

Chapter 9

On the Tortuous Path to Peace

(the 1980s-1990s)

Since the KPNLF was announced on October 9, 1979, I have always remembered that this front army was just one component of the joint strategy to end the conflict in Cambodia. The existence of the Khmer People's National Liberation Armed Forces, or KPNLAF, showed that our group was resolved to fight to liberate the country, enable it to regain democracy, and prevent the genocidal regime from returning to power. In truth, we did not know whether our armed forces were capable of driving the Vietnamese troops out of our soil or not. We could only hope to resolve the Cambodian problem through negotiation and international intervention, specifically through the United Nations.

On the contrary, the Khmer Rouge troops, fully backed by China and Thailand, tried to reinforce their forces after sustaining

heavy damage under an attack launched by the Vietnamese troops and the armed forces of the Kampuchean United Front for National Salvation (KUFNS). The troop reinforcement and increase in military dominance on the battlefield over the other partners in the Khmer Rouge's coalition government reinforced our understanding that the Khmer Rouge had opted for a military solution to end the war in Cambodia. If they were still unable to topple the Phnom Penh government and chase out the Vietnamese troops straightaway, the Khmer Rouge was prepared to continue a long-term war of attrition that was nothing but prolonging the Cambodian people's suffering for a long period. As for the Vietnamese troops and the armed forces of the Kampuchean United Front for National Salvation at that time, after chasing Pol Pot out of power, they tried to dismantle the Khmer Rouge's political and military organisations, while also seeking ways to strengthen the Phnom Penh government's power and gain international recognition.

In that era, I saw that a military solution was the best strategy shared by both Vietnam and the Khmer Rouge to end the

conflict. However, exceptional efforts were made to arrange a meeting between Prince Sihanouk and Phnom Penh government leaders, even though the prince had already joined the Tripartite Coalition Government under Khmer Rouge domination. At the time, I was convinced that any negotiations on the international stage could mark the beginning of recognition of the Phnom Penh regime.

Two Aspects of the Cambodian Problem Certainly Correct

In that epoch, there was an interpretation that the conflict in Cambodia had two aspects: 1. an international aspect associated with the presence of Vietnamese troops and their withdrawal from Cambodia, and 2. the aspect related to reconciliation and compromise among the Cambodian conflicting parties. The Sihanouk-Hun Sen meeting held by the end of 1987 began to pave the way for the next step of national reconciliation, thus resolving the first aspect of the conflict in Cambodia.

In the 1980s, our group in the resistance movement was not really happy with Prince Sihanouk's change in political position. Under Son Sann's leadership, our group consistently saw the prince as too frivolous or inconsistent. In particular, while we were busy organising troops and setting up a front to counter Vietnamese troops, the former king not only remained inert but also tried to do the opposite of what we should have done, such as holding talks with Hanoi leaders. According to Son Sann, the KPNLF was established for the prince. In early 1979, in New York, he did not meet Prince Sihanouk personally; instead, Son Sann told the prince he was about to set up an anti-communist resistance movement acceptable to all Cambodian people.

In that era, we young people constantly believed what Son Sann told us. However, later, through analysis, I understood that Prince Sihanouk refused to join Son Sann for his own reasons. After he was free from Pol Pot's rule, the prince adopted a position that, as a former king revered by the Cambodian people, he should remain in a situation where he was able to hold talks with anybody, a kind of bridge that links all factions. Besides, he might

have known Son Sann better than anyone else, since Son Sann was his colleague or adviser for years while he was still in power. Prince Sihanouk may also have known that Son Sann was a veteran politician. The prince may have seen that politicians sometimes did things differently from what they said. Therefore, it was very hard for Prince Sihanouk to accept Son Sann's offer of KPNLF leadership because some key KPNLF leaders, such as Gen Dien Del, were republicans who had overthrown his regime and were still hostile toward him.

I still remember that in July 1982, when Prince Sihanouk paid his first visit to the Son Sann group's camp of Ampil, the camp leaders, mainly General Dien Del and Hing Kun Thon, did not want to come out to greet him and his consort. As I wrote in the previous chapters, in 1981 Prince Sihanouk finally created his political movement, FUNCINPEC. Therefore, two non-communist resistance movements were created separately. Son Sann led the KPNLF, and Prince Sihanouk led the FUNCINPEC. Son Sann started big but finished small, while Sihanouk started small but finished big. The rivalry between the two non-communist

resistance movements also gave the Khmer Rouge a window to reorganise its political and military apparatus for a while, before it vanished totally by the end of 1998, thanks to Prime Minister Hun Sen's win-win policy.

Since January 7, 1979, both the Khmer Rouge and the non-communist resistance movements, as well as their backing countries, failed to dissect the two aspects of the Cambodia problem mentioned above. They regarded the collapse of the Pol Pot genocidal regime as Vietnam's aggression against Cambodia's sovereignty. Under this strategy, the only appropriate solution to the conflict was the withdrawal of Vietnamese troops from Cambodia. The KPNLF adhered to a stance of fighting foreign aggressors, through a solution involving the United Nations' supervision of those foreign troops and then the organisation of a free and fair election to select a regime and national leaders in accordance with the wishes of the Cambodian people. During the transitional period, the KPNLF requested that a quadripartite government be formed, with participation from all Cambodian parties, including the Phnom Penh government.

KPNLF Adopts the Same Position as the Khmer Rouge

It was interesting that before joining the tripartite government, the KPNLF was the deadliest opposition to the Khmer Rouge. However, in the Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea (three-party), the KPNLF became a vehement advocate for this government's position, which was largely influenced by the Khmer Rouge. The KPNLF adopted the same position as the Khmer Rouge: it would categorically refuse to hold talks with the Phnom Penh government. If there were talks, they should be only with Hanoi. This stance mirrored the Khmer Rouge's hardline position. As regards Prince Sihanouk, despite being the Democratic Kampuchea President and top leader of the tripartite coalition government, he constantly sought ways to hold talks with either the Hanoi or Phnom Penh Governments.

As we saw in previous chapters, although Prince Sihanouk tried hard to maintain his independence from the Khmer Rouge, he also needed aid for his movement, especially FUNCINPEC. That was why he joined the Khmer Rouge and Son

Sann in the Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea. In fact, if the prince had his own contrivances to conduct political activities himself, or if any of the Western powers, or a superpower aside from China, provided him with the means, he would definitely leave the Khmer Rouge. The prince decided to request permission from the US and French governments to live in both countries. However, after receiving no positive answer from either country, and after an insistent request from Chinese leader Deng Xiaoping in January 1979, he returned to China. In the end, after many tactical manoeuvrings, he finally chose to join the Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea as its leader.

Prince Sihanouk had tried to contact Hanoi leaders to find ways to resolve the Cambodian problem through negotiations. Still, he had been strongly criticised by the Khmer Rouge and Son Sann's faction. In addition, the prince also tried, through his extensive contacts on the world stage, to negotiate with Phnom Penh government leaders. According to Prime Minister Hun Sen, the first tentative Sihanouk-Hun Sen talks were scheduled in France in 1984, but were delayed because of the unfavourable

situation. At the time, both China and the ASEAN countries maintained that Vietnamese troops should withdraw first before talks could take place.

Son Sann's Faction Criticises Prince Sihanouk

In 1984, supporters of Son Sann and the KPNLF vigorously attacked Prince Sihanouk through many criticisms, whether public or private, that the prince was responsible for the Khmer Rouge's ascension to power in 1975 and that he continued to serve communist China's and the Khmer Rouge's policies. To respond to the criticism hurled by the Son Sann faction, Prince Sihanouk published a question-and-answer document dated November 10, 1984 and a memorandum dated November 15, 1984, counter-attacking that if Son Sann and the KPNLF had really hated the Khmer Rouge, why had they been willing to join the Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea with this group and why had Son Sann consented to act as the prime minister of the Democratic Kampuchea? In that document, Prince Sihanouk also

revealed that he had asked to step down as president of Democratic Kampuchea for months. Still, ASEAN, China, and other partners in the coalition government had asked him to continue holding the position. Expressing his views, the prince said he was waiting for their green light to quit. Prince Sihanouk reproached Son Sann, saying he had violated the tripartite agreement reached in Kuala Lumpur¹ by launching an attack on him, with the most ruthless and contemptible words, in the presence of international press. The prince aimed at the KPNLF groups in France and in the United States, in particular at Mrs Suon Kaset, Dr Chhay Hancheng (Son Sann's son-in-law), the group of Cambodians in (Minnesota) the United States², and so forth.

The KPNLF faction was disappointed with France's position and attempted to arrange a Sihanouk-Hun Sen meeting in 1984. The KPNLF perceived that French Foreign Minister Claude Cheysson seemed strongly in favour of Vietnam and the Phnom

¹ Norodom Sihanouk, Memorandum, New York, November 15, 1984.

² Norodom Sihanouk's Replies to Son Sannian Accusations and Questions in Minneapolis, November 10, 1984.

Penh government. Notably, whenever he was prepared to negotiate with Phnom Penh government leaders, Prince Sihanouk always resorted to the pretext of asking for the resignation of the Democratic Kampuchea presidency.

In July 1984, Prince Sihanouk proclaimed publicly that the Khmer Rouge troops had attacked his army. He threatened to relinquish the post or walk away from the three-party alliance. His public proclamation, which was like “killing two birds with one arrow,” was a warning to his partners in his tripartite government that, should there be pressure on him, be it military or verbal, he would not be afraid to break away from those partners. It also signalled to Vietnam and the Phnom Penh government that he kept the possibility open of holding talks with them at all times. It should also be noted that since new French President François Mitterrand of the socialist party came to power in 1981, France had tried to encourage direct talks between the two Cambodian rival parties: the coalition government of Democratic Kampuchea, or the tripartite government, and the Phnom Penh government.

From 1982 to 1985, meaning since the formation of the coalition government of Democratic Kampuchea, the troops of this government had intensified their constant attacks on the Vietnamese troops and the Heng Samrin government forces. Nevertheless, since 1985, Vietnamese and Heng Samrin troops had launched counterattacks vigorously. In the end, the two forces won, pressuring the tripartite forces to give up their military positions on Cambodian soil along the Cambodian-Thai border. Following the breakup, military commanders of the KPNLF, specifically former army generals of the republican regime, such as Gen Sak Sutsakhan, proclaimed publicly that their group had changed conventional war tactics to guerrilla ones. Therefore, stationary military positions were no longer needed.

International Community Accepts New Universal Morality

The military clashes, growing larger and larger, had caused enormous humanitarian disasters. The Cambodian people, who had been victimised by the genocidal regime unprecedented in

Cambodia's history, were further beset by the fallout of the war. To escape the war, hundreds of thousands of Cambodian refugees had fled to seek shelter in border areas. Many of them crossed the border to seek refuge in Thailand. They had received food supplies, shelters, and protection from the United Nations. They had brought along their own stories about the cruel crimes committed by the Pol Pot regime when it was still in power. The whole world was more clearly aware of the true nature of the genocidal regime. With the refugee crisis, the international community seemed to accept a new universal conscience and morality; that is, the search for an urgent end to the sufferings of the Cambodian people. The main superpowers appeared to realise that the Cambodian conflict should be resolved through peaceful means, in which there should also be the prevention of the Pol Pot Khmer Rouge regime's return to power and the absolute respect for human rights in Cambodia.

This international current made the Khmer Rouge better understand that its future would disappear from the face of the earth if it failed to reinforce its military forces on the battlefield

firmly. The Khmer Rouge's future lay in military supremacy. Therefore, the most important and easiest tactics were to boost military supremacy over its two other non-communist partners, the KPNLF and FUNCINPEC. With them, the Khmer Rouge maintained only a political alliance. They were unafraid to attack the two partners militarily. As such, clashes then took place between the Khmer Rouge troops and the forces of the non-communist movements. In that era, to the Khmer Rouge, only the military forces could ensure its survival and its presence at the negotiating table at any time to come.

Each Party's Position on Waging War

Vietnam too was under stronger pressure from the international community to pull its troops out of Cambodia. Along with that, national reconciliation among the Cambodian parties also became the key to the political settlement. The Vietnamese leadership used to proclaim that if all the Cambodian parties, after being reconciled and reunited, asked Vietnam to withdraw, it

would pull its troops out of Cambodia straightaway. At that time, the Cambodian parties were still unable to reconcile, specifically the two major parties: the Phnom Penh government and the Khmer Rouge. The Phnom Penh government side took the position of going to war to free the Cambodian people from the genocidal regime. As for the Vietnamese troops' presence in Cambodia, it was indispensable to help bring down the Pol Pot genocidal regime and prevent this barbaric and cruel regime from returning to massacre the Cambodian people anew. Therefore, the Vietnamese troops were allied forces coming to help protect the Cambodian people, not foreign troops invading Cambodia. The Khmer Rouge party and its other two partners maintained the position that they would wage war to liberate Cambodia from the Vietnamese aggressor troops. With these contrasting positions, reconciliation was certainly extremely difficult. Anyway, countries that wanted to help find solutions to the Cambodian problem raised the idea of reconciling the Cambodian parties.

Ceausescu Advises Khieu Samphan

To Reconcile with Heng Samrin

In August 1982, Prince Sihanouk and Khieu Samphan visited Romania, which was still a communist country at that time, but had good relations with Vietnam and the coalition government of Democratic Kampuchea. At a meeting with these tripartite government leaders, the Romanian President advised Khieu Samphan to be reconciled with the Heng Samrin side; otherwise, the Cambodia problem could not be settled. The Romanian president did not believe that the Khmer Rouge could achieve victory through military means. The recommendation was, however, unacceptable to the Khmer Rouge, because its position was to force the Vietnamese troops to pull out of Cambodia first. The Khmer Rouge perceived that if there were no Vietnamese troops, the Heng Samrin regime would definitely collapse³. The

³ Résumé des paroles du président Nicolae Ceaușescu de Roumanie prononcées lors de son entrevue avec Norodom Sihanouk et Khieu Samphan, à Bucarest, en août 1982.

Khmer Rouge was convinced that the withdrawal of the Vietnamese troops from Cambodia would clear the way for them to return to power.

In truth, the Khmer Rouge had only followed China's strategy. China demanded that Vietnam withdraw its troops from Cambodia before there was an international conference on Cambodia. Since October 1982, China and the Soviet Union had been negotiating to normalise their relations. The Sino-Soviet talks opened a new perspective on international diplomacy. Nonetheless, the talks caused some concern to us within the KPNLF, as we were militarily weak. We were also concerned about the red solution to the Cambodia problem. In other words, if the two communist giants, China and the Soviet Union, were in harmony, they could share interests by expelling non-communist groups from Cambodian politics. Along with this concern, we used this so-called red solution in Cambodia as a theme for political propaganda and as a pretext to seek more support from the West.

Hun Sen Says, “Fight, Fight, Talk, Talk”

In 1985, Hun Sen, deputy prime minister and foreign minister of the People's Republic of Kampuchea (Phnom Penh government), assumed the prime minister's position. Immediately, the new prime minister presented conditions for ending the conflict in Cambodia by stressing the need to attack and topple Pol Pot's political and military organisations and to reconcile with groups or individuals who accepted the framework of the People's Republic of Kampuchea. Prime Minister Hun Sen (33 years old at that time) certainly conceived that the main enemy of his regime was the Khmer Rouge. If the Khmer Rouge were destroyed, it would be easy to either bring down the other opposition groups or be reconciled with them. The young and new Cambodian leader also unambiguously realised that the major obstacle preventing the People's Republic of Kampuchea from being recognised by the international community was the presence of Vietnamese troops in Cambodia.

Nevertheless, Prime Minister Hun Sen maintained a steadfast position that Pol Pot had committed genocide against the Cambodian people and that if there had been no genocide, there would have been no uprising by the Cambodian people to oppose Pol Pot. The Vietnamese troops had not come to invade Cambodia; they were volunteer troops coming only to help the Cambodian people topple the genocidal regime. If there had been no genocide, there would have been no presence of these Vietnamese troops either.

In principle, the use of military forces to occupy a country was a violation of international law; then, genocide was also a crime that was no less serious than the crime against humanity. That is why Prime Minister Hun Sen used the clear-sight strategy to gain international recognition, standing firmly on the legitimate position against the Khmer Rouge genocide. Moreover, this young Cambodian prime minister linked the Vietnamese troop withdrawal with the perpetual overthrow of the Pol Pot Khmer Rouge group. In addition to using military forces to fight Pol Pot, the Phnom Penh government also launched a campaign to seek negotiations in the

style called “fight fight, talk talk”; that is, attacks are attacks mounted to resist or destroy the Khmer Rouge, while talks are talks held to gain recognition. In that epoch, the Phnom Penh government was the only party that could gain most advantages in every session of the negotiations.

