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THE SITUATION IN KAMPUCHEA

SECURITY COUNCIL
Thirty-seventh year

Letter dated 5 April 1982 from the Permanent Representative
of Democratic Kampuchea to the United Nations addressed to
the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit to you herewith, for your information, the statement of 19 March 1982 by the Ministry of Culture and Education of Democratic Kampuchea on the destruction and looting of antiquities, works of art and other treasures of Kampuchea's national heritage by the Vietnamese invaders.

I should be most grateful if you would circulate this text as an official document of the General Assembly, under item 20 of the preliminary list, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) THIOUNN Prasith
Ambassador
Permanent Representative
of Democratic Kampuchea

* A/37/50.

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ANNEX



STATEMENT
BY THE MINISTRY OF CULTURE AND EDUCATION
OF DEMOCRATIC KAMPUCHEA

ON THE DESTRUCTION AND LOOTING OF
ANTIQUITIES, WORKS OF ART AND OTHER TREASURES
OF KAMPUCHEA'S NATIONAL HERITAGE
BY THE VIETNAMESE INVADERS

Of late, the Vietnamese administration installed in Phnom Penh has lavished perfidious calumnies on Democratic Kampuchea, accusing her of "having sent agents to steal antiquities and works of art in the pagodas of Kampuchea".

This is a vile groundless accusation on the part of the Vietnamese Hanoi clique which is now committing acts of aggression and genocide against Kampuchea. It cannot mislead the Kampuchean people or the international community. Indeed, it is a matter of public knowledge that for more than 3 years already, the Vietnamese aggressors have destroyed or looted antiquities, works of art and other treasures of Kampuchea's national heritage both in Phnom Penh and the Angkor monuments as well as in the pagodas and the provincial towns.

In Phnom Penh, they have looted antiquities, works of art and statues of Buddha in pure gold or silver, in the Silver Pagoda, the Royal Palace, the National Museum and in other pagodas. At Angkor, the Vietnamese aggressors have stolen and removed to Vietnam many bas-reliefs, lintels, statues and Apsaras. Furthermore, they have felled trees and destroyed one part of the forests around and within the precincts of Angkor monuments. They have stolen statues of Buddha and valuables, and destroyed ancient buddhist works in the pagodas of provinces.

In committing those criminal acts, the Vietnamese Le Duan clique of Hanoi attempts to destroy the civilization, the culture and the art of Kampuchea, and to annihilate the national soul and the nation of Kampuchea. The Government of Democratic Kampuchea has, on several occasions, condemned the Vietnamese clique aggressor, and reported those acts of pillage and

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destruction to the United Nations. Today, this clique, guilty of crimes of aggression and genocide against the Kampuchean people, has the arrogance to resort to the method of "the thief cries catch thief" against Democratic Kampuchea who is making sacrifices of all kinds to defend the Kampuchean nation and people, and to preserve forever the civilization and national identity of Kampuchea.

Before the Vietnamese invasion, despite its heavy tasks of national reconstruction to improve the living conditions of the Kampuchean people, the Government of Democratic Kampuchea had given all due attention and made considerable efforts to the maintenance and preservation of the national heritage, namely the Angkor monuments. Those who had visited Democratic Kampuchea: Heads of State, personalities, journalists and tourists had been the eyewitnesses of the good state of preservation of the Angkor monuments, and they had admired all the works of art and other treasures in the National Museum and the Silver Pagoda in Phnom Penh.

The Ministry of Culture and Education of Democratic Kampuchea categorically rejects the vile calumnies of the Vietnamese administration installed in Phnom Penh. The Government of Democratic Kampuchea, the nation and the people of Kampuchea condemn with the utmost vigour the criminal acts committed by the Vietnamese Le Duan clique aggressor. They make a pressing appeal to the international community and the United Nations to take all necessary measures so as to stop those criminal acts of the Hanoi authorities and to safeguard the civilization of Kampuchea and to save the nation and people of Kampuchea from extinction. The most appropriate measures consist in compelling the Hanoi authorities to immediately and unconditionally withdraw all of their aggression forces from Kampuchea in accordance with relevant United Nations resolutions, enabling the Kampuchean people to decide themselves their own affairs, free from outside interference. The people and the nation of Kampuchea will therefore be able to conduct the work of maintenance and restoration of the Angkor monuments and to preserve for ever this cultural heritage of Kampuchea, which is also a part of mankind's heritage.

Democratic Kampuchea,
19 March 1982
