



**គណបក្សជាតិខ្មែរ**  
**KHMER NATION PARTY**  
**PARTI DE LA NATION KHMERE**  
 សីលធម៌ - សម្បជញ្ញវិបាក - យុត្តិធម៌

July 7, 1997

**INTERNATIONAL ASSISTANCE TO THE ILLEGAL  
 PHNOM PENH GOVERNMENT MUST BE SUSPENDED**

The **coup d'état** staged over the weekend by Second Prime Minister Hun Sen must be clearly condemned. Hun Sen pretends that it was not a **coup d'état** but facts and legal considerations clearly qualify his seizing absolute power in Phnom Penh as a **coup d'état**:

1- Backed only by military force Hun Sen declared that he has "dismissed" First Prime Minister Norodom Ranariddh (Reuters, July 7, 1997)

On what ground, following what rule, what law, what article of the Constitution, what legal procedure can the Second Prime Minister unilaterally "dismiss" the First Prime Minister ? The National Assembly has not been convened, Members of Parliament (MPs) have not been consulted, general elections have not been organized, yet with only the backing of his tanks Hun Sen gave to himself the right to dismiss the First Prime Minister and to announce the formation of a new government !

2- Hen Sen declared that FUNCINPEC MPs who "renounced Ranariddh as their leader could keep their positions in Parliament" (Associated Press, July 7, 1997)

Curiously enough Hun Sen has also given to himself the right to dismiss and to appoint MPs without feeling the need to organize any elections since those FUNCINPEC MPs who remain loyal to Prince Ranariddh will be "dismissed" by Hun Sen and "replaced" by others loyal to Hun Sen !

On behalf of the National United Front (NUF) of which the Khmer Nation Party (KNP) is a founding member and in my capacity as former finance minister, I urge the international community to suspend its assistance to the illegal government of Phnom Penh. Representatives of donor countries and organizations as well as international financial institutions recently met in Paris on July 1 - 2. They agreed to attach strict conditions to any further assistance to Cambodia on law enforcement, transparency in public decision making, a proper monitoring of logging activities, an end to discretionary tax exemptions, the transfer of all State revenues to the National Treasury, and the assurance that free and fair elections be organized as scheduled in May 1998. Given the latest developments in Phnom Penh, with Hun Sen crushing the democratic process and exercising absolute power, Cambodia has definitely departed from what is expected by the donor community. Therefore any assistance to Cambodia through the illegal government of Phnom Penh – especially loans provided by the World Bank and used as budget support – must be interrupted. Only social programs implemented through non-governmental organizations (NGO) must be maintained.

*Sam Rainsy*

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