Vietnam Refuses to Accept UN, but Agrees To Hold Talks With ASEAN

Since 1979, Vietnam has refused to implement the resolutions adopted by the United Nations at all its General Assembly sessions. Nonetheless, this country had opted for regional forums to hold talks to end the conflict. Hanoi asked ASEAN countries to negotiate with the Indochinese group (Cambodia under the Hun Sen government, Laos, and Vietnam). The ASEAN grouping had not accepted this proposal, as it had avoided recognising the Hun Sen government. Generally, ASEAN had stuck to the United Nations’ resolution pressuring Vietnam to

pull its troops out of Cambodia, but it had not completely closed the door to negotiations. ASEAN let one of its members, Indonesia, hold talks with Vietnam. In that epoch, Indonesia played an active role in the quest for peace and stability in the region.

It should be recalled that since the 1960s, Indonesia had lost China's trust after President Suharto had come to power, following the rooting out of communist networks in the country. Since then, Indonesia has consistently sought to curb China's influence in the region. Indonesia's frequent contact with Vietnam initially worried us in the KPNLF, because we thought Indonesia's initiative seemed inclined toward Vietnam. Therefore, we, KPNLF, were constantly alert to every session of talks between Indonesia and Vietnam.

Usually, every session of talks constituted an opportunity and raised hopes for peace. However, each party used them to advance its strategy and gain an advantage. For the Hun Sen government, the main goal was to gain international recognition at all costs. As this government already had a foothold in Cambodian territory, what was lacking was universal recognition

from the international community. This recognition was indispensable to ending diplomatic and economic embargoes.

As regards the opposition groups, especially the groups of Son Sann and the Khmer Rouge, they continued to maintain the hardline stance; that is, they refused to negotiate with the Hun Sen government, arguing that the Cambodia problem had stemmed from Vietnam's invasion. Therefore, the war in Cambodia was a war of aggression between Vietnam and Democratic Kampuchea (the Khmer Rouge), not a civil war between Cambodians and Cambodians. The anti-Vietnamese group perceived that if talks were held with the Hun Sen government, it would be tantamount to Cambodia having two governments: that is, the coalition government of Democratic Kampuchea) and the Hun Sen government, which could split Cambodia in two. That was why the coalition government insisted on holding direct talks with Vietnam. Nevertheless, Vietnam definitely could not talk with the coalition government either, because if it talked, Vietnam would have to accept that it had invaded Cambodia, not come to help topple the genocidal regime at the request of the Kampuchean

United Front for National Salvation. As the two sides' positions were absolutely contradictory, it was difficult to adjust them, anyway.

Since the end of 1985, the KPNLF had been implicated in a critical internal rift, depriving the movement of the possibility of taking part in any further political initiatives. Son Sann had spent much time and energy mounting counter-attacks against the faction of Gen Sak Sutsakhan and Gen Dien Del to wrest back KPNLF leadership. The generals accused Son Sann of dictatorial leadership and nepotism, as well as reluctance to join hands with Prince Sihanouk's movement.

As for me, I (Ieng Mouly) also spent a great deal of time strengthening Son Sann's influence and leadership by organising networks of direct contact with military commanders and refugee camp chiefs to secure their support. In sum, the KPNLF lost almost all self-reliance. Every time he met with representatives of donor countries, Son Sann offered no ideas, only beseeching aid donors to help restore his military power.

Actually, at meetings of foreign ministers, both the Indochinese countries (Vietnam, Laos, and the Hun Sen government) and their ASEAN counterparts presented their own peace proposals. At their 12th conference on January 23-24, 1986, in Vientiane, Laos, the Indochinese ministers underscored two aspects of the Cambodia problem⁴. They included the internal aspect, which required talks between the Cambodian parties on the grounds of overthrowing the Pol Pot genocidal group, without interference from other countries, to achieve an agreement on a general election to be held following the withdrawal of the Vietnamese troops. On the external front, it required that the withdrawal of Vietnamese troops be linked to the cutoff of foreign aid to all Cambodian parties. The three Indochinese countries welcomed the continuation of talks between Vietnam and Indonesia; however, they requested that all future talks be directly between the Indochinese countries and ASEAN. The three countries announced to the world that Vietnam would withdraw its

⁴ Douzième Conférence des Ministres des Affaires Étrangères du Cambodge, du Laos et du Vietnam tenue à Vientiane, Laos, du 23 au 24 janvier 1986, Points à retenir.

troops completely from Cambodia in 1990. Because the Cambodian problem was split into two aspects, Prime Minister Hun Sen could resolve each aspect separately, without letting one interfere with the other and hinder a comprehensive solution. Besides, with the indication of a clear time-frame for the complete withdrawal of the Vietnamese troops from Cambodia (starting in 1986 and ending in 1990), the Indochinese countries even eased off the pressure of the international community.

ASEAN also proposed a formula for ending the conflict. In general, the formula introduced by those countries supported the principles specified in the declaration of the International Conference on Kampuchea (ICK) with key points such as a ceasefire to allow foreign troops to pull out of Cambodia under UN supervision and monitoring; the organisation of free elections, or the exercise of self-determination under UN supervision; reconstruction; respect for independence, territorial integrity, sovereignty, and neutrality of Cambodia; a program to help rebuild the Cambodian national economy, and the socioeconomic development of the regional countries.

ASEAN Asks Tripartite To Strengthen Unity and Solidarity

In that era, the ASEAN grouping recommended that the coalition government of Democratic Kampuchea strengthen its military capability, avoid internal clashes, increase consultation, expand cooperation in all fields, coordinate activities on the battlefield, and, especially, expand psychological warfare activities broadly. ASEAN anticipated that, for 18 months starting in 1986, if the tripartite forces could withstand or counterattack Vietnamese and Hun Sen troops, Vietnam would agree to negotiate a withdrawal of its troops from Cambodia. At that time, ASEAN's position was more flexible than the Khmer Rouge's and China's because the grouping did not demand that Vietnam pull out all of its troops first, before talks.

The important points of the ASEAN formula at that time were as follows:

- Phased withdrawal of Vietnamese troops and ceasefire, starting from the Thai-Cambodian border area;
- Together with the complete troop withdrawal, all of the Cambodian armed forces had to lay down their arms;
- Safe havens should be set up in areas where troops pulled out;
- Repatriate Cambodian refugees under the supervision of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR);
- Establish demilitarised zones on Cambodia's border areas between neighbouring countries and along the seaside; and
- Establish an international control commission to monitor all aspects of the political settlement implementation.

During the transitional period, the ASEAN country grouping proposed creating a provisional government of national reconciliation⁵ under the leadership of Prince Sihanouk. This provisional government would serve as a provisional administration,

⁵ Secret document, ASEAN Suggested Modalities for Political Settlement of the Kampuchean Problem, February 3, 1986.

replacing the tripartite coalition government and the Hun Sen government in Phnom Penh. In this government, each party in the tripartite coalition government and the Heng Samrin/Hun Sen party had an equal number of members.

In light of this proposal, ASEAN accepted the Phnom Penh government as a party to the talks to seek peace for Cambodia. ASEAN also did not openly state that the provisional government was quadripartite, but rather a provisional government. This meant that, if the Cambodian parties agreed, this government would not even need the Khmer Rouge.

ASEAN asked to strengthen unity and solidarity within the tripartite coalition government because it was badly divided: the Khmer Rouge had seized military supremacy over its two other partners, and there was an internal rift between the two non-communist fronts.

On February 6, 1986, Thai Deputy Foreign Minister Arun Phanupong⁶, accompanied by Thai Ambassador Chavat, met with representatives of the coalition government of Democratic Kampuchea, consisting mainly of Khieu Samphan and Son Sen (Khmer Rouge representatives), Neang Chin Han, Boun Say, and Son Soubert (KPNLF representatives), and Chak Sarik and Pen Dareth (FUNCINPEC representatives) and asked the Cambodian parties to accept the ASEAN settlement formula for consideration and to present their views before ASEAN introduced it for good. At the meeting, Thai Ambassador Chavat asked both the KPNLF and FUNCINPEC to try to end their internal dispute quickly to prevent outside circles from perceiving our struggle as futile.

At that time, I did not fully understand the internal dispute within FUNCINPEC. However, I could guess from the press that Prince Norodom Ranariddh, a son of Prince Sihanouk and the supreme commander, and Gen Tiep Ben, the chief of staff of the

⁶ Secret document of the KPNLF, Compte rendu de la Réunion au Ministère des Affaires Étrangères, Bangkok, le 6 février 1986.

Sihanoukist Army (ANS), or FUNCINPEC Army, were in disagreement. We, around Son Sann, thought FUNCINPEC's problems were no different from the KPNLF's internal conflict. We believed Thai army generals planned to place the Sihanoukist army command solely under Gen Tiep Ben so it would be easier for Thai military leaders to control this army.

As he used to have internal disputes with Gen Sak Sutsakhan, who attempted to place the KPNLF army out of Son Sann's leadership, Son Sann sent a message dated February 8, 1986,⁷ to Prince Sihanouk, informing him of bad experiences in the KPNLF and his belief that the prince was able to settle the FUNCINPEC or Sihanoukist Army's internal problem. In addition, Son Sann also expressed his gratitude to the former king for his support to him in the KPNLF's internal dispute.

On February 12, 1986, perhaps to show ASEAN that the tripartite coalition government had maintained good solidarity,

⁷ Son Sann, Télégramme à Son Altesse Royale Samdech Preah Norodom Sihanouk, le 8 février 1986.

Khieu Samphan and Son Sen, on behalf of Democratic Kampuchea, issued a statement voicing support for Prince Sihanouk and another for Son Sann, who was facing the same internal issue. As regards FUNCINPEC,⁸ the Khmer Rouge proclaimed that, at present, they accepted Prince Norodom Sihanouk as president of Democratic Kampuchea and, in the future, as president of Cambodia. Besides, in that proclamation, the Khmer Rouge also asserted to the national and international public that Democratic Kampuchea (Khmer Rouge) would exert efforts to achieve great national solidarity within the framework of capitalism and parliamentarism, contrary to the genocidal regime in power between 1975 and 1979.

⁸ Khieu Samphan, Son Sen, Statement By The Democratic Kampuchea Party concerning its Position vis-à-vis the Present and Future Role of Samdech Norodom Sihanouk and the National United Front for an Independent Neutral Peaceful and Cooperative Cambodia (FUNCINPEC), Democratic Kampuchea, February 12, 1986.

As for the support for Son Sann and the KPNLF, the Khmer Rouge, through Khieu Samphan and Son Sen, briefly proclaimed⁹, "The Democratic Kampuchea party regarded the Khmer People's National Liberation Front and its president as a national force both at present and in the future." While the Khmer Rouge fully supported Prince Sihanouk, their support for Son Sann was more ambiguous. They said, "they supported the KPNLF and its president," without clearly naming Son Sann as president, even as Gen Sak Sutsakhan made every effort to replace him. They could support either Sak Sutsakhan or Son Sann as president. This was perhaps because the Khmer Rouge did not want to clash with Thai army generals. In its statement, the Khmer Rouge group neither mentioned its support for Son Sann as prime minister of the tripartite coalition government of Democratic Kampuchea nor voiced its views on Son Sann's future role.

⁹ Khieu Samphan, Son Sen, statement of the Democratic Kampuchea party on the present and future roles of the Khmer People's National Liberation Front and its leader, Democratic Kampuchea, 12 February 1986.

The KPNLF's internal problems were more complicated than FUNCINPEC's because, in FUNCINPEC, neither individuals nor groups dared to infringe on or challenge Prince Sihanouk's leadership, no matter what. In contrast, within the KPNLF, Gen Sak Sutsakhan and his friends tried to topple Son Sann's leadership and demanded that he serve only as honorary president. The most difficult issue to resolve was that even though Son Sann had removed Gen Sak Sutsakhan from being commander-in-chief of the Khmer People's National Liberation Armed Forces, ASEAN, specifically Thailand, still recognised the general as the top military leader of the KPNLF.

On February 12, 1986, Son Sann, accompanied by Boun Say, Neang Chin Han, and Son Soubert, held a working meeting with Thai Deputy Foreign Minister Arun Phanuphong to exchange views on the solution formula proposed by ASEAN¹⁰. At the meeting, Son Sann first said that Vietnam did not want to negotiate. Therefore,

¹⁰ Secret document of the KPNLF, Meeting at the Thai Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Bangkok, February 12, 1986.

Son Sann understood that friends were seeking tactics to press Vietnam into coming to the negotiating table. Afterwards, Son Sann took the opportunity to ask Thailand to help restore the KPNLF's military power. KPNLF President Son Sann said that 18 months was very short and that they were wasting valuable time on an internal crisis. Son Sann told the Thai deputy minister that he had always kept the door open for solutions to the internal dispute. Still, he demanded that, as KPNLF president, he should have the right to political, administrative, and financial affairs. Besides, on February 1, 1986, Son Sann issued a decision stating that General Sak Sutsakhan's Provisional Committee, called PCCS, was an illegal structure. Responding to Son Sann, the high-ranking Thai diplomat said that, as friends, they could not interfere in a friend's internal affairs. At every later meeting with donor countries, Son Sann used the forum to ask them to help him regain control of the KPNLF's military forces, but he always failed.

On February 17, 1986, ASEAN met again with representatives of the tripartite coalition government, or CGDK, to gauge their reactions to the proposed formula for resolving the Cambodian

problem¹¹. At the meeting, the Democratic Kampuchea side was represented by Khieu Samphan and Son Sen, FUNCINPEC by Prince Norodom Ranariddh, and the KPNLF by Neang Chin Han, Boun Say, and Son Soubert, without Gen Sak Sutsakhan or his representative present. Responding to ASEAN's question, Khieu Samphan said that there was no definite answer yet due to the absence of Prince Sihanouk and Prime Minister Son Sann. However, Democratic Kampuchea's position was that any meetings should be held between Vietnam, the aggressor, and Democratic Kampuchea, the victim. The Khmer Rouge wanted to hold direct talks with Vietnam. They believed the means to pressure Vietnam into talks should be intensifying military activities, in close cooperation with the other two partners in the coalition government. As for the KPNLF, it announced its intention to join ASEAN in seeking solutions to end the war through talks at an international conference, within the framework of the UN General Assembly's resolution and in accordance with the statement of the

¹¹ KPNLF document. Compte rendu de la réunion entre les parties du CGDK et les « Senior Officials » des pays de l'Asean, à l'Hôtel Ambassador, Bangkok, le 17 février 1986.

International Conference on Kampuchea (ICK) in July 1981. However, the KPNLF maintained that all talks should avoid recognising what was established by Vietnam's aggression. All in all, the positions of both the Khmer Rouge and the KPNLF had not changed in the least.

On February 26, 1986, ASEAN met with the representatives of the non-communist resistance (NCR) movements, KPNLF and FUNCINPEC¹². At that meeting, although Son Sann had dismissed him, Gen Sak Sutsakhan was invited to attend and serve as the military leader of the non-communist movements, alongside Prince Norodom Ranariddh. Both Gen Sak Sutsakhan and Prince Norodom Ranariddh spoke about the progress each army had made throughout the country. Gen Sak Sutsakhan described the strong battlefield cooperation among the three armies of the coalition government (Khmer Rouge, FUNCINPEC, KPNLF). At the same time, Prince Norodom Ranariddh mentioned the assistance

¹² KPNLF document. Compte rendu de la réunion entre les parties du CGDK et les «Senior Officials» des pays de l'Asean, à l'Hôtel Ambassador, Bangkok, le 17 février 1986.

and some cooperation from the Phnom Penh government's troops to the Sihanoukist Army. At that time, the ASEAN representatives advised them to intensify propaganda as well as political and diplomatic pressure. Through this meeting, ASEAN clearly showed its support for Gen Sak Sutsakhan despite Son Sann's efforts to dismiss him.

Tripartite's Eight-Point Peace Plan

Son Sann travelled with Khieu Samphan from Bangkok to Beijing to meet Prince Sihanouk from March 15 to 21, 1986, to exchange views on a proposal for a political settlement for the coalition government of Democratic Kampuchea. On March 17, 1986, in Beijing, the leaders of the coalition government, or CGDK, agreed to issue an Eight-Point Peace Plan¹³ in reference to the UN

¹³ Khieu Samphan, Samdech Norodom Sihanouk, Son Sann, Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea's Proposal for A Political Settlement to the Problem of Kampuchea, Beijing, March 17, 1986.

