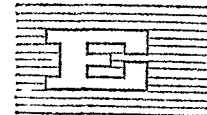


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THE RIGHT OF PEOPLES TO SELF-DETERMINATION AND ITS
APPLICATION TO PEOPLES UNDER COLONIAL OR ALIEN
DOMINATION OR FOREIGN OCCUPATION

Letter dated 31 January 1984, addressed to the Assistant Secretary-General,
Centre for Human Rights, by the Permanent Representative of the Socialist
Republic of Viet Nam to the United Nations Office at Geneva

I have the honour to transmit to you, for your information, the following document (original French):

"Communiqué by the Eighth Conference of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of Laos, Kampuchea and Viet Nam" held on 28 and 29 January 1984 at Vientiane (Laos).

I should be grateful if you would have this text distributed as an official document of the fortieth session of the Commission on Human Rights, under item 9 of its agenda.

(signed) NGUYEN THUONG
Permanent Representative

Annex

COMMUNIQUE BY THE EIGHTH CONFERENCE OF THE MINISTERS FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS
OF LAOS, KAMPUCHEA AND VIET NAM

The Eighth Conference of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Lao People's Democratic Republic, the People's Republic of Kampuchea and the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam was held at Vientiane on 28 and 29 January 1984.

The Conference has surveyed the last five years of struggle waged by each of the three peoples of Indo-China for the sake of their work of nation-building and national defence, has taken stock of the implementation of the resolutions of the Summit Conference of the three countries during the past year and has discussed the direction that activities should take in the immediate future.

1. The Conference is unanimous in regarding the last five years as an extremely difficult but highly successful phase for the Lao, Kampuchean and Vietnamese peoples in their struggle for the defence of the independence and sovereignty of their respective countries and for the cause of peace, stability and co-operation among the nations of south-east Asia. In particular, the miraculous revival of the Kampuchean people and the growing international prestige of the People's Republic of Kampuchea manifested themselves in the most lively manner in the mass parade and military march past organized in Kampuchea on the occasion of the fifth anniversary of the National Festival. The successes achieved by the three peoples over the last five years have struck a severe blow at the intrigues of the Chinese expansionist and hegemonist forces, American imperialism and the reactionary forces in the ruling circles of certain ASEAN countries, which are trying to stir up tension and confrontation in south-east Asia in an endeavour to reverse the situation in Kampuchea and enfeeble the three Indo-Chinese countries.

The trials of the last five years have united still further the three Indo-Chinese peoples in their special friendship and militant alliance. The first Summit Conference of the three Indo-Chinese countries marks a new phase in the just and assuredly victorious combat and in the special relations of the three peoples.

The resolutions of the Summit Conference of the three countries have been steadily implemented, thus resolutely strengthening their co-operation at all levels and increasing their mutual confidence and their solidarity in the joint revolutionary task of the three peoples.

The Conference is happy to note that the progress achieved in the revival of Kampuchea has made possible the steady annual withdrawal of units of the volunteers from the Vietnamese army and hopes that the present state of security and stability in the People's Republic of Kampuchea will make it possible to withdraw further units of Vietnamese volunteers during 1984.

2. The Conference notes with satisfaction that there is a growing public awareness of the fact that the chief threat to peace and stability in south-east Asia stems from the expansionist and hegemonist policy pursued by the Chinese authorities, in collusion with American imperialism. The peoples of the three Indo-Chinese countries have been the victims of the longest and bloodiest wars of aggression

in the history of the world, while at the same time being valiant fighters in defence of their independence and making a major contribution to the cause of peace in south-east Asia and in the world. The three countries cherish no greater aspiration than that of living in peace and friendship with their neighbours and, indeed, with all other countries. Pursuing as they do a policy of peace, friendship and co-operation, the three countries constitute a major factor for peace and stability in south-east Asia.

The Conference is unanimous in concluding that the hostile policy of the Chinese leaders towards the three Indo-Chinese countries has not changed in any way.

