



Read file

គណបក្សជាតិខ្មែរ
KHMER NATION PARTY
PARTI DE LA NATION KHMÈRE

MEMORANDUM ON THE SITUATION IN CAMBODIA
VISIT TO BONN BY A DELEGATION OF THE KHMER NATION PARTY
(Sam Rainsy, Tioulong Saumura, Chhuy Sok, Men Sothavarin)
September 17, 1996

Meeting with Mr. Helmut Schäfer, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs

The Khmer Nation Party (KNP) is the only liberal and democratic opposition party in Cambodia. It was founded in November 1995 by Sam Rainsy, former member of the Supreme National Council (SNC) of Cambodia following the 1991 Paris Peace Accords, elected MP following the 1993 UN-organized elections and former Finance Minister in the first Cambodian coalition government. Sam Rainsy was unconstitutionally expelled from the National Assembly in June 1995 because of his critical views on corruption and human rights abuses by the government.

The government has so far refused to recognize the KNP in violation of the Constitution which guarantees the freedoms of opinion, expression and assembly. In order to overcome the government ban, the KNP merged on March 1996 with one of the UN-recognized political parties formed during the UNTAC era, the Liberal Reconciliation Party. But the Phnom Penh government ignored this move and continues to ban the KNP. In fact, the present authoritarian and corrupt Cambodian leadership fears more a liberal and democratic opposition represented by the KNP than the murderous Khmer Rouge who have just been pardoned and allowed to join the political life. In spite of threats, harassments and assassinations, the KNP continues to grow and has now over 160,000 members in the country. Its platform includes respect for human rights and strict adherence to democratic principles, good governance based on rule of law, transparency and accountability, fight against corruption, preservation of the forest and the eco-system which determine the living conditions of the farmers who make up more than 80% of the total population. The KNP also urges the donor countries and the lending institutions to attach conditions to assistance provided to Cambodia in order to promote the rule of law, to curb corruption and to ensure the respect for human rights in Cambodia which is very heavily dependent on international assistance and therefore must be accountable to the international community. Germany directly and through the European Union is a major donor country and has a strong leverage on the situation in Cambodia.

The KNP urges Germany to genuinely and effectively help bring Cambodia back on the right track and ensure a real and sustainable development for this country by

- 1- pushing for the actual holding of parliamentary elections due in 1998 and ensuring that they will be free and fair,
- 2- insisting that human rights and democratic principles be respected, especially in relation to the right of opposition parties to operate freely, to hold meetings, to open offices, to have access to the public electronic media and if need be, to launch their own radio and TV stations.
- 3- pressuring the top ranking Cambodian government officials to abide by the law of the land, to refrain from corrupt practices, to preserve the country's natural resources, to stop running a parallel budget for the army, to separate the public administration from the ruling political party and to promote the sense of common good and national interest,
- 4- assisting and monitoring the Cambodian government in the implementation of fundamental reforms (such as land reform, administrative reform, tax reform, civil service reform, judicial reform) with the objective of making Cambodia a viable and self-reliant country as soon as possible,
- 5- ensuring that international assistance does really benefit the Cambodian people as a whole and not only a few privileged elite, in particular readjusting budget support so as not to encourage corruption and hinder the necessary reforms.