General Assembly's resolution and in line with the International Conference on Kampuchea's 1981 statement. Notably, the coalition government did not demand the total withdrawal of Vietnamese troops as before. This time, the tripartite leaders asked the Hanoi government to hold direct talks with the CGDK to discuss withdrawing Vietnamese forces in two phases. After reaching an agreement on the troop withdrawal, a ceasefire would allow Vietnam to pull out its forces in accordance with that agreement. UN observers should directly supervise the troop withdrawal and ceasefire. Another new key point was that the CGDK, which had previously refused to negotiate, now agreed to hold talks with the Phnom Penh government of Prime Minister Hun Sen. However, the talks to set up a quadripartite coalition government of Cambodia, with Prince Sihanouk as president and Son Sann as prime minister, should only be held after Vietnam withdrew its troops in the first phase. This quadripartite coalition government of Cambodia would hold elections under the supervision of UN observers.

In the blueprint for setting up the government, the posts of president and prime minister were also arranged (because of the president's existence, the prime minister was not a head of government with full rights as usual). The key point was that the Khmer Rouge party should be part of the quadripartite coalition government, which the ASEAN formula did not clearly specify. Besides, in the ASEAN proposal, there was no mention of Son Sann's future role, but only that the provisional national government would be under the leadership of Prince Sihanouk. The Eight-point Peace Proposal issued in Beijing was intended to further confirm the CGDK partners' support for Son Sann's leadership role, which Gen Sak Sutsakhan's faction was undermining. Therefore, this proposed Eight-point Peace Plan, including the quadripartite coalition government, showed unity to the world.

Remind China about the KPNLF Internal Rift

In Beijing, the leaders of the CGDK, namely Prince Sihanouk, Son Sann, and Khieu Samphan, presented the Eight-point Peace Proposal to Chinese leaders. At a meeting with him, Hu Yaobang¹⁴, Secretary-General of the Communist Party of China, lauded Prince Sihanouk and his partners for their good cooperation, which had gone so far as to issue the Eight-point Peace Proposal. This historic brainchild could help settle the Cambodian conflict politically and normalise the situation in Southeast Asia. However, he added that the conditions for settlement were not enough because the Cambodian problem was an international one. In turn, Son Sann did not raise the Eight-point Peace Proposal as a key issue, but instead revealed internal problems within the KPNLF. Son Sann mainly said that since December last year, following his

¹⁴ Khieu Samphan, Samdech Norodom Sihanouk, Son Sann, Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea's Proposal for A Political Settlement to the Problem of Kampuchea, Beijing, March 17, 1986.

successful visit to friendly China, he had faced internal disputes within the KPNLF, causing a great loss of time and energy.

In response, Hu Yaobang said it was most difficult to talk about or comment on internal problems. Nevertheless, China could highlight two points: 1. China recognised His Excellency Son Sann as a patriot and a nation-loving resistance fighter, and 2. China noted that His Excellency Son Sann was an old friend and a good friend of China. China never changed this second point. As for Prince Sihanouk, he tried to reassure and reaffirm that there was no major problem within the CGDK, except for some insignificant or minor issues that Cambodians could resolve among themselves. He asked the Chinese leader not to worry about the unity and solidarity of all the parties in the CGDK.

The next morning, Son Sann and the KPNLF delegation met with Chinese Deputy Foreign Minister Liu Shuqing. At the meeting, Son Sann openly protested that the Thai military was using the KPNLF internal problem as a pretext to exert direct control over the

KPNLF army¹⁵. He also informed the deputy foreign minister that, while waiting for the conflict settlement, the Thai military had already convened a meeting of 10 KPNLF army commanders to set up a military committee called the “10 Commander-Committee” to lead the KPNLAF under the control of a Thai colonel named Colonel Vishu¹⁶. The KPNLF President feared this action might allow the Thai military to use the KPNLAF to carry out other activities contrary to the aspirations of the CGDK or the spirit of the Kuala Lumpur Declaration. He added that the Thai military had also ceased providing his party with Chinese financial assistance.

In his reply, the Chinese deputy foreign minister asked Son Sann to settle the internal problem quickly, in accordance with the advice of Gen Chavalit, who had already divided responsibility with Son Sann, as prime minister, for diplomatic and political affairs,

¹⁵ Notes d’entretien politique entre S.E. Son Sann, Premier ministre du CGKD et S.E. Liu Shuqin, vice-ministre A.E. de la RPC, Beijing, le 19 mars 1986.

¹⁶ Some of our Cambodians called Vishu, while the others Visnu. This name was secret, while the real one was Surayuth Chulanond. In 2006, Surayuth Chulanond assumed the post of Prime Minister following the military coup that ousted Thaksin Shinawatra from power.

and Gen Sak Sutsakhan as army commander. In fact, both Son Sann and Gen Sak Sutsakhan confirmed that they had accepted Chavalit's advice. However, they still disagreed over how to manage military funding and control refugee camps. As movement president, Son Sann believed he should be responsible for all expenses, including military ones. Moreover, the president also needed the power to "control" refugee camps because his political support came from there. With refugees' support in those camps, Son Sann could claim that the "Cambodian people" supported him. In fact, control of those refugee camps meant he could receive only political support, since the Thai authorities and the United Nations effectively and directly controlled the camps. Gen Sak Sutsakhan also needed power to "control" the refugee camps because he could recruit combatants there to serve the army. Moreover, camp chiefs could take food or material aid left over from distribution to refugees to support political or military activities, depending on their own tendencies, even though they were under the control of Thai and United Nations authorities.

In that era, China provided three kinds of aid to the KPNLF aside from its diplomatic support to the entire CGDK. These included military aid—weapons, ammunition, and material aid — and diplomatic aid. The Thai military received the Chinese military aid and delivered it to the KPNLF at the latter's request. The material aid consisted mainly of canned food, hoes, spades, office supplies, and clothes. With Thai military authorisation, the Chinese delivered this aid to the KPNLF. For diplomatic support, the Chinese Embassy provided a secret fund directly to Son Sann to carry out the diplomatic mission. China kept this secret fund from everyone, including the Thais, except Chinese embassy officials in Bangkok. In 1985-1986, the material aid China gave to the KPNLF was worth one million yuan.

At the meeting with Liu Shuqing, Son Sann asked China to give the one million yuan in cash to help create a new special army that he intended to place under Gen Thach Reng's command. Nevertheless, the Chinese side disagreed with the proposal, as it might create further problems with the Thai military group, which

had decided not to allow Son Sann to get involved in military affairs. Therefore, the plan to set up the special army for Thach Reng failed to materialise as he desired. As for the secret fund for diplomatic missions, it was USD 200,000 in cash a year. Whenever Son Sann needed the fund, he could assign an official to get it directly from the Chinese Embassy in Bangkok at any time.

First Overt US Aid

The conflict between Son Sann and Gen Sak Sutsakhan took place just as the United States was preparing to provide its first overt aid of about USD 5 million a year to the non-communist movements. The aid was non-lethal, meaning it did not consist of weapons or ammunition for killing people. In fact, even though the United States had not yet emerged from the nightmares about its fiasco in the Vietnam War in the 1970s, it timidly introduced a strategy to help promote the non-communist movements as reliable movements that the Cambodian people could choose to replace the communist groups. The key idea was to unite Prince

Sihanouk's movement and Son Sann's into a nationalist army under a single command, independent of the Khmer Rouge. Gen Sak Sutsakhan might recognise this new political direction of the United States. The General's faction might believe that Son Sann was no less than a Khmer Rouge dependent.

The joint command of the two non-communist armies might symbolise the establishment of a new group of forces having no connection whatsoever with the Khmer Rouge. The Thai military authorities strongly backed this joint command. Thai army generals' support for Gen Sak Sutsakhan as commander-in-chief of the combined forces gave weight to his struggle for leadership against Son Sann. At that time, Gen Sak Sutsakhan asserted that he fostered a close relationship between the KPNLF and FUNCINPEC, unlike Son Sann, who was accused of obstructing cooperation between the two non-communist movements. Anyway, I am sure that if Prince Sihanouk were allowed to choose whether to cooperate with Son Sann or Gen Sak Sutsakhan, the prince would definitely select Son Sann. On his homepage, found a few

years later, Prince Sihanouk¹⁷ wrote personally about the KPNLF internal conflict in that epoch, saying mainly that the internal conflict between the Son Sann faction and that of Dien Del, Gaffar Peang Meth, and Sak Sutsakhan was not actually caused by the proponents or opponents of cooperation with the Sihanoukist party. The Gaffar Peang Meth faction positioned itself as pro-cooperation between the KPNLF and FUNCINPEC, while portraying Son Sann as anti-Sihanouk. In fact, the Gaffar Peang Meth, Dien Del, and Hing Kunthon faction opposed Sihanouk more strongly than Son Sann did. However, it made use of this pretext because it was easy and gave advantages to the Gaffar faction, and because its sponsors, especially the United States and ASEAN, wanted to see good cooperation between the two non-communist parties.

¹⁷ Norodom Sihanouk, Ce “rift” entre le clan de Son Sann et celui de Dien Del-Gaffar Peangmeth-Sak Sutsakhan... a handwritten note (undated) www.norodomsihanouk.info.

I told a US Official, “With or Without US Help, We Will Still Fight”

According to his handwriting, Prince Sihanouk identified one ringleader of the rebel faction against Son Sann as Gaffar Peang Meth, as I already recounted earlier. Prince Sihanouk also understood that these opponents were all members of the republican regime that had ousted him from power in 1970. As for the Thai military, it also had its own reason for supporting Gen Sak Sutsakhan, because all aid to be provided to this new army should go through the Thai Army. All aid to the Cambodian armed forces, both new and old, should pass through Thailand, no matter what. If Son Sann had good relations with the United States at the political decision-maker level in Washington, D.C., the Sak Sutsakhan faction would also have maintained good connections with the US Embassy in Bangkok, thanks to Gaffar's regular work.

As for myself, in that era, I also had some connections with the US Embassy, but only at a lower level; that is, at the Second or Third Secretary level. Among those secretaries was an official

named McCormick. Often, I asked him to help forward our request for US aid to officials higher than him. One day, fed up with the US Embassy's indifference to our request, I told McCormick that we needed your aid, but, with or without it, we would continue our national liberation struggle, for it is our duty as Cambodians. Several months later, I learned through friends in Washington, D.C., that what I had told McCormick in Bangkok had reached the US Department of State.

Son Sann Signs on Paper, But Money Hand to Someone Else

Agitated to know whether US aid to the non-communist Cambodians would be given through which groups, the KPNLF (of the Son Sann faction) sent a memorandum to Gaston Sigur¹⁸, US

¹⁸ Khmer People's National Liberation Front, Memorandum presented to His Excellency Mr. Gaston Sigur, US Assistant Secretary of State for East Asia and Pacific Affairs, March 26, 1986.

assistant secretary of state (of the rank equal to a deputy minister). The memo informed him that the KPNLF was prepared to present US officials with a formula for aid utilisation once it received an official note from the United States on the aid provision. In the memorandum, the KPNLF underlined that the reasons the United States should assist the non-communist movements were:

1. To respond to Vietnam's negative reaction to the CGDK's Eight-Point Peace Proposal;
2. To offer encouragement and reward to the CGDK for its military progress on the battlefield and in the international arena.

However, in fact, if there were infiltration of armed forces into the country, most of them would be the strongest Khmer Rouge forces, while the non-communist troops were unable to move far away from the border. The memorandum also stressed that we had to resort to guerrilla tactics. In conclusion, we asserted that if the non-communist forces remained weak, the Khmer Rouge would win the war, and the non-communist groups would vanish from Cambodia's political arena. These were the reasons the KPNLF presented to the US Department of State to persuade the United States to provide military aid to the non-communist resistance forces.

The United States eventually provided non-lethal aid. At that time, the Thai authorities asked Son Sann's representative to sign acceptance documents. However, we only signed the papers, but the cash fell into other people's hands. In fact, the working group had decided on the cash withdrawal in accordance with Gen Chavalit's advice. Therefore, the real recipients of the aid were the military led by Gen Sak Sutsakhan, which took a large part, and FUNCINPEC, represented by Prince Norodom Ranariddh, which received another chunk. Simply put, the US aid called Solarz Aid did not fall into the hands of Son Sann's faction at all. In 1988, Son Sann¹⁹ sent a letter to US House Representative Stephen Solarz protesting that no aid had been seen at any time. He wrote that "military aid was used without being accountable to me and without letting me know of anything. Every year, they ask me to sign to accept documents for cash withdrawal." In fact, as we received funds directly from the Thai military, we were not clearly

¹⁹ Khmer People's National Liberation Front, Memorandum presented to His Excellency Mr. Gaston Sigur, US Assistant Secretary of State for East Asia and Pacific Affairs, March 26, 1986.

aware of the exact amount of the US funds, how much the United States gave us, how much it gave the Sak Sutsakhan-led faction, and how much Thai army generals kept for themselves.

In a letter dated June 22, 1988, Son Sann also protested that while the KPNLF's President and staff did unpaid work and while the ordinary soldiers received an allowance of less than USD 5 a day, senior military officers, including those in the office of the KPNLAF High Command led by General Sak Sutsakhan, divided the monthly allowance, with each pocketing from USD 800 to 6,000.

To my knowledge, Son Sann's faction received one million baht, or USD 40,000 in cash a month, from the Thai military. After that, they cut the fund to 800,000 baht, or USD 32,000, a month in 1985. In 1988, they reduced the fund to just 500,000 baht, or USD 20,000. Finally, they trimmed the fund down to 449,000 baht, or USD 17,960. The Thais claimed that they cut the fund from Son Sann's faction to give to Sak Sutsakhan's. News analysts estimated that US aid to the non-communist movements was about USD 12 to 18 million a year.

For years, Washington had tried to find ways to provide aid to the non-communist Cambodian resistance fighters; for some members of the US House of Representatives and Congress, specifically Stephen Solarz, perceived that this aid could help bring further pressure on Vietnam to pull its troops out of Cambodia. Nonetheless, those US politicians did not want to see the Vietnamese troop withdrawal replaced by the Pol Pot genocidal regime's return to power either. Some US senators were of the view that the holding of power by the Heng Samrin-Hun Sen Phnom Penh government was better than the return to power of the Pol Pot genocidal regime. Therefore, since 1986, an increasing number of US politicians had asked the US Government to begin thinking about improving relations with Vietnam. Such a shift by the United States caused stronger concern among non-communist Cambodian groups about the US's unexpected volte-face in relations with Vietnam.

United States Wants Relations with Vietnam

In 1987, Congressman Peter Kostmayer proposed an amendment to the law on US-Vietnamese relations, called the Kostmayer Amendment. In general, some politicians in Washington sought to improve US-Vietnamese relations, especially the idea from the House and Senate to open a technical office and exchange bilateral relations between the United States and Vietnam. This idea caused us in the KPNLF to feel concerned about the change in the United States' policy toward the Cambodia problem, as it used to assert that as long as Vietnam did not withdraw troops from Cambodia, the United States would refuse to normalise relations with Vietnam.

On May 1, 1987, Son Sann sent a letter to President Ronald Reagan²⁰ and another to Stephen Solarz²¹ to express KPNLF

²⁰ Son Sann, [Letter] to His Excellency President Ronald Reagan, The White House, May 1, 1987.

²¹ Son Sann, [Letter] to The Honorable Stephen J. Solarz, May 1, 1987.

concern. Son Sann wrote that any small sign to Vietnam of an intention to improve US-Vietnam relations could be regarded as an important step, because Vietnam might perceive that Washington was no longer too adamant; that is, it no longer demanded that Vietnam withdraw its troops from Cambodia. Son Sann requested that US President Ronald Reagan and Congressman Stephen Solarz oppose the idea of improving relations with Vietnam while the Vietnamese troops still occupy Cambodian territory.

As regards this concern, Frank Carlucci, security adviser at the White House,²² responded mainly on behalf of President Ronald Reagan that the United States was still concerned about the tragedy in Cambodia and that the United States would normalise relations with Vietnam only in the context of an acceptable solution to the Cambodian problem, including the Vietnamese troop withdrawal. Carlucci added that the government of President Reagan would oppose sending any signals to Vietnam

²² Frank C. Carlucci, [Letter] to Mr. Son Sann, President, Khmer People's National Liberation Front, June 15, 1987.

that might lead to the misunderstanding that the United States no longer demanded the withdrawal of the Vietnamese troops from Cambodia.