While talking peace, the Chinese authorities are, in fact, still intensifying their multifarm war of sabotage against the three Indo-Chinese countries, striving to regroup those countries reactionaries, multiplying acts of infiltration for the purpose of internal subversion, intensifying their psychological warfare and endeavouring to divide the three countries of Indo-China and to undermine their cohesion. While China proclaims to all and sundry that the question of Kampuchea is a problem between the ASEAN countries and the Indo-Chinese countries - its aim being to pit the former against the latter - it is common knowledge that the Khmer reactionaries led by Pol Pot are the creatures of China, which is the main source of arms for the Pol-potists to use against the Kampuchean people and that China is the chief threat to the three Indo-Chinese countries. At the same time, China is attempting to acquire a monopoly over the so-called Kampuchea problem for the purpose of serving its global strategy. While fiercely opposing talks between the ASEAN countries and the Indo-Chinese countries and inciting the former against the latter, it has selected the question of Kampuchea as the main problem to be settled with the Soviet Union in order to improve Sino-Soviet relations, making that question, together with the question of Afghanistan, the key to its strategic collaboration with the United States against the Soviet Union, by inciting the countries of south-east Asia against the countries of Indo-China and the countries of southern and western Asia against Afghanistan. Moreover, China has made the settlement of the question of Kampuchea - prerequisite for an improvement in its relations with Viet Nam. It is quite evident that, to China, the Kampuchean question is simply a card for it to play in its global strategy and in its relations with the United States and the Soviet Union, in the service of its policy of hegemony and expansion in south-east Asia. That is an habitual policy of China aimed at setting some countries against others and at taking advantage of such conflicts to subserve its own strategy and to settle problems over the heads of the parties to a conflict, as it has already done in connection with the struggle of the three Indo-Chinese peoples against the colonialists in the 1950s and against the imperialists in the 1960s and 1970s. China's so-called five-point proposal on the Kampuchean question amounts to demanding the unilateral withdrawal of all the volunteers of the Vietnamese army so as to enable the Pol-potists to return to Kampuchea and destroy the revival of the Kampuchean people and to give the Chinese expansionists and hegemonists a free hand to act against the three Indo-Chinese countries. The Lao People's Democratic Republic, the People's Republic of Kampuchea and the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam are completely in favour of the pourparlers being held with China by the Soviet Union with a view to improving the relations between the two countries but, at the same time, they

warmly approve the constant policy adopted by the Soviet Union with respect to the three Indo-Chinese countries in those discussions, namely, its firm rejection of the absurd Chinese demands and its determination to strengthen its solidarity with and its energetic support for the work of nation-building and national defence in the three Indo-Chinese countries. The Lao People's Democratic Republic, the People's Republic of Kampuchea and the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam have the highest regard for this principled attitude of the Soviet Union and see in it an emphatic support and a major source of encouragement for them.

At present as in the past, the three Indo-Chinese countries continue to set great store by their solidarity and long-standing friendship with the Chinese people and to regard these links as a factor of great importance for the peace and stability of south-east Asia. The abnormal situation currently prevailing in the relations between the three Indo-Chinese countries and China is a temporary one only and the peoples of Indo-China, like the people of China, share a common interest in attaining the peace that would enable them to concentrate their strength on the work of nation-building. In this spirit, the three Indo-Chinese countries reiterate their proposals designed to re-establish relations of friendship and good-neighbourliness with the People's Republic of China, on the basis of the principles of peaceful coexistence. The Lao People's Democratic Republic and the People's Republic of Kampuchea fully support the efforts being made by the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam to restore peace to the frontier zones between Viet Nam and China and to resume Sino-Vietnamese pourparlers anywhere and at any time. The proposals put forward by the two parties with a view to a normalization of their relations will form the subject of bilateral discussions.

3. Over the last five years, the administrations of the United States constantly played the Chinese card against the Soviet Union and the three Indo-Chinese countries. Concurrently with its intensification of the arms race, which is giving rise to a situation of severe tension in the world and in the region of Asia and the Pacific, the American Administration, in collusion with China, has increased its military aid to the ruling circles of Thailand and the other ASEAN countries, doing everything in its power to impede the revival of the Kampuchean people and to oppose the three Indo-Chinese countries. The Conference strongly reproves the hostile attitude of the American Administration to the three countries of Indo-China, a policy which runs counter to the interests of the American people and to that of peace in south-east Asia, and which is doomed to failure like that applied in Indo-China in the 1970s.

