

E M B A S S Y
of the
SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM
United Kingdom

12-14 Victoria Road,
London, W8 5RD
01-937 1912/8564
Telex : 887 361 Victem G.

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PRESS RELEASE

MEMORANDUM ON THAILAND'S COLLUSION WITH
POL POT AND ACCOMPLICES

Hanoi, VNA April 21 - The Foreign Ministry of the People's Republic of Kampuchea has denounced Thailand for using its territory as "sanctuary" for the Pol Pot remnants to oppose the Kampuchean people, reports the Kampuchean News Agency SPK. In a memorandum issued on April 19, the Ministry said : "For two months now remnants of Pol Pot's forces from "sanctuaries" on Thai territory, assisted by Thai forces, have many times intruded into border areas of the People's Republic of Kampuchea committing utter atrocities. The armed forces of the People's Republic of Kampuchea, with the assistance of Vietnamese army volunteers and local populations, have meted out fitting punishment to the enemy at many places. The authorities in Thailand, in an effort to divert the attention of the world public from this reality, have mounted a slander campaign, charging the Vietnamese volunteer army with "attacks on refugee camps". The memorandum says :

"Following the Kampuchean people's victory on January 7, 1979 in overthrowing the genocidal regime of Pol Pot, the Thai authorities took advantage of the problem of refugees to receive Pol Pot remnants on Thai soil, harbouring them, enabling them to recoup for long-term opposition to Kampuchea... Most of the refugee camps have been turned into bases for Polpotist remnants and their associates. Evidence of the existence of barracks, command posts and arms caches inside these camps for Pol Pot remnants and their associates has been given by many U.N. officials and by journalists from different countries.

At many camps their troop strength runs into the thousands and they exert complete control on every aspect of life there. The fact is that as early as 1980, a task force codenamed "task force 80" was formed by the Thai authorities to take direct control of refugee camps and to assist Pol Pot remnants and their associates in supplies, conscription and training (sud-est Asie, December 1980). It should be noted that "task force 80" is directly attached to the supreme command of the Thai armed forces. Thus, refugee camps on Thai soil close to Kampuchea's border have been turned into "sanctuaries" for Pol Pot remnants and their associates. For many years now these forces have used these "sanctuaries" as staging bases for incursions into the territory of the People's Republic of Kampuchea. More serious still is that bombings, shellings and infantry attacks by Thailand were announced by Thai armed forces Supreme Commander Arthit Kamlang-Ek himself in the last days of March. An official of the Thai Foreign Ministry even openly declared that Thailand was within her right, to do so (Bangkok Post, April 5,). This was a new escalation in the Thai authorities' hostile policy regarding the People's Republic of Kampuchea.

The use of Kampuchean refugee camps as "sanctuaries" for Pol Pot remnants and their associates has in practice formed a military line along the whole border, posing a permanent threat to the People's Republic of Kampuchea. This is the cause of the explosive situation along the Thai-Kampuchean border. At its peak, this military line consisted of 21 camps with a total of 140,000 refugees.

The Thai authorities have been moving these refugee camps to and fro according to seasons with the aim of backing intrusions into Kampuchea by Pol Pot remnants and their associates. Every year when comes the wet season, they help the Pol Pot move these camps deep into Kampuchean territories to shield hostile acts against Kampuchea, comes the dry season and they will open the border to allow Polpotists to flee back into Thailand together with these camps.

The Thai authorities divert humanitarian aid from Kampuchean refugees to Pol Pot remnants and line their pockets by supplying arms to the latter. As early as 1979, it was pointed out by A.F.P that most of the relief goods had been transported across the Thai border to areas controlled by Pol Potists and Khmer Serei forces. The French paper "Liberation" on March 25, 1980, reporting on the distribution of relief at camp Macimun, said that according to figures released by the International Red Cross, only 13 per cent of the humanitarian aid allotted to this camp really reached the hands of refugees...