As for Congressman Stephen Solarz, he replied that he too would not change his political position²³. He still believed that the Vietnamese troop pullout of Cambodia remained a precondition for the normalisation of relations between Washington and Hanoi. Solarz promised to get the United States to offer further aid to the non-communist movements. Nevertheless, Solarz conceded that he would not close the door completely to relations with Vietnam, for almost all countries had embassies in Hanoi. Solarz supported relations with Vietnam at the “people-to-people” level, such as cultural exchanges or visits for mutual scientific research, which he regarded as a channel of communication. In light of this attitude, it could be seen that the United States was considering

²³ Stephen J. Solarz, [Letter] to Hon. Son Sann, President, Khmer People’s National Liberation, Washington, DC, June 3, 1987.

both normalising relations with Vietnam and providing aid to prevent the Khmer Rouge from returning to power.

Hun Sen and Keat Chhon in Secret Contact

The Cambodia problem also affected this country's membership in the Non-Aligned Movement. The Non-Aligned Movement was formed in the early 1960s, and its key founding members were Marshal Tito of Yugoslavia, President Sukarno of Indonesia, President Nasser of Egypt, Prime Minister Nehru of India, and President Nkrumah of Ghana. In the 1960s, our country, Cambodia, under the leadership of Prince Sihanouk as chief of state, also played an active role in the movement until 1970, when Cambodia fell into the flames of war.

The Non-Aligned Movement brings together countries that position themselves outside both the communist bloc, led by the Soviet Union, and the free bloc, with the United States as its ringleader. Some communist countries, such as China, Vietnam, Yugoslavia, and Cuba, are key members of this movement. In

1979, two Cambodian delegations left to attend the 6th Non-Aligned Movement Summit in Havana, Cuba. President Heng Samrin led the Phnom Penh delegation, accompanied by Foreign Minister Hun Sen, while the Khmer Rouge delegation was led by Khieu Samphan, accompanied by Keat Chhon. The two delegations were, however, not permitted to participate in the meeting because the conference had decided to leave the Cambodian seat vacant until after the Cambodian conflict had been settled definitively. Anyway, despite not being able to attend the summit, Foreign Minister Hun Sen took that opportunity to contact Keat Chhon secretly²⁴.

Cambodia has returned to the Non-Aligned Movement seat since the Paris Peace Accord came into being in 1991.²⁵ When there was still no solution to the Cambodian problem, the Non-

²⁴ In an interview with Samdech Techo Hun Sen by a group of history researchers led by HE Ieng Mouly and Son Samnang on March 16, 2010, Samdech Techo said he had sent a confidential letter to Keat Chhon.

²⁵ The delegation led by Prince Sihanouk, President of the Supreme National Council [SNC], attended the 10th Non-Aligned Movement Summit in Jakarta, Indonesia, from September 1 to 6, 1992. I (Ieng Mouly) had the honor of being chosen as a Member of the Cambodian delegation to attend the Summit.

Aligned Movement, at its 6th Summit in Havana, Cuba, and 7th Summit in New Delhi, India, decided to leave Cambodia's seat vacant and appealed for the withdrawal of foreign troops from Southeast Asia and continued the search for a political solution through negotiations. This movement included the Cambodia issue among Southeast Asia's problems and endorsed all efforts aimed at speedily building a region of peace, freedom, and neutrality.

In a letter dated March 26, 1986, to the foreign ministries of the Non-Aligned Movement member countries, Vietnamese Foreign Minister Nguyen Co Thach asked this movement to leave Cambodia's seat vacant further in the 8th Summit, to be held in Harare, Zimbabwe, in September 1986, reasoning that it was to avoid differences within the movement. Nguyen Co Thach also asked the summit to continue adhering to the same positions on the Cambodia problem and on the Southeast Asian region as in the previous summits²⁶. In the same letter, the Vietnamese

²⁶ Nguyen Co Thach, Vietnamese Foreign Minister, Letter to Foreign Ministers of Non-Aligned Countries, Hanoi, March 26, 1986.

diplomacy chief also made known that the Indochinese countries represented by Vietnam and the ASEAN countries represented by Indonesia had already started talks. Bilateral negotiations had also begun between Vietnam and Malaysia and between Malaysia and Laos. Through these activities, Vietnam had persevered in having regional-level talks in which any demands for the withdrawal of the Vietnamese forces from Cambodia should be linked with the withdrawal of all foreign troops from other countries in Southeast Asia, such as the pullout of the US forces from the Philippines, to turn this region into a region of peace, freedom, and neutrality. Along with this public stance, in which Vietnam linked the Cambodian problem to regional issues to avoid being accused of aggression against Cambodia, the Vietnamese leader also tried to push for talks beforehand between the Cambodian parties, meaning the CGDK and the Phnom Penh government.

Vietnam Asks Prince Sihanouk To Organize Two-Phase Talks

At 10:30 PM on the night of October 24, 1986, Prince Sihanouk summoned the ambassadors of the CGDK at the United Nations, namely Um Sim, representing the KPNLF; Prince Sisowath Sereirath, FUNCINPEC; and Tiuonn Prasith, the Khmer Rouge, to see him the next day at 12:30 at the Helmsley Hotel in New York, in a working meeting and convey information to their respective leaders. With Khek Sysoda present, Prince Sihanouk informed the ambassadors that, at 11:30 AM on October 24, he granted an audience to Austrian Ambassador Karl Fischer for a working meeting.

At the meeting, the Austrian envoy informed the prince that Vietnam had asked, through Austria, for two-phase talks. The first phase was called the national phase, in which Prince Sihanouk, together with a KPNLF representative and a Khmer Rouge representative (except Pol Pot), was requested to hold talks with Heng Samrin and Hun Sen in Vienna, Austria. The second phase,

called the international phase, would involve Vietnam, together with other superpowers, meeting with the Cambodian parties if the first phase were successful to endorse the agreement among those Cambodian parties²⁷. Regarding this proposal presented by Vietnam, the prince informed the Austrian ambassador that, as he was clearly aware of his partners' positions in the CGDK, it was impossible for the Cambodian parties to meet in Vienna. The prince was well aware that the CGDK maintained the stand of only holding direct talks with Vietnam, because the present war was between Vietnam, the aggressor, and Democratic Kampuchea, the victim, not a civil war between Cambodians and Cambodians; nonetheless, should Vietnam agree to hold talks with the CGDK, the party in Phnom Penh could also be part of the Vietnamese delegation. Prince Sihanouk told the three CGDK ambassadors this was just his personal view, because he believed that at that time, Vietnam could not accept the CGDK stand, even though the country was facing many problems and seeking ways to resolve

²⁷ Um Sim, Propositions vietnamiennes pour une négociation en deux phases, une note sur la réunion de travail, à l'hôtel Helmsley, New York, le 24 octobre 1986.

them. Before closing the meeting, Prince Sihanouk advised the three CGDK armed forces to intensify their military activities to pressure Vietnam into coming to the negotiating table with them.

In response to successive diplomatic initiatives by Vietnam and the group of Indochinese countries, the Khmer Rouge and China, backed by the Thai military, tried to project tripartite armed forces' hermetic unity by pushing for a meeting of the commanders-in-chief of the three parties. On November 18, 1986, Prince Norodom Ranariddh, as Prince Sihanouk's representative and Commander-in-Chief of the Sihanoukist Army, chaired a meeting, attended by Son Sen of the Khmer Rouge side and Sak Sutsakhan of the KPNLAF, after which a joint declaration was issued.

The main points of the joint declaration included²⁸: expressing pleasure with the military successes in the 8th rainy season; expressing pleasure with the better cooperation of the three armies; agreeing with the military activities in the 9th rainy season; and

²⁸ Norodom Ranariddh-Son Sen-Sak Sutsakhan, Press Release, 18 November 1986.

trying to strengthen and expand the cooperation and solidarity among the three parties' armies.

The key point of the meeting was that, aside from showing photos op about unity, solidarity, and good cooperation of the three-armed forces, the presence of Sak Sutsakhan, who was in the process of claiming his independence from the leadership of Son Sann, signaled that the Thai military and the countries supporting KPNLF still recognised the general as the KPNLAF commander-in-chief, regardless of whether Son Sann agreed or not. In truth, as I have already written in previous chapters, by the end of 1986, the Thai military pressured Son Sann to reconcile with Sak Sutsakhan again. That said, on January 11, 1987, Son Sann issued a decree appointing Gen Sak Sutsakhan as KPNLAF commander-in-chief, under some conditions imposed by the president. In fact, Gen Chavalit issued an ultimatum to Son Sann's faction and Gen Sak Sutsakhan to end their internal dispute once

and for all by the end of 1986²⁹. In a letter dated December 18, 1986, to the KPNLF president, Sak Sutsakhan pointed out that Chavalit's spokesman had warned that in another two weeks, if there were no compromise, the KPNLF would vanish, come hell or high water.

Ceausescu Asks Sihanouk To Strive to Find Political Solutions

At the beginning of 1987, Prince Sihanouk went to Romania again. At a two-hour meeting in Bucharest on January 12, 1987, Prince Sihanouk and President Ceausescu exchanged views on the Cambodia problem. The prince, the Democratic Kampuchea president, said that every point on the battlefield had favoured the resistance movements. However, the Romanian president replied

²⁹ Sak Sutsakhan, (letter) to His Excellency Son Sann, KPNLF President, December 18, 1986.

that, on the international arena, the situation favoured a peaceful and equitable political solution. He told the prince that Vietnam had proposed Bucharest as a venue for a meeting between Sihanouk and Heng Samrin. Prince Sihanouk answered that the holding of such a meeting would be impossible because his partners in the CGDK, namely the Khmer Rouge and Son Sann, would object³⁰. The Romanian president further told the prince that Vietnam would reject the charge that it was the aggressor of Cambodia. He said it was reasonable for the CGDK to form a quadripartite government with the Heng Samrin party to demonstrate the national reconciliation. Ceausescu further said that this national reconciliation government would then ask Vietnam to withdraw all its troops from Cambodia in two phases, as the CGDK had proposed. Vietnam would certainly pull its troops out as proposed. Although Prince Sihanouk did not immediately accept the proposal to meet directly with the Phnom Penh party,

³⁰ Norodom Sihanouk, mon compte rendu succinct de mon entretien politique, d'une durée de 2 heures, avec Son Excellence Monsieur le Président Nicolae Ceaușescu de la République socialiste de Roumanie, Bucarest, lundi 12 janvier 1987.

subsequent events confirmed that the prince had not relinquished the idea of direct talks with Phnom Penh.

Moreover, the Romanian president's proposal strongly impressed the Khmer Rouge. On January 18, 1987, Khieu Samphan wrote a letter to Prince Sihanouk in the sense that he wanted to discuss Ceausescu's proposal or ask for the prince's opinion on whether it was appropriate to meet with this Romanian president in Bucharest.

On 25 January 1987, Prince Sihanouk sent back a telegram advising both Khieu Samphan and Son Sann that they didn't have to go to Romania or come to meet him, since he had already reached a solution with President Ceausescu at the request of Democratic Kampuchea; that is, there would be no direct talks between the CGDK and the Phnom Penh government³¹. In the telegram, Samdech Sihanouk seemed to want to insinuate to his two partners that if they continued to adhere to the hardline stand,

³¹ Norodom Sihanouk, Télégramme à Son Excellence Khieu Samphan, Vice-président du Kampuchea démocratique, c/o S.E. Ambassadeur Chan Youran, Pékin, 25 janvier 1987.

they would not need to waste their time worrying about the Romania solution, since he clearly realised that Hanoi would definitely refuse to hold direct talks with the tripartite coalition government, with the Khmer Rouge as its backbone.

As regards the KPNLF, after ending its internal dispute, the front, especially Son Sann, took a new political initiative straightaway to establish the Angkor region as a demilitarised zone of international culture. However, the reconciliation at that time between Son Sann and Gen Sak Sutsakhan was only in appearance, not a genuine compromise, since each faction continued to maintain its initial stand. Gen Sak Sutsakhan continued to manage military affairs alone, without consulting Son Sann or seeking his prior consent, as specified in the annex to the decree appointing the commander-in-chief. As evidence, Gen Sak Sutsakhan immediately promoted KPNLAF officers to the rank of general without the KPNLF president's knowledge. This led to a reminder from Son Sann³².

³² Son Sann, KPNLF President, sent to General Sak Sutsakhan, 22 February 1987.

Son Sann Proposes To Create an Angkor Neutral Region

Based on the appeal launched by former Austrian Foreign Minister Willibald Pahr as Chairman of the International Conference on Kampuchea (ICK) in 1984, Son Sann issued a memorandum on the Angkor cultural region, a demilitarised and neutral zone, to allow international experts to help repair and restore the Angkor Wat and Angkor Thom Temples³³. The key point was that UNESCO had initiated a proposal to establish international cultural zones endorsed by member countries, especially European countries, including Romania and Yugoslavia. As for India, with its experts already on site, it could also help achieve this initiative. The memo mentioned that, after all had

³³ The Office of the Prime Minister of the Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea, Memorandum on the conception of an Angkor cultural zone from all the presence of the armed forces, February 26, 1987.

accepted this idea, UNESCO would internationalise the Angkor cultural region and be responsible for all kinds of support. In this sense, the airport in Siem Reap town would be open for experts' free entry and departure, and authorisation would be granted for the shipment of materials and supplies to the cultural region, which would be open for visits by tourists from all parties. Nevertheless, the memo also set a condition that no talks on establishing this cultural region should lead to recognition of the Phnom Penh government before any agreement on national reconciliation. The initiative was introduced because Angkor's cultural heritage, which had been damaged, needed urgent repair and should not be under the control of any disputed parties. Internationalising the area could free Angkor-Siem Reap from the Phnom Penh government's control.

In a letter to Prince Sihanouk and Khieu Samphan, Son Sann recalled that the CGDK leaders had supported him as prime minister and had written a letter of support to Willibald Pahr, who announced the request to set up this cultural region in 1984. However, Khieu Samphan appeared strongly concerned about this

initiative. In his reply to Son Sann, Khieu Samphan recalled that the CGDK had discussed this issue under the chairmanship of Prince Sihanouk and that everyone understood that every step of the initiative should be handled with the highest vigilance and should not, in any case, lead to the international recognition of the Phnom Penh regime³⁴. Khieu Samphan asked for clearer information for consideration; specifically, the Khmer Rouge wanted to know which friendly countries Son Sann claimed had supported this idea.

In fact, the Khmer Rouge had also intended to capture and occupy this region; therefore, they had no interest whatsoever in declaring it as the international cultural zone. As for Son Sann, he believed the international community could pressure Vietnam and the Phnom Penh government to establish the Angkor-Siem Reap region as an international zone that should not be under the control of any party. This was because the Angkor temple was of

³⁴ Khieu Samphan, Vice-Président du Kampuchea Démocratique chargé des Affaires Étrangères, à S.E. M. Son Sann, Premier Ministre du Gouvernement de Coalition du Kampuchea Démocratique, le 24 avril 1987.

enormous cultural value, and its repair and restoration could not be objected to or opposed. If the memo was reviewed, it provided no details for feasible implementation. That was why on June 15, 1987, from Paris, France, Son Sann issued a statement specifying the cultural region as follows³⁵:

1. Foreign troops and the armed forces involved in the dispute should withdraw from a 50 km radius of the Siem Reap-Angkor region;

2. Representatives of all the parties were permitted to come and meet freely to discuss the technical procedures regarding the repair and restoration of the temples of Angkor that would not lead to the legal recognition (of the Phnom Penh regime) to bring in international assistance, such as UNESCO aid, and so forth; and

³⁵ Son Sann, Déclaration de Son Excellence Son Sann, Premier Ministre du Gouvernement de Coalition de Kampuchea Démocratique (GCKD), Président du Front National de Libération du Peuple Khmers (FNLPK), Paris, le 15 juin 1987.

3. Cambodian and UNESCO international technicians were permitted to enter or leave this region, under the security ensured internationally.

On July 4, 1987, UNESCO Director General Amadou-Mahtar M'Bow responded to Son Sann's proposal³⁶, saying that UNESCO had paid attention to the preservation and protection of the Angkor Temples and that he had raised this issue for discussion several times at the UNESCO Executive Council's meetings. The director general promised to do everything in UNESCO's power to achieve this goal. This political initiative to turn the Angkor-Siem Reap region into an international cultural zone, a neutral zone, and a demilitarised zone devoid of armed forces yielded no fruitful results because all parties to the dispute lacked support. The Phnom Penh party, in seeking international recognition, would definitely reject this idea, as the Phnom Penh leaders could also see the immense value of the Angkor temples and use issues related to

³⁶ Amadou-Mahtar M'Bow, le Directeur général de l'UNESCO, (à) S. Exc. Monsieur Son Sann, Premier ministre du Kampuchea démocratique, Paris, le 4 juillet 1987.

the temple area as a subject matter for their struggle to seek international recognition. Therefore, it was an attempt to bypass the Phnom Penh government, which led to a fiasco. However, Son Sann intended to show the international community that he had paid more attention to maintaining and protecting the Angkor temples than other leaders. Besides, Son Sann wanted to demonstrate that the KPNLF also intended to have talks among the Cambodian parties, even though his initiative was unrealistic.