In view of the friendship between the American people and the three Indo-Chinese peoples which was cemented in the struggle against the war of aggression waged by the American rulers in Indo-China, each Indo-Chinese country will, in a humanitarian and understanding spirit vis-à-vis the American people, do its best to communicate to the two others any information it may have concerning Americans posted as missing during the war in Laos, Viet Nam and Kampuchea. If the American Government exhibits a co-operative attitude and gives up its policy of hostility towards the three Indo-Chinese countries, the latter are prepared to the best of their respective abilities to discuss that question with the American Government. They are also ready to co-operate in the matter with American non-governmental organizations.

The peoples of Laos, Kampuchea and Viet Nam express the hope that, with regard to the question of missing Americans as well as that corresponding to the interests of the two parties, namely, peace and friendship, the American people will collaborate with them, the main victims of the warmongering and aggressive policy waged by American imperialism.

4. The Conference has highlighted the fact that the ASEAN countries and the Indo-Chinese countries have in common a very basic long-term interest, namely, to maintain lasting peace and stability in south-east Asia, to shut out once and for all any foreign interference and to concentrate their efforts on resolving the urgent problems of each individual country which are those of economic construction and development. The peoples of ASEAN share with those of Indo-China the ardent desire to co-exist peacefully and to develop relationships of co-operation, friendship and good-neighbourliness in the interests of the peace and prosperity of every country.

On the other hand, there are some points of disagreement between the two groups of countries regarding the cause of the present situation in south-east Asia and the steps needed to restore peace and stability there. Thailand and some of the other ASEAN countries take the view that a settlement of the Kampuchean question is a precondition for resolving the problem of peace and stability in south-east Asia and endeavour to impose an absurd solution on Kampuchea. They demand that Viet Nam unilaterally withdraw its armed forces from Kampuchea while China, Thailand and the Pol-potists arrogate to themselves the right to have full liberty of action. They wish to introduce into Kampuchea the armed forces of a number of countries that have supported the Pol-potists against the Kampuchean people, thus rendering possible the return to Kampuchea of the so-called coalition Government of the Pol-potists for the purpose of destroying the legal authority of the People's Republic of Kampuchea and hindering the process of reviving the Kampuchean people. By so doing, they hope to transform Kampuchea into a dependency of Thailand, of American imperialism and of the Chinese reactionaries. Such a solution would constitute a gross violation of the right of the Kampuchean people to self-determination and would help to achieve the designs of China against the three Indo-Chinese countries and its intrigues against peace and stability in south-east Asia.

The Indo-Chinese countries consider that, as far as the problems of south-east Asia are concerned, a global approach to their settlement should be adopted based on equality and respect for the legitimate interests of every group of countries, without one dictating to another and without any dictation from outside. The contemporary history of south-east Asia, and particularly that of the last 40 years, has made it possible to call attention to four factors:

Any threat to the independence of the countries of south-east Asia comes from outside;

The chief victims of the various acts of aggression, interference and domination have been the three Indo-Chinese countries,

The acts of aggression and interference against the Indo-Chinese countries and against peace and stability in south-east Asia by the colonialist, imperialist and expansionist forces could not have been effected without assistance and without the use of the territory of certain countries in the region such as Thailand;

The imperialist and expansionist forces have constantly had recourse to the policy of divide and conquer and are provoking a confrontation between the ASEAN countries and the Indo-Chinese countries.

Any solution designed to ensure a solid and durable peace in Indo-China and in south-east Asia must take these factors into account and must be able to guarantee that the independence and sovereignty of the three Indo-Chinese countries and the other countries of south-east Asia will be respected and must ensure the peaceful co-existence in friendship and co-operation of the two groups of countries.

The Conference considers that there are five possible ways in which the present situation in south-east Asia could develop:

The adoption of a global solution to the question of peace and stability in south-east Asia on the basis of the withdrawal of all foreign armed forces from south-east Asia, the discontinuance of any external interference and the establishment in south-east Asia of a zone of peace, friendship and co-operation. This global settlement should make it possible to ensure a durable and solid peace in the region. The contents of such a settlement are mentioned in the resolution on south-east Asia adopted by the Seventh Summit Conference of Non-Aligned Countries in March 1983 and is in keeping with the proposals by the ASEAN countries concerning a zone of peace, freedom and neutrality put forward in 1971 and also with the seven-point proposal submitted by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Lao People's Democratic Republic, on behalf of the three Indo-Chinese countries, to the United Nations General Assembly at its thirty-sixth session in 1981.

