dead, 94 serious cases of poisoning.

Comments:

1. The agents engaged in these poisoning operations are all Vietnamese. The majority are women. They mingle with the population in large numbers, in some areas amounting to 60 to 80
2. This list contains the number of known victims. In many places there are numerous victims whose number could not be determined.
3. When water from contaminated wells is drunk, the victim immediately suffers from vertigo and suffocation. His breathing becomes difficult, abdominal convulsions start and his temperature rises, followed by vomiting of blood and diarrhoea tinged with blood.