In Europe, I Conduct a Propaganda Campaign Again

In February and March 1987, I was assigned a mission in Europe to conduct propaganda to drum up support among Cambodian refugees for the KPNLF, specifically for Son Sann, after the announcement that the internal dispute had already ended. My mission at that time aimed to strengthen support for KPNLF members in France, Belgium, Switzerland, and Germany. The main theme focused on Son Sann's leadership attributes and outlined his conditions for reappointing Gen Sak Sutsakhan as

commander-in-chief. Actually, the war of words between the two people had continued as always. My activities were limited to responding to the propaganda conducted by the Sak Sutsakhan-led faction, with Yem Sarong, Dr You Kim Yean, Sam Sok, and others as activists. My propaganda activities vigorously whipped up support among refugees and KPNLF members, making Pong Kim Koan, chief of the KPNLF Information Office in Paris, very proud. On March 16, 1987, Pong Kim Koan sent a letter in French to Son Sann, reporting to him the positive results of my mission³⁷.

We Do Not Know What the Prince Does on His Trip to Pyongyang

On April 16, 1987, President Li Xiannian and Prime Minister Zhao Ziyang of China sent letters of congratulations on the 12th

³⁷ Pong Kim Koan, le Chef du Bureau d'Information du FNLPK, à Son Excellence le Président du FNLPK et Premier Ministre du GCKD, Paris, le 16 mars 1987.

anniversary of Democratic Kampuchea, with Prince Sihanouk as President, reiterating that the Chinese government and people would continue to provide firm support to the Cambodian people in their sacred cause of struggle against Vietnam's aggression to defend the motherland³⁸. On the same day, Prince Sihanouk replied, from Pyongyang, that brotherly China and Cambodia were in solidarity and would further their solidarity forever, for they were inseparable comrades-in-arms³⁹.

In Bangkok, we were unaware when the prince had gone to Pyongyang. It was his past habit that, if he intended to undertake any political activities that would displease Chinese leaders, Prince Sihanouk would leave the country to stay elsewhere, especially in

³⁸ Li Xiannian, Président de la République populaire de Chine, et Zao Ziyang, Premier ministre du Conseil d'État de la République populaire de Chine, à Samdech Norodom Sihanouk, Président du Kampuchea démocratique, Son Excellence Son Sann, Premier ministre du Gouvernement de coalition du Kampuchea démocratique, et Son Excellence Khieu Samphan, Vice-président du Kampuchea démocratique, Beijing, le 16 avril 1987.

³⁹ Norodom Sihanouk, Président du Kampuchea Démocratique, à Son Excellence Monsieur LI XIANNIAN, Président de la République Populaire de Chine, et à Son Excellence Monsieur Zao Ziyang, Premier Ministre du Conseil d'État de la République Populaire de Chine, Pyongyang, le 16 avril 1987.

Pyongyang, North Korea, where he had President Kim Il-sung, his close friend, who supported him unreservedly. Before leaving Beijing, Prince Sihanouk sent a telegram to Son Sann asking for a list of names of the KPNLF delegation members who would join the official CGDK delegation on its visit to China in August 1987. In that telegram, the prince asked for the names of some members of the faction of Gen Sak Sutsakhan as well, not just those from the Son Sann group, in the list of that delegation for the sake of the “supreme interest of the national resistance movement”⁴⁰. That is why Son Sann included General Sak Sutsakhan as the fourth member of the KPNLF delegation, after Son Sann, Im Chhoodet, and Boun Say, for the CGDK leaders' visit to China in August 1987⁴¹.

⁴⁰ Norodom Sihanouk, Président du Kampuchea Démocratique, à S.E. Son Sann, Premier Ministre du CGDK, Beijing, 11 mars 1987.

⁴¹ Son Sann, Prime Minister, Coalition Government Democratic Kampuchea, Son Altesse Royale Samdech Preah Norodom Sihanouk, Président du Kampuchea Démocratique, le 27 avril 1987.

Sihanouk Suspends CGDK Presidency

Because of Khmer Rouge Violation

A few years later, in the 1980s, the Khmer Rouge had frequently fomented armed violations against its non-communist partners in accordance with its stratagem to gain battlefield supremacy. The violations included the killing of the KPNLAF combatants, such as the gunning down of a KPNLAF battalion commander named Prum Chamroen in Puok district, Siem Reap province, on February 12, 1987, prompting the KPNLF to issue a written protest. In the letter of protest, Son Sann, as prime minister of the CGDK and president of the KPNLF, warned Khieu Samphan that such an action was deliberate and premeditated and asked the Khmer Rouge to end it immediately for the sake of preserving the solidarity of the CGDK's armed forces⁴². Aside from the armed

⁴² Son Sann, president of the KPNLF and prime minister of the Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea, to His Excellency Khieu Samphan, vice president of Democratic Kampuchea in charge of foreign affairs, March 16, 1987.

violation, the Khmer Rouge also snatched the opportunity to serve its self-interest by attending international conferences or meetings alone, without informing the other two partners, through the firm control of foreign affairs, for which Khieu Samphan was responsible in the coalition government.

In the letter of protest, Son Sann asked the Khmer Rouge to help reinforce the spirit of cooperation within the CGDK in line with this government's common principle⁴³. Moreover, the Khmer Rouge also committed violations against Prince Sihanouk's armed forces. This abuse by the Khmer Rouge had caused sufficient reason for Prince Sihanouk to disassociate himself from the coalition and find ways to hold direct talks with the Phnom Penh regime. On May 7, 1987, in Pyongyang, Prince Sihanouk issued a declaration through the international press that he had decided to suspend his duty as Democratic Kampuchea president from May 7, 1987, to 7 May 1988, under the pretext that the Khmer Rouge had

⁴³ Son Sann, prime minister of the Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea, to Vice President Khieu Samphan, Vice President of Democratic Kampuchea in charge of foreign affairs, May 7, 1987.

launched attacks on his army.⁴⁴ Later, the prince threatened to suspend his function as president of Democratic Kampuchea every 12 months, until the Khmer Rouge changed its policy by ceasing its attacks on his army and ending all kinds of human rights violations in the border refugee camps under their control.

The KPNLF team in Bangkok, which learned of Prince Sihanouk's decision only through the international press, was taken aback and deeply concerned about the CGDK's stability. In his message to Prince Sihanouk, Son Sann told him he still hoped the news was untrue, and reiterated that the KPNLF continued to fully support the prince as Democratic Kampuchea's president, with a life-or-death role in the national liberation struggle⁴⁵.

Moreover, the KPNLF leader, in his capacity as the prime minister of the CGDK, sent another letter to Khieu Samphan, asking the Khmer Rouge to end this crisis rapidly and begging

⁴⁴ It meant that during these 12 months, Prince Sihanouk ceased playing his official role as the President of Democratic Kampuchea.

⁴⁵ Son Sann, À Son Altesse Royale Samdech Preah Norodom Sihanouk, Président du Kampuchea Démocratique, Pyong Yang, le 14 mai 1987.

Prince Sihanouk to desist from taking such a decision that might cause adverse consequences to the CGDK, in particular for the cooperation of the three armies of the resistance movements. Along with that, Son Sann also recalled that armed clashes occurred between both the Sihanoukist and KPNLF Armies. Especially, Son Sann recalled a killing that the KPNLF had protested to Khieu Samphan through a letter dated March 19, 1987, that had remained silent since then⁴⁶.

Khmer Rouge Fears Losing Seat

In Washington, growing demands for the trial of the Pol Pot clique for genocide that had gained more support from many US politicians, in particular from Congress members, were a cause of concern for ASEAN. The Khmer Rouge was strongly anxious about Prince Sihanouk's attitude. They requested to see the prince at

⁴⁶ Son Sann, prime minister to His Excellency Khieu Samphan, Vice President of Democratic Kampuchea in charge of foreign affairs, May 14, 1987.

any time. According to news published in Bangkok, Khieu Samphan and Son Sen sent a letter asking the prince to reconsider his decision because the Khmer Rouge feared losing the CGDK's seat at the United Nations. They promised that they would agree to pay cash compensation to the families of the prince's fallen combatants⁴⁷. Moreover, Khieu Samphan hinted that he did not believe that Prince Sihanouk had decided to retreat due to the Khmer Rouge's unfriendly activities. This idea aligned with analyses by some observers who interpreted the Prince's decision as a political tactic to demonstrate his flexibility and freedom to seek possibilities for direct talks with Hanoi or Phnom Penh⁴⁸.

Some diplomats in Bangkok told The Bangkok Post, in a June 5, 1987, article, that Vietnam had agreed two weeks earlier to negotiate with Prince Sihanouk after the prince arrived in

⁴⁷ The Nation, Khmer Rouge Appeal to Sihanouk, June 1, 1987, p. 5.

⁴⁸ Nayan Chanda, The Prince Makes Waves, Far Eastern Economic Review, Vol. 136, No 25, June 18, 1987, p. 48.

France⁴⁹. Nonetheless, in a telegram sent to his son, Prince Norodom Ranariddh in Bangkok, Prince Sihanouk charged that only his detractors could fabricate the story that he had criticised the Khmer Rouge only as a pretext to hold direct talks with Vietnam and the Heng Samrin-Hun Sen government. The prince also pointed out that he had no contact whatsoever with Hanoi, Phnom Penh, or Moscow, and no intention of establishing relations with those capitals. However, he did not completely reject any future meetings, saying, "If the other party asks to see me on any day in the future, I will not forget to inform the public." As regards Khieu Samphan's request for an audience, Prince Sihanouk refused, pretexting that he was having a mental crisis that had grown serious with each passing day.

It was true that Prince Sihanouk would certainly be unable to establish direct contact with the Phnom Penh government if he continued to carry out his official function as president of Democratic Kampuchea. This was because China and the Khmer

⁴⁹ Bangkok Post, Sihanouk denies he'll talk with Phnom Penh, June 5, 1987.

Rouge, as well as some countries in ASEAN, had all adopted a position of negotiating with Vietnam on the Vietnamese troop withdrawal first, before talking with the Phnom Penh leaders. As for Prince Sihanouk, his retreat from Democratic Kampuchea and his status as a former king gave him the freedom to pursue his own politics.

Son Sann Leaves for Romania To Gauge the Country's Stance

Meanwhile, Son Sann led a KPNLF delegation to Romania between June 17 and 19, 1987, even though Prince Sihanouk had advised him that there was no need to meet President Ceausescu, as described above. Nonetheless, the KPNLF leader argued that the purpose of the visit was to thank President Ceausescu verbally for his endeavour to seek a solution to the Cambodian problem

and to ask Romania to help seek all kinds of measures to end the sufferings of the Cambodian people⁵⁰.

The purpose of the delegation's mission at that time was to exchange views, because Son Sann, as Prime Minister of the CGDK, had adopted the political stance of demanding talks with Vietnam on troop withdrawal first, before negotiating with the Phnom Penh government. At the same time, Romania recommended reconciliation with Phnom Penh first. The mission to Romania offered me the opportunity to join the delegation as a member. Romania was the first communist country I had visited. Aside from political duty, as I have mentioned above, I was very impressed by the country's protocol. The Romanian protocol official was very strict about timing and seating: where to sit, where to stand, whether to be in front or behind, when guests would be served food simultaneously, and so forth. For instance, when the Prime Minister arrived, how many steps the head of our

⁵⁰ Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea, Office of the Prime Minister, Communiqué de Presse, Bucarest le 17 Juin 1987.

delegation should advance and how many steps their prime minister should take before shaking hands.

In the delegation, I was granted the rank of Cabinet Minister. A Son Sann's confidant, who was older than me, told the Romanian protocol official that he had the rank of Ministre d'Etat, or State Minister, if it is translated word by word from French into English. In the French system, a state minister (Ministre d'Etat) ranks higher than a minister. The correct English translation is "Senior Minister," but in French, it is Ministre d'Etat. The word Ministre can be translated as Minister and Etat as State; so, Ministre d'Etat translates as State Minister, which, under the federal system, ranks below a Minister. The Romanian protocol official might have thought that Son Sann's confidant had only the rank of State Minister; that was why they seated me next to Son Sann, which made him feel strongly disappointed.

Talks Planned Under Different Forms

Since 1985, although the military armed forces fought each other vigorously, the initiative for talks between the adversaries had been taken successfully under various forms, such as the proximity talks and cocktail parties. On May 7, 1987, Son Sann, as prime minister of the CGDK, issued a joint communique congratulating Indonesian Foreign Minister Mochtar Kasumaadmaja on the initiative to host a cocktail party in Jakarta. This approach allowed the opponents to meet, since it was an informal meeting. Without this approach, it would not have been easy for the adversaries to meet, because their political positions were opposed. In a declaration at the event, Son Sann said they would be very pleased if Vietnam also agreed to attend. In other words, Son Sann intended to reaffirm that the current dispute was between Cambodia and Vietnam, not a civil war between

Cambodians and Cambodians⁵¹. This position was completely contrary to Vietnam's stance. Despite support from several countries, the cocktail party idea eventually failed. That said, the KPNLF and Son Sann wanted to appear to show that Prince Sihanouk was not the only one seeking a solution through talks; he was also trying. However, Son Sann had not yet dared to hold direct talks with Phnom Penh as Prince Sihanouk did.

As already pointed out in the previous chapters, the Phnom Penh party had certainly reaped more benefits from holding direct talks with Prince Sihanouk. Therefore, Phnom Penh leaders, especially Prime Minister Hun Sen, should continue this mission to succeed. The most important interest was to topple the genocidal Pol Pot regime once and for all. As for Prince Sihanouk, he had clearly seen the major obstacles to finding a political solution to end the war in Cambodia, but he had resolved to try, regardless of what the solution looked like. Moreover, as he had already clearly

⁵¹ Statement of H. E. Son Sann, Prime Minister of the Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea, May 8, 1987.

assessed the true nature of the Khmer Rouge regime, the prince realised that he had to find ways to eliminate them. It was true that he could revoke the alliance, provided that peace could be built and Cambodia liberated from the Khmer Rouge.

Friendship between Yasser Arafat and Prince Sihanouk

In Pyongyang, away from China's eyes, it was certainly easy for Prince Sihanouk to carry out some diplomatic tasks in accordance with his own political stance. In Pyongyang, the Prince also trusted a diplomat who could serve effectively as his spokesman or as a mediator between him and the other party. The spokesman, or go-between, was the Palestine Liberation Organisation's ambassador to North Korea, Sapharini⁵². Because he backed the Palestinian struggle while still in power during the Sangkum Reas Niyum era, Prince Sihanouk became a close friend

⁵² Hun Sen, 10 Years of Cambodia Process, 1979-1989, p. 168, Printing Education Publication House, Nop Bophan printing house.

of the late Palestine Liberation Organisation Chairman Yasser Arafat. I (Ieng Mouly), lucky to be included in a high Cambodian delegation to the Non-Aligned Movement summit in Jakarta, Indonesia, in 1992, led by Prince Sihanouk, President of the Supreme National Council, had witnessed the close friendship between the two leaders. During a recess in the meeting, held in a grand hall, I saw Chairman Yasser Arafat, in a camouflage uniform with a pistol at his waist and wearing a scarf that was his symbol, walk past a crowd of heads of state and government toward the Cambodian seat to hug and kiss Prince Sihanouk most intimately.

Back in Pyongyang, some rumours indicated that Prince Sihanouk was ready to meet with Prime Minister Hun Sen in June 1987. However, following a meeting between the Chinese Premier and Neak Moneang Monique,⁵³ the prince's wife, the plan was cast aside.

⁵³ Prince Sihanouk's wife.

The Khmer Rouge Criticises Sihanouk for Falling into Vietnam's Trap

At the time, we in Bangkok knew nothing about the planned talks. We learned of this only later, through international press. Moreover, we had no official documents related to this planned meeting either. In Beijing, the Khmer Rouge's ambassador was carrying out diplomatic activities at various embassies to explain the inappropriate political behaviour of Prince Sihanouk. This aimed to convince the diplomatic corps that Prince Sihanouk's decision to suspend his job as Democratic Kampuchea president was not the Khmer Rouge's fault, but the prince's adoption of a new stance, leading the Khmer Rouge to accuse him of falling into Vietnam's trap. The Khmer Rouge ambassador's activities upset Princess Monique, the prince's wife, who was deeply disappointed

and warned that the relationship with the Khmer Rouge would be cut off in the future, unlike before⁵⁴

As for Prince Sihanouk, he still appeared to have distanced himself from the Khmer Rouge and was no longer working with them. Still, he also took care not to upset China either. From Pyongyang, the prince gave instructions to another Khmer Rouge Ambassador Chan Yuran in Beijing to be implemented when he returned to China next August, to lead the high Democratic Kampuchea delegation on its official visit to China, as follows:

- Not to give any interview to newspaper, radio, or television reporters;
- Request permission from Chinese leaders for him not to give any interview to newspaper, radio, or television reporters, including Chinese newspaper, radio, and television reporters as well as Xinhua;
- He would not chair any meetings of the CGDK cabinet;

⁵⁴ Monique Sihanouk [letter], Chang Sou On, 22 juillet 1987.