The adoption of a partial solution involving the three Indo-Chinese countries and China with a view to the complete withdrawal of the Vietnamese armed forces from Kampuchea and to ending the threat from China, the use of Thai territory as a base for activities directed against the three Indo-Chinese countries and the employment of the remnants of the Pol-potist armed forces and other Khmer reactionaries against the Kampuchean people.

The adoption of a partial solution involving the three Indo-Chinese countries and Thailand based on guaranteeing the equal security of both parties and establishing a security zone on either side of the Kampuchea-Thailand frontier. The two parties would arrange for a suitable form of international supervision of what had been agreed.

Pending the achievement of a global or partial solution as mentioned above, the adoption of an outline agreement on the principles governing the relations between the ASEAN countries and the Indo-Chinese countries designed to eliminate the danger of the current situation escalating into a major conflict and to lay the foundations for a gradual settlement of the disagreements, both immediate and latent, between the two groups of countries or between the various countries of the region. The two parties would consider and devise an international arrangement to guarantee and supervise what had been agreed.

A prolongation of the present situation without achieving a global or partial solution, whereby the disagreements between the two groups of countries will be accentuated and could lead to an explosive and uncontrollable situation which China would be able to exploit to instigate a large-scale war in south-east Asia.

The factual developments of the last five years indicate that, in the immediate future, the peoples of south-east Asia have only a single alternative to adopt, namely, that whereby the two groups of countries discuss together all the problems raised by each of the parties with the aim of solving them on the basis of the principle of equality and of mutual respect for their respective legitimate interests and without any interference from outside. The last five years show that this is the only way of defusing tension, strengthening reciprocal understanding, reducing the disagreements between the two groups of countries

and gradually achieving peace and stability in conformity with the interests of all the countries of the region and that of peace. Any other alternative cannot but lead to tension and a deadlock, aggravate the disagreement between the two groups of countries and encourage still further acts of flagrant interference by countries from outside the region in the affairs of the countries of the region.

As for the form the regional or international conference might take, that is a question that can be discussed and settled on the basis of the principle of equality and non-imposition. The three Indo-Chinese countries are ready to engage in bilateral consultations and simultaneously to begin immediate talks between the two groups of ASEAN and Indo-Chinese countries. All the proposals put forward by each of the parties will be discussed on the basis of the principle of equality. The People's Republic of Kampuchea reaffirms its willingness to refrain from allowing the question of its participation to prevent the opening of a dialogue between the two groups of countries. The Conference has agreed to appoint Laos and Viet Nam as representatives of the three Indo-Chinese countries to take part in talks between the two groups of countries. It welcomes the formula put forward by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Malaysia for talks between the five ASEAN countries, on the one hand, and Viet Nam and Laos on the other, and declares that it is willing to consider any formula for a dialogue between the two groups of ASEAN and Indo-Chinese countries. The Conference takes note of the fact that an ever-increasing number of ASEAN countries have expressed the desire to promote the dialogue with the Indo-Chinese countries and once again calls upon the Governments of all the countries in the world to work along those lines towards peace in south-east Asia and in the world.

It welcomes the results achieved in the pourparlers between the Lao People's Democratic Republic and the Kingdom of Thailand with a view to settling the problems concerning them and making the Mekong River their frontier of peace.

5. The three Indo-Chinese countries welcome the assessment and the over-all in-depth analysis of the causes of the deterioration in the international situation carried out by Comrade Yuri Andropov in his statements of 28 September and 24 November 1983. They unreservedly support all the démarches and practical measures adopted by the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics for the purpose of strengthening its defence capability and ensuring the security of the Soviet people and its allies. They consider the retaliatory measures adopted by the USSR, the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic and the German Democratic Republic - in harmony with all the other countries members of the Warsaw Treaty - in response to the schemes of the imperialists who are seeking in every way to ensure their military and, in particular, nuclear supremacy by installing in the territories of some Western European countries new American medium-range nuclear missiles, to be so many needful and expedient actions to maintain the balance of nuclear forces in Europe and ensure the peace and security of the peoples of Europe and all the world. The three Indo-Chinese countries express their unreserved support for the position of the USSR and the other States members of the Warsaw Treaty at the current Stockholm Conference.

Vientiane, 29 January 1984.