

(Unofficial translation)

Statement by Senior Minister Ieng Mouly

in his capacity as former Secretary-General of the Khmer People's National Liberation Front (KPNLF) and former Member of the Supreme National Council of Cambodia (SNC) Regarding Former Khmer Refugee Camps

In 1982, I left France to join the Khmer People's National Liberation Front (KPNLF), which had set up camps on Khmer territory along the border with Thailand. These camps included Nong Chan Camp (now called Chouk Chey Village, near the Thai village named Ban Nong Chan), Rithysen Camp (near the Thai village named Ban Nong Samet), and Ampil Camp (near the Thai village named Ban Sangae). Adjacent to Ampil Camp was another camp called Samlor Chhnhanh Camp on Khmer territory. Furthermore, in distant provinces, there were O'Bok Camp, Nam Yuen Camp, and Sok Sann Camp. Arriving directly from France, I stayed overnight at Nong Chan Camp, which at that time had Mr. Chea Rithychhut as Chief, Mr. Sou Kimsun as Deputy Chief, and Mr. Chum Chheang as Chief of Administration, before he left to become Chief of Dangrek Camp, which was split off from Nong Chan Camp. All these camps were entirely situated on Khmer territory. Civilians set up their dwellings along the border, while military units lived separately and have established frontlines deeper inside Cambodia. After the Nong Chan camp fell, the civilian residents of this camp were relocated in new camp at Prey Chan, adjacent to the Rithysen camp.

Throughout the 1980s, all these camps frequently came under attack from the People's Republic of Kampuchea Army, backed by Vietnamese troops. During these attacks, no Thai troops or forces came out to fight to defend any of these camps because they were Khmer camps located on Khmer soil. Therefore, Thailand cannot claim, as the Thai Foreign Minister, Mr. Sihasak Phuanketkeo recently told international press that Thailand had opened its territory to shelter Khmer displaced persons and that all those camps were on Thai territory. In 1984-1985, all those camps were overrun and dismantled. The civilians were then allowed to live in camps on Thai territory, such as Site 2 Camp for

the KPNLF faction, Site B Camp for the faction of Samdech Preah Norodom Sihanouk, and other camps for the Khmer Rouge faction.

It is important to note that, at that time, the Khmer refugees were divided into two categories: **Category 1** were fully-fledged refugees, who had the right to go and live in a third country; **Category 2** were displaced persons, the group that was to be prepared for repatriation. For the first category of refugees, Thailand allowed them to live in camps on Thai territory, such as the Khao I Dang camp, etc. The second category, the non-fully-fledged refugees or displaced persons, who stayed in the camps of the KPNLF and other resistance faction camps, had no right to enter Thai territory; if they entered Thai territory, these Cambodian displaced persons would be arrested and imprisoned or mistreated by Thai police. The first category of refugees was under the protection and assistance of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), while the second category, or displaced persons, received assistance from an organization called the United Nations Border Relief Operation (UNBRO). The refugee camps were permanently closed when all those refugees had departed for third countries. As for the displaced persons camps, such as Site Two, Site B, etc., they were also completely closed when the repatriation was fully completed.

Since the Paris Peace Agreement came into effect, all those Cambodian displaced persons were repatriated, leaving not a single one behind. Therefore, the Thai side's claim that some Cambodian nationals have continued to live on Thai soil for decades is a complete and utter lie. In the 1990s, as peace returned, Cambodian citizens gradually began to return and live there, and especially after 1998, thanks to the Win-Win policy of Samdech Techo Hun Sen, Cambodian citizens started building houses, big and small, wooden or stone houses, as well as farming on Cambodian land, which were former resistance movement camp sites (such as the former Nong Chan camp or the former Rithysen camp), all without any issues with Thai authorities or Thai citizens along the border. Former Thai Defense Minister Prawit Wongsuwan once released a video confirming that Cambodian citizens have long been living on Cambodian territory, on the sites of former camps. Moreover, the illegal intrusion into Cambodian sovereign territory in the area

of Chouk Chey village, between boundary pillars 46 and 47, by an ultra-Thai nationalist named Veera Somkwamkid on December 29, 2010, who was arrested and imprisoned by Cambodian authorities and released on July 2, 2014, clearly confirms that only Cambodian authorities firmly control the territory in that area.

Regarding the Boeng Trakuon area, until the end of the 1980s, this area was uninhabited. Following the fall of Ampil camp and the military base known as Banteay Ampil, around 1989, General Dien Del led his men to build shelters, creating the first settlement. Subsequently, it was organized into a military base named Banteay Meanrith, located on purely Khmer territory. During the UNTAC period, the faction of General Sak Sutsakhan and Dien Del administered the Banteay Meanrith-Boeng Trakuon area, while the faction of Grandfather (Samdech Bovorsetha) Son Sann administered the Thmar Pouk-Banteay Chhmar area. UNTAC was clearly aware of this situation, and Samdech Preah Norodom Sihanouk, the President of the SNC at that time, paid official visits to both areas: Thmar Pouk-Banteay Chhmar and also Banteay Meanrith-Boeng Trakuon. At that time, Thai officials recognized it as genuinely Khmer territory, without any objection or protest.

Later, after returning to live in those old camp areas, the Cambodian people established villages and experienced continuous development, with the knowledge of the authorities of both countries. However, regarding the actual occupation of land beyond the border line in any way, only the Joint Border Commission (JBC) knows precisely through the documents left from the French colonial era (such as treaties, conventions, maps, and border demarcation minutes). Meanwhile, since 2006, the Cambodia-Thailand Joint Border Commission (JBC) has agreed to jointly search for the exact locations of the border markers planted during the French era and has surveyed and verified the border line on the actual ground, based on the treaties, conventions, maps, and border demarcation minutes left from the French colonial era.

The continued occupation of Khmer territory by Thai troops is a clear violation of Cambodia's sovereignty and confirms that the Thai leadership is instigating war with Cambodia solely to encroach upon Cambodian territory, not because of fighting online

scams or under the guise of combating anti-personnel landmines. Moreover, the war of aggression against Cambodia is also a benefit that Thai political parties exploit, following an ultranationalist sentiment, for their campaign to compete for the prime ministership in the recent elections.

If the Thai side truly desires a peaceful bilateral solution, Thailand must immediately cease its efforts to alter the border markings and must allow the joint survey teams of both countries to carry out measurements without delay, without waiting for the formation of a new government. Because while the Thai side tells the Cambodian side to wait for the formation of a new Thai government, Thai soldiers continue to violate the ceasefire, build infrastructure, place containers, and lay barbed wire to encircle and claim Khmer territory, without waiting for the new government at all.

I hereby declare my full support for the conflict resolution measures raised by Samdech Thipadei Prime Minister in his interviews with Reuters and Fox News in the United States.

Done in Phnom Penh, March 6, 2026.

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