- During his stay in Beijing, the prince could grant a private audience, without the presence of any newspaper, radio, and television reporters, to His Excellency Khieu Samphan and another to His Excellency Son Sann if either of them wanted to hold political discussion with him;
- At the conclusion of the delegation's visit, he would not take part in a news conference, but he could read the text of the joint communique of the CGDK, text drafted by Khieu Samphan and the Khmer Rouge party and agreed to by Son Sann⁵⁵.

China Says Not Yet Time to Hold Talks

In light of the diplomatic activities in the third quarter of 1987, the initiative to hold talks moved forward steadily. Nonetheless, the

⁵⁵ Norodom Sihanouk, Note pour S.E. Chan Youran, Ambassadeur du Kampuchea Démocratique en R. P. de Chine, Pyongyang, le 11 juillet 1987.

superpowers, which played a key role in the Cambodia problem, believed the time was not yet ripe. In August 1987, the Thai Foreign Minister, Siddhi Savetsila, stated publicly that he had met with Chinese leaders in China and that, at a meeting with Deng Xiaoping, this Chinese leader advised ASEAN that, as Vietnam had not yet changed its stance, any too-hasty activities might lead to more complicated problems⁵⁶.

According to the international press, Siddhi Savetsila accused Vietnam of destroying ASEAN's cocktail party formula, which they had already agreed to in principle. However, Vietnam denounced that ASEAN's proposal at that time was aimed at exhibiting the picture of Hanoi as the aggressor of Cambodia⁵⁷. These developments led to the failure of the diplomatic manoeuvres at the time.

In addition, Siddhi Savetsila said that at a meeting with Prince Sihanouk in Pyongyang, he received the elated news that the

⁵⁶ Bangkok Post, ASEAN Told Not to Rush Peace Bid, August 26, 1987.

⁵⁷ The Nation, Phnom Penh Echoes Hanoi, Quoted Kuala Lumpur Times, August 26, 1987.

prince would travel to New York in September, even though the prince would not lead Democratic Kampuchea's delegation at the United Nations. Only the prince's presence in New York could boost the morale of the Cambodian resistance group, because his prestige was priceless for the cause of the CGDK. When he arrived in Beijing at the end of August, Prince Sihanouk said he could say "no" to what Khieu Samphan and Son Sann had proposed, but he could not say so to China, his great friend⁵⁸. In reality, the countries backing the CGDK, specifically ASEAN led by Thailand and China, had been concerned about the support for Democratic Kampuchea's UN seat, which could tumble down without the presence of Prince Sihanouk. Therefore, news that the Prince would travel to New York was good for Siddhi Savetsila and his loyal friends.

In September 1987, Prince Sihanouk arrived in New York as planned, but he did not lead the Democratic Kampuchea delegation to attend the UN General Assembly as in previous

⁵⁸ The Nation, Sihanouk Arrives for China, August 30, 1987.

years. In 1987, the CGDK prepared a speech for Prince Sihanouk as Democratic Kampuchea President, but Prime Minister Son Sann instead read it at the UN meeting. In light of his trip to New York, it was reported in Bangkok that the prince would not meet with Prime Minister Hun Sen. Nevertheless, aside from the big headline on the first page, it could be understood that Prince Sihanouk did not completely reject the possibility of meeting, because the prince stated that he would not meet unless there were a request from Phnom Penh⁵⁹.

Image Shows of Solidarity While Being Divided

As part of the diplomatic campaign at the United Nations, representatives of the three CGDK armies intensified public relations operations by organising a meeting in Bangkok to voice support for the CGDK's position under Prince Sihanouk's

⁵⁹ The Nation, Sihanouk Assures Bangkok: He Won't Meet Hun Sen, September 1, 1987.

leadership. The purpose of the three armies' meeting was to show images that the armies of the resistance movements continued to be united and well cooperated⁶⁰.

Attending the meeting were Son Sen, representing the Khmer Rouge, and Tuon Chay, representing Prince Norodom Ranariddh, Commander-in-Chief of the National Sihanoukist Army. As for the KPNLF, it was Son Soubert and I (Ieng Mouly) representing the army. Actually, according to a documented plan, Sak Sutsakhan was slotted to sign the press communique.

Despite reconciliation, and even though General Sak Sutsakhan had been officially appointed commander-in-chief, Son Sann and the military faction had not compromised. As commander-in-chief of the KPNLAF, Sak Sutsakhan had not consulted Son Sann on several major issues, including the appointment of Dien Del and Pok Sam-an as deputy commander-in-chief and chief of staff, respectively, as laid down in Sak

⁶⁰ Son Sen, Ieng Mouly, Son Soubert, Brig. Gen. Tuon Chay, Press Communiqué, 27 August 1987.

Sutsakhan's conditional appointment. Son Sann raised the lack of consultation in appointing Dien Del and Pok Sam-an when he met Gen Suchinda Kraprayoon on April 28, 1987.⁶¹ Since that time, Son Sann and Sak Sutsakhan had performed their duties separately, political on one side while military on the other, without close cooperation any longer. The rift continued until two separate political parties were formed to contest the 1993 general election.

The Prince Eventually Asks Elders To Help Arrange the Meeting

Following the failed attempt to hold a meeting in Pyongyang, Prince Sihanouk wrote a letter on July 18, 1987, to Cambodian elder dignitaries in France, namely Nhiek Tioulong, Chau Sen Kosal Chhum, Huy Kanthoul, Chhean Vam, Nong Kim Ny, Thonn

⁶¹ Brief translation of the conversation between His Excellency the President and General Suchinda Kraparyoon on April 28, 1987.

Ouk, and Duong Sam-ol, asking them to help arrange a meeting among the Cambodian parties in dispute⁶².

On this point, I recalled that in the Sangkum Reas Niyum era in the 1960s, when he was firmly in power, Prince Sihanouk consistently reasoned that, based on petitions presented in demonstrations or national congresses, he would decide to conduct political activity. That being the case, this time, he cited the intervention of the seven Cambodian elders, former military chiefs, former ministers, and former prime ministers, as a valid reason to go ahead with the meeting and negotiate with the Phnom Penh leaders. Of the seven dignitaries, Huy Kannthoul, Chhean Vam, Nong Kim Ny, and Thonn Ouk were members of the Council of Elders (Conseil des Sages) of the KPNLF, which publicly announced revoking confidence in Son Sann in 1985. Those dignitaries might perceive that the flexible stance of Prince Sihanouk could be more effective than Son Sann's position.

⁶² Hun Sen, 10 Years of Cambodia Process, 1979-1989, op. cit., p. 171.

Since the end of 1985, Huy Kannthoul and Thonn Ouk had actively participated with General Sak Sutsakhan in opposing Son Sann's KPNLF leadership. On September 4, 1987, the seven dignitaries wrote a letter to the Phnom Penh government, appealing for a meeting.⁶³ Regarding this Hun Sen-Sihanouk meeting, the Phnom Penh leader sent a letter to the prince in Paris before he left Pyongyang. However, the letter did not reach the prince, according to Prime Minister Hun Sen. The prime minister said, "The prince's entourage and bodyguards" created all kinds of conditions and dared to go so far as to make decisions on his behalf. To ensure direct contact with Prince Sihanouk, the Phnom Penh leader decided to send a telegram to the Prince through Prince Norodom Ranariddh, his son and his representative in Bangkok. Prince Ranariddh then took the telegram to Paris and presented it to Prince Sihanouk in person. The prince replied to Phnom Penh straightaway, thanking Hun Sen and agreeing to meet him. The prince let the Phnom Penh

⁶³ Hun Sen, 10 Years of Cambodia Process, 1979-1989, op. cit., p. 172.

party pick up a meeting date⁶⁴. He opted for France as the meeting venue because he had already received reassurance from the French Government. For the Phnom Penh leaders, they might consider the prince's concurrence to negotiate in France a golden opportunity they should not lose. Phnom Penh selected December 2, 1987 for the talks. The selection of December 2 was not made by chance, but also taking into consideration the historic significance of Pol Pot's collapse, for December 2, 1987 was the 9th founding anniversary of the Kampuchean United Front for National Salvation, formed in 1978 in Kratie province's Snuol district to muster forces to bring down the genocidal regime.

The planned Sihanouk-Hun Sen meeting in France did not impress the KPNLF at all, because it was believed that if China and ASEAN were unsupportive, the meeting would absolutely fail. In contrast, those close to Prince Sihanouk expressed optimism and congratulated the meeting. In his best-wishes letter in French to the prince on his 65th birthday, Nhiek Tioulong mainly said that

⁶⁴ Hun Sen, 10 Years of Cambodia Process, 1979-1989, op. cit., p. 173.

the prince's past actions had achieved fruitful results. At the end of the letter, he wrote that all Cambodians, inside and outside the country, pinned their only and last hope on the prince's father, the father of Cambodia's independence.⁶⁵ As for Prince Norodom Ranariddh, he wrote a greeting letter in French to his father, meaning as follows: "The 65th birthday anniversary of Papa is the most important turning point (le grand tournant) of the Cambodia problem, and this has ensued from your just and unremitting efforts in the search for an honourable and most correct solution for our so fortuneless country."⁶⁶ The optimism matched up with the policy of the Phnom Penh government, which was resolved to dissociate Prince Sihanouk from the alliance with the Khmer Rouge successfully, in line with the strategy of toppling the Pol Pot genocidal regime, even though it had to offer a top post, like the chief of state position, to the prince.

⁶⁵ Nhiek Tioulong, [A] Son Altesse Royale Samdech Norodom Sihanouk du Cambodge, Sucy-en-Brie, le 27 octobre 1987.

⁶⁶ Norodom Ranariddh, [lettre] datée de Bangkok, le 23 octobre 1987.

Sihanouk-Hun Sen Meeting at Fere-en-Tardenois

According to documents we had obtained, we could analyse that Prince Sihanouk would make use of his status as the former King to meet one of his subjects, while Phnom Penh would perceive that the Sihanouk-Hun Sen meeting was an encounter between adversaries, on an equal footing, to seek a solution to ending the conflict in Cambodia⁶⁷. Despite the different views on the meeting's formality, the meeting was eventually organised at Fere-en-Tardenois, France, on December 2, 1987. Prince Sihanouk promised not to conceal anything from any meeting he held with the Phnom Penh leader by providing us in the KPNLF with cassette tape recordings of the meetings. So, I, who was staying in the Bangkok office, prepared to listen to the tapes closely.

A few days later, I received the cassette tapes as promised through Voice of Khmer's radio working group. I spent several

⁶⁷ Hun Sen, 10 Years of Cambodia Process, 1979-1989, op. cit., pp. 174-175.

hours listening to all the discussions recorded on the many cassette tapes. It should be pointed out that on December 4, the last day of the meeting, the two sides issued a four-point joint communique as follows: 1. The Cambodia problem requires a political solution, not the use of military forces; 2. The Cambodian people themselves should resolve the Cambodia problem through negotiations; 3. To bring back peace and national reconstruction and create a political system of independence, democracy, sovereignty, neutrality, and non-alignment; 4. The next meeting will be held in January 1988.⁶⁸ These could be considered the meeting's positive points. As for Prince Sihanouk, he disseminated to the public the significance of the Sihanouk-Hun Sen meeting, saying mainly that the meeting between him and Prime Minister Hun Sen was genuine talks to try to resolve the Cambodia problem. Cambodian compatriots inside and outside the country congratulated the meeting, except those associated with the Khmer Rouge, the demagogic Blue Khmer (the prince directed

⁶⁸ Ek Sam Ol, Aide-Mémoire on the process of talks for a comprehensive political solution to the Cambodia problem.

this at us, the KPNLF, or at Son Sann), and some foreign governments with vested interests in continuing the conflict in Cambodia. As regards Prince Sihanouk, he accepted the meeting with Prime Minister Hun Sen as an encounter with the representative of Hanoi or Moscow. Nonetheless, the prince voiced disappointment with Hanoi for its failure to send an envoy to hold direct talks with him on the Cambodia-Vietnam problem, although among the Cambodian resistance movement heads, he was the only leader who had avoided talking in a wild manner as Son Sann and other people did, saying, “Vietnam invaded Cambodia” and categorically demanding direct talks between the Socialist Republic of Vietnam and the CGDK⁶⁹.

Prince Sihanouk called Prime Minister Hun Sen a young fox, *jeune renard* in French, in a note distributed to journalists at a FUNCINPEC global seminar held in France on December 20, 1987. He also raised several points that he needed clear-cut answers from Hun Sen when they met again in January 1988, as follows: in

⁶⁹ Norodom Sihanouk, Note pour la Presse, Roissy-en-France, le 20 Décembre 1987.

case a quadripartite national reconciliation government was formed, would Hun Sen agree to place the quadripartite government under the jurisdiction of a new Cambodian state that would be neither the People's Republic of Kampuchea of the Phnom Penh regime nor the Democratic Kampuchea regime of the Khmer Rouge. In other words, the prince sought a new regime⁷⁰. It is true that Prince Sihanouk demanded independence from France in the 1950s. Still, he was certainly faced with difficulties returning to Cambodia in the presence of Vietnamese troops in the country. However, the forces had assisted in liberating Cambodia from Pol Pot. Besides, it would certainly be difficult for Prince Sihanouk to distance himself from Democratic Kampuchea (Khmer Rouge), which secured the United Nations recognition, if there were no acceptable new legal formula for, at least, the country's name, national flag, anthem, and so forth.

In the note distributed to the journalists at the FUNCINPEC global seminar, Prince Sihanouk wrote that when they met again

⁷⁰ As referred to above.

in January 1988, if Prime Minister Hun Sen failed to answer clearly the points he raised above, his wife, Princess Monique, FUNCINPEC Second Vice Chairman, would object to his signing a joint communique with Hun Sen as previously. As for the third Sihanouk-Hun Sen meeting scheduled for April 1988 in Pyongyang, it would be postponed as well⁷¹.

Prince Sihanouk Asks to Change Cambodia's Name, National Anthem, National Flag

In preparation to meet with the Phnom Penh leader, Prince Sihanouk issued an announcement specifically directed at the CGDK and its sponsor countries, as well as to its friends, saying his holiday absence from the Democratic Kampuchea presidency was not just limited to May 7, 1988, but indefinite so long as the Khmer Rouge (the Democratic Kampuchea party) and the blue

⁷¹ As referred to above.

Khmer (KPNLF), his two partners in the CGDK, still disagreed to change the name of the state, national anthem, and national flag and so long as the Khmer Rouge and the blue Khmer continued to violate the people's human rights. For the KPNLF, the prince launched two attacks on it: 1. he used the term blue Khmer that had previously been used with the pro-Son Ngoc Thanh Cambodian rightist, republican traitor in addition to the word demagogic; 2. he also accused the KPNLF of human rights violations. In that period, some nongovernmental organisations accused leaders of the KPNLF-controlled Nang Chan and Ritthisen camps of human rights violations. However, this did not mean that the other Cambodian refugee camps, including the Khmer Rouge camps and the camps under the control of Sihanoukists, were immune to the human rights violations either. Prince Sihanouk lodged a protest with the EU Parliament over the charge that all resistance movements, including his, had committed human rights violations. The prince responded that the charge was unjust and

asked the EU Parliament to send an envoy to investigate the Site B refugee camp and the Phnom Sruoch base⁷².

In reality, because they did not personally live in refugee camps, political leaders could not ensure effective camp management, as real power lay with Thai army officers who also controlled the leaders of Cambodian refugee camps. Political leaders had mostly moral and cultural influence. Therefore, the prince's attack on the KPNLF was just political pressure that he skillfully employed to fight back against his opponents.