To disguise arms and food supplies to Pol Pot remnants it was agreed between Beijing and Bangkok that Chinese arms supplies would be packed as civilian goods for refugees and would be transported by Chinese merchant ships to the commercial harbour in Bangkok, from where they would be moved by Thai armed forces to Pol Pot remnants in refugee camps. The monthly volume was set up six reception points on roads, at harbours and airfields. It has also built new roads and helicopter pads close to the Thai-Kampuchean border and built many more logistic bases including station 1002 in peak petum and station 1003 in Dangac which consists of big depots and a system of hundreds of ware houses west of Tassanh, four kilometres inside Thailand. International law strictly prohibits the use of refugees. In January and February 1983 alone Thailand delivered to Pol Pot remnants 16,471 cases of weapons and munitions from China. These included AK-47 assault rifles and other infantry guns, land mines, hand grenades, mortar ammunition of the 120mm and other calibres, and other kinds of munitions.

For political ends and contrary to humanitarian purposes, the 1951 convention on the status of refugees provides for guarantees of security and against abuses on the part of countries of residence, even of temporary residence. International law also strictly prohibits the use of refugees, either by persuasion or by coercion, in military or political activities. The fact, however, is that in recent months as well as in all the five years since 1979, Kampuchean refugees living in camps along the Thai-Kampuchean border have repeatedly been used as an instrument to further military and political designs by the ruling circles in Beijing and Bangkok.

It is prohibited by the 1907 The Hague Convention, the 1949 Geneva Convention and the 1977 complementary Protocol to set up

refugee camps near scenes of hostilities and the use of such camps for purposes contrary to the status of refugees. The Manila Conference in Jan. 1981 also strictly prohibits the use of refugees in activities against other countries including the countries of origin, and demands that refugees be moved far from the borders of their countries of origin. But Thailand has run counter to all these provisions of international legal documents by using refugee camps "sanctuaries" for Pol Pot remnants, by setting up logistic and training facilities inside such camps, and by building refugee camps along the Thai-Kampuchean border into a military line to threaten the People's Republic of Kampuchea. Moreover, by causing the "seasonal exoduses" and staging what they call "voluntary repatriations" the Thai authorities over the past five years have many times moved refugee camps or pushed refugees close to or into areas where fighting was taking place, thus causing many people, first of all women and children, to be killed or wounded, these acts are utterly inhuman they are flouting to international law.

The People's Republic of Kampuchea, wishing to see the early return of those citizens who have been forced to leave their homeland, again calls upon Thailand to enter into negotiations, under any forms and at any places, directly or through a third party, including meetings between the Kampuchean and Thai Red Cross organizations, so that a mutually agreeable humanitarian solution may be found at an early date to the problem of refugees. The People's Republic of Kampuchea reiterates that negotiations between the two parties, either direct or through a third party would absolutely not be construed as a recognition, either de jure or de facto ...

Pending a satisfactory solution to ensure the repatriation of Kampuchean refugees, the safety of Kampuchean refugees, and the strict observance of the status of these refugees as recognized by international law, the P.R.K. government proposes that the Thai government :

- 1- Move refugee camps far away from the Thai-Kampuchean border, where sabotage activities by Pol Pot remnants and other Khmer reactionaries are daily occurrences.

2- Restrain from using Kampuchean refugee camps on Thai territory as "sanctuaries" for Pol Pot remnants and other Khmer reactionaries to undermine the renaissance of the Kampuchean people .

3- Stop staging "voluntary repatriation" which, in fact, are the herding of refugees in mass back to Kampuchea to act as bullet shields for Pol Pot remnants and other Khmer reactionaries, and

4- See to it that Kampuchean refugees can live safely in their camps or join third countries if and when they are accepted.

The P.R.K. government reaffirms that while resolutely punishing Pol Pot remnants in their intrusions made with the assistance of Thai armed forces, the armed forces of Kampuchea have always acted with self-restraint and scrupulously respected Thailand's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

The P.R.K. government demands that the Thai government, in return, respect Kampuchea's sovereignty and territorial integrity and act with responsibility regarding the safety of civilians. If they continue to take advantage of the refugee problem to further inhuman ends and to serve China's expansionist and hegemonistic policy against the People's Republic of Kampuchea, the Thai authorities will only increase their involvement in the criminal course against the Kampuchean people and will thus cause the situation along the Thai-Kampuchean border to become more explosive, to an uncontrollable point, and they will have to account for all the consequences of their acts.