Along with announcing his resignation as President of Democratic Kampuchea, Prince Sihanouk also set another condition for his two partners to accept: changing Cambodia's name, national anthem, and national flag. He asked that the name of Kampuchea in Cambodian, Cambodge in French, and Cambodia in English be selected. As for the national flag, it should be the pre-war one, with blue and red colours and the white

⁷² Norodom Sihanouk, Télégramme, Au Parlement européen, Strasbourg, France, published on www.norodomsihanouk.info on 2 September 2004.

picture of the three-steeple Angkor Wat Temple in the middle. For the national anthem, use the second verse of the Nokor Reach melody, used by Cambodia in the 1940s, 1950s, and 1960s, starting with the sentence, “the stone temple hidden in the middle of the jungle...,”

Son Sann Does Not Attend Meeting, but Secretly Seeks to Get in Touch with Hun Sen

To prove that the KPNLF was neither an obstacle nor an opposition to the Sihanouk-Hun Sen meeting in December, the KPNLF issued a press release clarifying an Agence France-Presse article published in the Bangkok Post on December 9, 1987. The press release said that Prince Sihanouk and Prime Minister Son Sann held many meetings to discuss the planned Sihanouk-Hun Sen meeting in Paris and New York at every UN General Assembly meeting. Prime Minister Son Sann told the prince he supported any measures aimed at ending the suffering of the Cambodian

people, thereby supporting the prince's initiative now and in the future⁷³. The press release added that Prime Minister Son Sann had never refused to join the peace-seeking initiative to withdraw Vietnamese troops from Cambodia and organise a free general election to move toward national reconciliation. The press release also said that Prime Minister Son Sann regularly held discussions with people in the camps and KPNLF cadres (a term locals used at the time). Nonetheless, regarding participation in the subsequent second Sihanouk-Hun Sen meeting in January, the press release did not clearly state whether Son Sann would definitely attend, saying the prime minister was currently engaged in scores of works and could not promise to accept more new assignments⁷⁴. At that time, Son Sann's position seemed very ambiguous. On the one hand, he dared not take any action that deviated from China's position and that of some ASEAN countries led by Thailand. That position demanded that the Vietnamese

⁷³ Office of the Prime Minister, Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea, Press Communiqué, December 9, 1987.

⁷⁴ As referred to above.

troop withdrawal or talks with Vietnam take place first. On the other hand, Son Sann did not want to see Prince Sihanouk always lead the initiative to negotiate with Phnom Penh or seek peace.

In a statement issued on December 21, 1987, Son Sann said he would join the Cambodian parties' meeting (the Sihanouk-Hun Sen meeting) as a private person, not as the prime minister of the CGDK, if Vietnam also attended. The statement, however, pointed out that if, for any reason, Vietnam were unable to attend the Cambodian parties' meeting right away, Prime Minister Son Sann would ask it to issue a solemn statement (copies of which would be sent to the UN Secretary-General, in particular to the five superpowers, members of the UN Security Council) ahead of the Cambodian parties' meeting, pledging that it would pull all its forces out of Cambodia most speedily, following the Cambodian quadripartite meeting⁷⁵. In brief, Son Sann wanted to join Prince Sihanouk's meeting if Vietnam pledged to withdraw its forces from

⁷⁵ Son Sann, Statement of H E Son Sann, Prime Minister of the Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea and President of the Khmer People's National Liberation Front, December 21, 1987.

Cambodia in writing, in the presence of the United Nations, specifically of the five giant countries, permanent members of the UN Security Council.

On the Vietnamese troop pullout, the People's Republic of Kampuchea government said Vietnam had already withdrawn 20,000 troops in November 1987 and would continue to withdraw. Nevertheless, Phnom Penh linked the complete withdrawal of Vietnamese forces from Cambodia to the cessation of military assistance to all parties in dispute, as specified in the five-point appeal of October 8, 1987⁷⁶. Anyway, although he apparently took a hardline stance in the talks, not different from that of the Khmer Rouge, Son Sann assigned his confidant, General Thach Reng, to secretly contact Phnom Penh, without letting us in Bangkok know in the least. In a document in the style of an appointment that we discovered several years later, Son Sann issued a special decision on November 23, 1987, appointing Gen Thach Reng as the KPNLF

⁷⁶ Ek Sam-ol, aide-mémoire on the process of talks for a common political solution to the Cambodian problem, op. cit.

president's personal representative to seek a solution to the Vietnamese troop withdrawal and national reconciliation⁷⁷.

I understood that the KPNLF president may have acted secretly on Thach Reng's idea, since the latter had contact with a French secret agency that might have advised the KPNLF to contact Phnom Penh directly for talks. Nevertheless, Thach Reng's mission did not achieve any success because Prime Minister Hun Sen had refused to meet him. In an aide-mémoire to Son Sann, Gen Thach Reng reasoned that the reason Hun Sen had refused to meet was that he had received a letter from an opponent of the KPNLF President in France belonging to Gen Sak Sutsakhan's faction. The letter presented an ugly report about the KPNLF and specifically about Son Sann, prompting Hun Sen to decide not to meet with the KPNLF president's representative. In the aide-mémoire, Thach Reng reported that Hun Sen was resolved to do everything to sweet-talk Prince Sihanouk into cooperating with

⁷⁷ Son Sann, Front National de Libération du Peuple Khmer, Décision n° 87/SPECIAL/FNL, le 23 décembre 1987.

Phnom Penh and that Hun Sen had rejected Son Sann, but had made known that if Son Sann wanted to join the next Sihanouk-Hun Sen meeting, he could do so. The aide-mémoire also reported that leaflets had circulated in the country demanding Prince Sihanouk's quick return to Cambodia and that the KPNLF's voice had never been heard. Finally, Thach Reng opined that the struggle should continue, but the problem was how much ASEAN countries, China, and the United States would support the KPNLF⁷⁸.

After negotiating with Prince Sihanouk from December 2 to 4, 1987, Prime Minister Hun Sen wrote a letter to the seven elders, including Nhiek Tioulong, Chau Sen Kosal Chhum, Huy Kanthoul, Chhean Vam, Nong Kim Ny, Thonn Ouk, and Duong Sam Ol, thanking and calling on them to help try to invite the parties of Son Sann and Khieu Samphan to join the later meetings⁷⁹. That said, Prime Minister Hun Sen intended to hold talks with all Cambodian

⁷⁸ Thach Reng, Memorandum, (date illisible) février 1988 ?

⁷⁹ Hun Sen, 10 Years of Cambodia Process, 1979-1989, op. cit., p. 180.

parties. Still, he should be careful to avoid anything that would diminish the importance of the Sihanouk-Hun Sen meeting, which had just come into being. It could be argued that Hun Sen's refusal to meet the KPNLF president's representative had two reasons. If the meeting were granted, it would appear as letting Son Sann exploit too much benefit, for Son Sann and the KPNLF had all along been regarding the Phnom Penh regime as illegal and as Vietnam's lackey or puppet. In other words, the meeting should not be held secretly, as Son Sann could both meet and curse. Besides, if Son Sann were met, this could lead Prince Sihanouk to conceive that he was not that useful for Phnom Penh. On this point, Prince Sihanouk said at a meeting with ASEAN envoys on December 11, 1987, in Fere-en-Tardenois, France, that Hun Sen needed Son Sann and Khieu Samphan more than Sihanouk⁸⁰.

Son Sann and his confidants had completely covered up their secret attempt to contact the leaders in Phnom Penh. We young

⁸⁰ As referred to above.

people staying in Bangkok at the time were convinced there was no bid for any secret contact. We believed Son Sann was not someone who would say this but do otherwise. Besides, we were never aware that Son Sann had officially appointed Thach Reng as his representative to contact the Phnom Penh leaders secretly. The secret of Son Sann was leaked when Prince Sihanouk held the second talks with Prime Minister Hun Sen at Saint-Germain-en-Laye on January 20-21, 1988, because at that time Hun Sen informed Prince Sihanouk of Son Sann's attempts to contact him secretly through Thach Reng. Prince Sihanouk then disseminated this news widely in his report on the second Sihanouk-Hun Sen meeting.

On January 19, 1988, one day ahead of the second Sihanouk-Hun Sen meeting, Son Sann saw Prince Sihanouk to reiterate the same position that he would join a meeting if Vietnam's representative were also present at the encounter or if Vietnam sent a letter to the UN Secretary General, pledging to pull

all its troops out of Cambodia following that meeting⁸¹. A press release on the meeting issued by the office of Prime Minister Son Sann in Paris did not mention the secret attempt to meet with Hun Sen. However, on January 23, 1988, shortly after Prince Sihanouk published the news about Son Sann's bid to make the secret contact, the KPNLF office in Paris, where Son Sann was currently staying, issued another press release vehemently rejecting the news about Son Sann's attempt to seek secret negotiations directly with Hun Sen, claiming that the news was untrue and purely cooked up by Hun Sen. The press release further said that as the prime minister of the legitimate government recognised by the United Nations, Son Sann did not have the idea of meeting anyone of the illegal Phnom Penh regime.⁸² In addition, we in Bangkok also helped reject the news about Son Sann's secret attempt, asserting that it was false.⁸³ More than that, I (Ieng

⁸¹ Office of the Prime Minister, Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea, Communiqué de Presse, Paris, le 19 janvier 1988.

⁸² Le Bureau d'Information du FNLPK à Paris, Communiqué, Paris, le 23 janvier 1988.

⁸³ Khmer People's National Liberation Front, Press Release, January 26, 1988.

Mouly), as an assistant to the KPNLF president, also wrote to the Bangkok Post editor to clarify an article by Jacques Bekaert that said, “KPNLF President Son Sann has made a secret attempt to hold talks with Hun Sen” and that “this attempt has led to vigorous criticism by the ASEAN country grouping⁸⁴.” In my letter, I rejected the baseless news because I was convinced that Son Sann did not have a plan, as he often proclaimed, to meet with Hun Sen without the presence of Vietnam’s representative, in accordance with the CGDK’s political line. Besides, I wrote the denial because I was unaware of the secret affairs Son Sann conducted in Paris with Thach Reng and his family members.

Second Meeting at Saint-Germain-en-Laye

At the second Sihanouk-Hun Sen meeting, Prince Sihanouk wanted Prime Minister Hun Sen’s answers about the Vietnamese

⁸⁴ Ieng Mouly, Letter to the Editor, Bangkok Post, Bangkok, January 29, 1988.

troop withdrawal and the creation of a new state that was neither the People's Republic of Kampuchea nor the State of Democratic Kampuchea of the Khmer Rouge. Prince Sihanouk imposed conditions on Khieu Samphan and Son Sann to change Cambodia's name, national flag, and national anthem of the Khmer Rouge, respectively, to Kampuchea in Cambodian, the pre-war national flag, and the national anthem, if he was still willing to cooperate further. Concerning this point, Khieu Samphan, on the Khmer Rouge's behalf, sent a letter to Son Sann, asking him not to relinquish the Democratic Kampuchea State, which was legal and recognised by the United Nations. Khieu Samphan wrote, "We need to stand firm on the status of Democratic Kampuchea, the sole legitimate state of Cambodia." What was laughable was that this Khmer Rouge leader asserted that the "Democratic Kampuchea State was born from the National Assembly elected by the general, direct, free, and secret election in February 1976" (Khieu Samphan failed, however, to indicate the day when the Khmer Rouge election was held in February 1976). At that time, the Khmer Rouge still persistently rejected Prince Sihanouk's proposal, while the KPNLF had no problem accepting it.

At the second meeting at Saint-Germain-en-Laye, Prime Minister Hun Sen asked Prince Sihanouk on what legal basis the new regime would be created, for the prime minister was convinced that only the People's Republic of Kampuchea was endowed with solid forces to topple the Pol Pot genocidal regime, preventing it from returning to power again. At the previous meeting last December, Hun Sen asked Prince Sihanouk to allow the two parties to cooperate to settle the Cambodia problem; that is, the prince should return to lead the People's Republic of Kampuchea while his forces would be offered an important role in national construction⁸⁵. In reality, the Phnom Penh leader had a clear-cut strategy and tactics in the talks: 1. preserve the achievements born from the January 7, 1979 victory, and 2. dismantle the genocidal regime, including its military forces and political structure.

⁸⁵ Keo Baphnom, (in Khmer) Samdech Hun Sen and Historic Declaration, Aide Memoire, Phnom Penh, 2010, p. 77.

Also, at the second meeting in January 1988, Hun Sen gauged Prince Sihanouk's view to see how he would conceive a secret Hun Sen-Son Sann meeting if Son Sann asked for it. According to the Phnom Penh leader's assessment, Sihanouk did not want to let Son Sann join the Hun Sen-Sihanouk meeting, meaning he did not want the Son Sann party to meet its Phnom Penh counterpart.⁸⁶ While Prince Sihanouk reported that Son Sann intended to meet secretly with the Phnom Penh party, Prime Minister Hun Sen also disclosed to reporters the letter of representation Son Sann had given to Thach Reng to contact him. Hun Sen's action was to resist Son Sann and support Prince Sihanouk. Hun Sen assured the prince that cooperation between the two parties was important and should continue to make headway, despite the other two parties' refusal to join. Moreover, the disclosure of the secret meeting proposed by Son Sann was meant to show Prince Sihanouk that, although his partners in the

⁸⁶ As referred to above.

coalition government did not come out to negotiate with Phnom Penh, some had secretly asked for a meeting.

On February 20, 1988, from Beijing, Prince Sihanouk issued a message to his Cambodian compatriots, read by Prince Norodom Ranariddh, his son and his representative in Bangkok, to explain the process of the talks he had recently had with Prime Minister Hun Sen. Prince Sihanouk offered the reason that, due to Hun Sen's refusal to dissolve the People's Republic of Kampuchea and his intransigence in disbanding the Democratic Kampuchea regime, he was still unable to return to the country. In that message, Prince Sihanouk also attacked the other parties, saying they did not think of national interests but only of their own. He called Khmer leaders in Phnom Penh, Khmer Viet Minh, the Khmer Rouge, Khmer communists, and the KPNLF Blue Khmer or Khmer Serei republican. Nonetheless, Prime Minister Hun Sen drew an optimistic conclusion about the second Sihanouk-Hun Sen meeting in France, saying that although no joint communique was issued at the end of the meeting, the two parties agreed it

was another progressive step toward a genuine solution to the Cambodia problem. They also agreed to meet again.

I wish to end the first part of the tortuous path to peace in Cambodia here, but I will continue with the second part in another book. In the peace process, the Sihanouk-Hun Sen meeting was the key solution to the Cambodian problem, which had two separate aspects: national and international.

In the national aspect, Prime Minister Hun Sen emphasised national reconciliation based on the dismantling of the Pol Pot genocidal regime, including its military forces and political structure. The prime minister was sure that no parties would oppose the policy of toppling Pol Pot. The Sihanouk-Hun Sen meeting broke an impasse and initiated national reconciliation, a major factor in peacebuilding and Cambodia's survival. During his talk with Prince Sihanouk, Hun Sen firmly defended the gains and achievements of the January 7 Victory. This meeting also showed that Cambodians themselves made tremendous efforts to seek a solution to the crisis in Cambodia. The move by both Prince Sihanouk and Prime Minister Hun Sen pressured all stakeholders

to re-examine their strategies. The Sihanouk-Hun Sen meeting could not have happened without the dauntless resolve of the two main actors in Cambodia's modern history. The valiant Prime Minister Hun Sen led the sharpest fight to overthrow the genocidal regime, no matter the sacrifice. Prince Norodom Sihanouk, whose every activity was connected to the faith of the Cambodian nation, was determined to do everything possible; even he had to face any obstacle, provided that the suffering of his people -his children and grandchildren- could be brought to an end.

Conclusion

In general, the fate of people is always linked to the nation's destiny. The nation's destiny depends on the quality or ingenuity of its leaders and on the way it is governed. Between 1960 and 1970, Cambodia was in a context in which the superpowers used their own forces to compete for influence over small and weak countries. One bloc waged war in the name of communist ideology to liberate humankind from colonialism and capitalism by building

a progressive, clean, and equal society, while the other waged war to protect human rights, freedom, and dignity. In that era, Cambodia chose the middle path, adopting a neutral line that normally did not lean toward either bloc. Moreover, Buddhist ideology was combined with socialist ideas to create a national ideology called "Buddhist Socialism." Nonpartisan politics had brought about peace for a while, but in the end, they had been unable to prevent the flames of war from setting Cambodia on fire. For nearly three decades, our country had been exposed to devastation, leading to the death of millions of Cambodians.

Most people who survived the war can appreciate the real meaning of peace and how peace, especially peace in freedom, is valued. They will certainly acknowledge that peace that brings about human rights, freedom, and dignity is of immense and inestimable value. This peace in freedom is what every Cambodian desires.

Among those who survived the war, some used their intelligence, acumen, and knowledge of time and place to survive. Others survived by relying on gods and faith in their destiny in

previous lives, leaving themselves to be led by predestination, meaning they left everything in their lives for the gods to decide. All those people have accumulated experiences that future generations of Cambodians should learn from.

What we can understand through past political events is:

- Cambodia's neutrality from 1957 to 1970 could have avoided war if the country had genuine unity and solidarity, and if neighbouring countries had also been at peace with us. In addition, our internal policies lacked overwhelming support from all political quarters. In truth, the Sangkum Reas Niyum Movement aimed to achieve national unity, but Cambodian politicians were split into different categories: the Khmer Rouge, Blue Khmer, Pink Khmer, and so forth. Besides, even though we declared that we adhered to an unwaveringly neutral policy, the United States still found fault with and accused Cambodia of being a sanctuary for Vietcong forces, who were carrying out a national liberation war against the United States. Therefore, the Vietnam War was spreading to Cambodia.

- China played a key role in the Indochinese War and was strongly involved in the Cambodia dispute. China unreservedly supported Prince Sihanouk in all circumstances that no other superpower could match. Nevertheless, at the same time, China was also the closest ally of Pol Pot's Democratic Kampuchea regime. This served China's interests in containing other superpowers' influence in the region.
- Throughout his life, Prince Norodom Sihanouk played a historic role and tied his fate to the destiny of the entire Cambodian nation. When talking about post-World War II Cambodia, one cannot forget Prince Norodom Sihanouk. The prince was crowned king in his youth in the French protectorate era. Later, he conducted a royal crusade to obtain Cambodia's independence from France. He transferred the throne to his father, an unprecedented move, to engage in politics. During the Khmer Republic, he suffered untold insults and contempt. He lived under the Pol Pot regime, which imprisoned him, slaughtered his relatives and denounced the regime in the Sangkum Reas Niyum era as a

feudal one. Thanks to the overthrow of the Pol Pot regime by Vietnam's forces and the troops of the Kampuchean United Front for National Salvation, the prince was able to survive and later free himself from the Khmer Rouge's control. He had the ingenuity to maintain the Cambodian people's unbreakable love and loyalty. The former king, or king-father or king-grandfather, showed high-calibre ability to protect his political life across eras, no matter how tremendous the obstacles. He survived and returned to political leadership, ultimately achieving a peace agreement that no other Cambodian politician has managed.

- The Khmer Republic regime of Lon Nol, born from the events of March 18, 1970, used the momentum of Cambodian nationalism against Vietnam, especially among most Cambodian city dwellers and intellectuals, to gain legitimacy and support from the Cambodian people. Nonetheless, the leadership's incompetence and corruption that ravaged society in the Khmer Republic era turned this regime into the weakest, forcing it to depend entirely on United States aid.

This regime could no longer survive, no matter how much aid it received.

- The Khmer Rouge Pol Pot regime exploited the overthrow of Prince Norodom Sihanouk by the Lon Nol group in 1970 to use the prince's name and popularity to set up a national united front, waging a war of attrition to seize power. Militarily, at first, the Pol Pot force made use of communist Vietnam's troops as a vanguard to attack and decimate the Khmer Republic army, but later it waged war against the Vietnamese, prompting them to return to Vietnam. Pol Pot practised deception, abused human rights, and committed indiscriminate and extrajudicial killings as a means of holding on to his power—this manner of governing turned into unforgivable genocide and crimes against humanity. The uprising resistance movement against Pol Pot emerged in various forms, as internal movements and as resistance movements along the Cambodian-Thai border. Nevertheless, owing to Pol Pot's arrangement for the masses to live in a cooperative style, eating together and working together, the

provision of supplies to the uprising resistance movements in the interior was extremely difficult. Therefore, if there were no exterior forces in a timely fashion, although the people in general detested it the most, the overthrow of the Pol Pot regime would take longer, which might allow the clique to continue massacring tens of thousands, hundreds of thousands more people. Anyway, because of the lack of support from the people, the Pol Pot regime could survive only three years, eight months, and 20 days, shorter than Lon Nol's republic regime.

- The Vietnamese troops, which used to fight shoulder to shoulder with the Khmer Rouge at the beginning of the war against Lon Nol, finally were obliged to help Phnom Penh to topple the Khmer Rouge Pol Pot regime on January 7, 1979. Nonetheless, the presence of the Vietnamese troops in Cambodia was accused of being an act of aggression, which became the motive for the setting up of nationalist movements against Vietnam by many Cambodians, specifically overseas. This was because the Cambodian

people in general were always imbued with the perception of their history that every intervention by Cambodia's neighbours had been an invasion to nip at and swallow Cambodian territory. Meanwhile, the Khmer Rouge exploited this nationalistic sentiment, and Prince Norodom Sihanouk and former Prime Minister Son Sann joined them to form an anti-Vietnam front in the form of the coalition government of Democratic Kampuchea. However, the great tragedy the Cambodian people suffered under the genocidal regime led to stronger global condemnation of the Khmer Rouge. This tendency was in agreement with the policy of dismantling the Khmer Rouge genocide regime, which Prime Minister Hun Sen constantly maintained and led its implementation effectively.

- In the epoch when our country fell into the abyss of devastation, a young Cambodian leader emerged, born into an authentic Cambodian peasant family. He was resolved to attack and topple the genocidal regime at all costs to free the Cambodian people from slavery, regardless of whether he

needed to seek assistance from foreign forces. The young Hun Sen employed the successful strategy of overthrowing the genocidal regime to counter the economic and political embargo until he became an indispensable partner in all Cambodian peace talks. Once seen as Vietnam's puppet, Prime Minister Hun Sen sat on an equal footing at the negotiating table with Prince Norodom Sihanouk. The first Sihanouk-Hun Sen meeting at Fere-en-Tardenois broke the stalemate, paving the way for the opposing sides in Cambodia to talk directly. This was a significant step toward a peaceful solution for the Cambodian people and Cambodia.

- Charting the history cycle, my life went on like that of other Cambodian compatriots, reaping the benefits of peace borne of the consequences of war. For a while, I became a refugee, living alone far from my homeland in a free country that could help assiduous, life-struggling people achieve success. Nevertheless, as a Cambodian, nobody could distance themselves from and not feel agitated with grief at the sufferings and pains endured by the Cambodian people in

Cambodia. My political life began with adventure, but this political lifeline followed the path of patriotism and true love for Cambodian land and fellow Cambodian compatriots. Every success was achieved through all-out physical and moral effort, but it was not easy.

Acronyms

ANS	Armée Nationale Sihanoukiste
AGKE	Association des Khmers à l'Étranger
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
CDL	Comité de Liaison
CGDK	Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea
COMEX	Comité Exécutif
DPPU	Displaced Persons Protection Unit
FUNK	Front Uni National du Kampuchea
FBI	Federal Bureau of Investigation
FUNCINPEC	Front Uni National pour un Cambodge Indépendant Neutre Pacifique Et Coopératif
FUKSANA	Front Uni Khmer pour le Salut National
GRUNK	Gouvernement Royal d'Union Nationale du Kampuchea
GOUPECIN	Gouvernement Provisoire de l'État du Cambodge Indépendant

HEC	Hautes Études Commerciales
ISOC	Internal Security Operation Command
IPKF	International Peacekeeping Forces
ICK	International Conference on Kampuchea
KPNAF	Khmer People's National Liberation Armed Forces
KPNLF	Khmer People's National Liberation Front
NCR	Non-Communist Resistance
PERMICO	Permanent Military Committee for Coordination
PCCS	Provisional Central Committee for the Salvation of KPNLF
SNC	Supreme National Council
SCF	Société de Comptabilité de France
UNBRO	United Nations Border Relief Operation

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- សម្តេច ហ៊ុន សែន និង ពាក្យសន្យាជាប្រវត្តិសាស្ត្រ, ឯកសារជំនួយស្មារតី ភ្នំពេញ ២០១០ ។

ក្រុមស្រាវជ្រាវ ឆយ យីហ៊ាង, ប្រែង ពិសិដ្ឋ, លេង ណែតឹម, ម៉ិល វាសនា, កិន ណារ៉ុង, ម៉ម សារិត, ជា មុនីឫទ្ធិ, គិន ភា

- សម្តេចអគ្គមហាសេនាបតីតេជោ ហ៊ុន សែន, នាយករដ្ឋមន្ត្រី ប្រសូតពី ត្រកូលកសិករ, រោងពុម្ពពន្លឺពេជ្រ, ភ្នំពេញ ២០០៧ ។

ខៀវ សំផន, សុន សេន

- សេចក្តីថ្លែងការណ៍របស់ភាគីកម្ពុជាប្រជាធិបតេយ្យ ចំពោះតួនាទីបច្ចុប្បន្ន និង អនាគតរបស់រណសិរ្សជាតិរំដោះប្រជាពលរដ្ឋខ្មែរ និងប្រធានរបស់ខ្លួន, កម្ពុជាប្រជាធិបតេយ្យ, ថ្ងៃទី ១២ កុម្ភៈ ១៩៨៦ ។

ចាយ ធុល, ឈាន វ៉ែម, ហ៊ុយ គន្ធាល, លឹម គ្រី, នង គឹមនី, ប៉ុន អ៊ុក, ស៊ឹម វ៉ា

- ឯកសារគ្នាចំណងជើង, ប៉ារីស, ១៥ មិថុនា ១៩៨៥ ។

ឡឿង មាលី

- អគ្គលេខាធិការ ស.ខ.ប (ទូលថ្វាយសម្តេច នរោត្តម សីហនុ), ប៉ារីស, ថ្ងៃទី០៨ សីហា ១៩៧៩។

ជឿន ដែល

- សំបុត្រផ្ទាល់ដៃជូនលោកប្រធាន, បន្ទាយអំពិល, ថ្ងៃទី ១៧ តុលា ១៩៨២។
- សំបុត្រផ្ទាល់ដៃជូនលោកប្រធាន, បន្ទាយអំពិល, ថ្ងៃទី ១៩ តុលា ១៩៨២។

នេត គុណ និង សាយ បូរី

- សេចក្តីកត់ហេតុនៃការិយាល័យរៀបចំបោះឆ្នោតជ្រើសរើសគណកម្មការនាយកសម្រាប់ឆ្នាំ ១៩៧៩-៨០ ថ្ងៃទី ៨ មេសា ១៩៧៩ ។

នរោត្តម រណប្បទី, សុន សេន, សក់ ស៊ុតសាខន

- សេចក្តីប្រកាសព័ត៌មាន, ថ្ងៃទី ១៨ វិច្ឆិកា ១៩៨៦ ។

សក់ ស៊ុតសាខន (ឧត្តមសេនីយ)

- សេចក្តីសម្រេច, គណកម្មាធិការបណ្តោះអាសន្ននៃអគ្គសេនាធិការ នៃកងទ័ពជាតិរំដោះប្រជាពលរដ្ឋខ្មែរ, អំពិល, ថ្ងៃទី ៨ វិច្ឆិកា ១៩៨២ ។
- លិខិតសម្ងាត់ផ្ទាល់ខ្លួនធ្វើជូនឯកឧត្តម ស៊ីន សាន ប្រធានរណសិរ្សជាតិរំដោះប្រជាពលរដ្ឋខ្មែរ ថ្ងៃទី៥ ធ្នូ ១៩៨៥ ។
- លិខិតជូនឯកឧត្តម ស៊ីន សាន ប្រធាន រ.ជ.រ.ប.ខ., ថ្ងៃទី ១៨ ធ្នូ ១៩៨៦ ។

សិន សំណាង

- អនុសញ្ញាពាណិជ្ជកម្ម និង សាសនា ថ្ងៃទី ១៨ តុលា ១៨៥៦ នៅក្នុង ទស្សនាវដ្តីរាជបណ្ឌិតសភាកម្ពុជា លេខ១ ត្រីមាសទី១, ភ្នំពេញ, ២០០២ ។

សិន សាន

- ប្រសាសន៍ថ្លែងក្នុងឱកាសមហាសន្និបាត នៃប្រជាពលរដ្ឋខ្មែរ នៅសហរដ្ឋអាមេរិក, ព្រឹត្តិបត្រ រ.ជ.រ.ប.ខ ខែកក្កដា ១៩៨១ ។
- សេចក្តីប្រកាសចំពោះមុខសារព័ត៌មាននានា, ព្រឹត្តិបត្រ រ.ជ.រ.ប.ខ ខែកញ្ញា ១៩៨១ ។
- សេចក្តីអំពាវនាវរបស់លោកប្រធានរណសិរ្សជាតិរំដោះប្រជាពលរដ្ឋខ្មែរ អគ្គមេបញ្ជាការនៃកងទ័ពជាតិរំដោះប្រជាពលរដ្ឋខ្មែរ, អំពិល, ថ្ងៃទី ១៨ ខែតុលា ១៩៨២ ។
- លិខិតប្រធាន រ.ជ.រ.ប.ខ.ផ្ញើជូនលោកឧត្តមសេនីយ សក់ ស៊ុតសាខន, ថ្ងៃទី ២២ កុម្ភៈ ១៩៨៧ ។
- លិខិតប្រធាន រ.ជ.រ.ប.ខ. និងជារដ្ឋមន្ត្រីទី១នៃរដ្ឋាភិបាលចម្រុះកម្ពុជា ប្រជាធិបតេយ្យ ជូនឯកឧត្តម ខៀវ សំផន អនុប្រធានកម្ពុជាប្រជាធិបតេយ្យ ទទួលបន្ទុកកិច្ចការបរទេស, ថ្ងៃទី ១៦ មីនា ១៩៨៧ ។

- សេចក្តីបកប្រែសង្ខេបពាក្យសន្ទនារវាង ឯ.ឧ. ប្រធាន ជាមួយឧ. សុជិន្នា ក្រាប្រយង្គ កាលពីថ្ងៃទី២៨ មេសា ១៩៨៧ ។
- លិខិតរដ្ឋន្ត្រីទី១ នៃរដ្ឋាភិបាលចម្រុះកម្ពុជាប្រជាធិបតេយ្យជូនឯកឧត្តម ខៀវ សំផន អនុប្រធានកម្ពុជាប្រជាធិបតេយ្យទទួលបន្ទុកកិច្ចការបរទេស, ថ្ងៃទី ៧ ឧសភា ១៩៨៧ ។
- លិខិតរដ្ឋន្ត្រីទី១ ជូនចំពោះឯកឧត្តម ខៀវ សំផន អនុប្រធានកម្ពុជា ប្រជាធិបតេយ្យទទួលបន្ទុកកិច្ចការបរទេស, ថ្ងៃទី ១៤ ឧសភា ១៩៨៧ ។

សុន សេន, អៀង មូលី, ស៊ីន ស៊ីប្លែ, ឧត្តមសេនីយ៍ត្រី ទួន បាយ

- សេចក្តីប្រកាសព័ត៌មាន, ថ្ងៃទី ២៧ សីហា ១៩៨៧ ។

ហ៊ុន សែន (សម្តេចតេជោ)

- ១០ ឆ្នាំនៃដំណើរកម្ពុជា ១៩៧៩-១៩៨៩, គ្រឹះស្ថានបោះពុម្ពផ្សាយ អប់រំ, រោងពុម្ពលុប បូជាន់, ភ្នំពេញ, ១៩៨៨ ។
- បទសម្ភាសន៍សម្តេចតេជោផ្តល់ជូនក្រុមស្រាវជ្រាវប្រវត្តិសាស្ត្រដឹកនាំ ដោយ ឯ.ឧ.អៀង មូលី និង ស៊ីន សំណាង កាលពីថ្ងៃទី ១៦ មីនា ២០១០ ។

អ៊ុន តាំ

- ឆ្នាំខួបទី៥ នៃរដ្ឋាភិបាលចម្រុះត្រីភាគី និងសម្លេងភ្នំពេញ, ទស្សនាវដ្តី
នគរខ្មែរឆ្នាំទី៩ លេខ៩៨ មិថុនា ១៩៨៦ ។

អេង-សុត

- ឯកសារមហាបុរសខ្មែរ - ផែនដីព្រះអង្គឌួង-ភ្នំពេញ ១៩៦៩ ។

ឯក សំអុល

- ជំនួយស្មារតីពីដំណើរការចរចាដើម្បីដំណោះស្រាយនយោបាយ
រួមនៃជម្លោះកម្ពុជា, ថ្ងៃទី ២ ធ្នូ ២០០៩ ។

ឱក សិរីសោភក្តិ

- លិខិតជូនលោកប្រធានរណសិរ្សជាតិរំដោះប្រជាពលរដ្ឋខ្មែរ,
សមរភូមិមុខ, ក្រេតេយ៍ ថ្ងៃទី ១ មេសា ឆ្នាំ ១៩៨២ ។

អៀង មូលី

- អត្ថបទសរសេរដៃគ្មានចុះថ្ងៃខែ ។