

ASEAN TROIKA STATEMENT

Bangkok, 19 April 1998

1. In accordance with its mandate to keep ASEAN engaged in efforts to contribute to the restoration of political stability in Cambodia, the ASEAN Troika, composed of the Foreign Ministers of the Philippines, Indonesia and Thailand, met in Bangkok on 18 April 1998 to review and assess recent developments on the Cambodian situation.
2. The ASEAN Troika met on 19 April 1998 with the "Friends of Cambodia" and the Representative of the United Nations Secretary General in Cambodia to continue their exchange of views and consultations on Cambodia.
3. Welcoming the complete amnesty granted by His Majesty King Sihanouk to Prince Ranariddh, with the full support of the Cambodian Government, which facilitated the return of the Prince to Cambodia from 30 March to 3 April 1998, the ASEAN Troika called for the early implementation of the other elements of Japan's "Four Pillars" peace plan for Cambodia. They urged all parties concerned to intensify their dialogues and consultations for the full realization of the plan.
4. The ASEAN Troika expressed the hope that a permanent cease-fire would soon be in force in Cambodia. They welcomed the proposal, made on 30 March 1998, by His Majesty King Sihanouk on the cease-fire and the arrangement by which forces loyal to Prince Ranariddh will give back the area under their control and reintegrate themselves into the Royal Cambodian Armed Forces under the auspices of the United Nations and with full dignity and safety for all concerned. The ASEAN Troika welcomed the statement of Prince Ranariddh on 17 April 1998 disassociating himself and his forces from the Khmer Rouge and supporting the abovementioned proposal of His Majesty King Sihanouk.
5. The ASEAN Troika discussed the elections to be held in Cambodia on 26 July 1998. At this crucial period of the run-up to the July 26 elections, the ASEAN Troika reiterated the importance that they attach to the creation of a neutral political environment that is conducive to the holding of free, fair and credible elections. They looked forward to all Cambodian political forces' returning and participating in the electoral process and hoped that there would be no further legal obstacles in the way of their participation.

6. The ASEAN Troika urged the Cambodian Government to facilitate the safe return to Cambodia of the Cambodian displaced persons in Thailand with the assistance of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in time for them to participate in the election process.

7. The ASEAN Troika discussed the urgent need for international electoral assistance to Cambodia, including the sending of observers. On its part, the ASEAN Governments have expressed their readiness to send observers. In addition to the assistance that governments will be prepared to extend, they also discussed the possibility of non-governmental organizations extending assistance in the form of observers and monitors, and agreed to request the United Nations to send the appeal in this regard.

8. The ASEAN Troika underscored the need for the Cambodian Government to complete the technical preparations for the elections including early voters' registration, the completion of the membership of the Constitutional Council and release of funds for the National Electoral Commission.

9. The ASEAN Troika welcomed UN Secretary General Kofi Annan's official acceptance of the Cambodian Government's request that the United Nations act as coordinator of the international observation of the elections in Cambodia. They endorsed the principles and modalities contained in the UN Secretary General's Memorandum which will guide the United Nations in carrying out its coordinating role.

10. The ASEAN Troika reaffirmed its support for the vital and unique role of His Majesty King Sihanouk in advancing the cause of national reconciliation, fostering political stability in Cambodia, and facilitating the country's reintegration into the international community. They looked forward to their audience with His Majesty in Siem Reap on 19 April 1998 and to His Majesty's continued presence in Cambodia and his grace in playing this vital and unique role in the critical months ahead..

11. The Foreign Ministers of Indonesia and the Philippines expressed their appreciation to the Royal Thai Government for its proactive contribution to the ASEAN Troika and Friends of Cambodia processes and also for the warm hospitality and excellent arrangements made for the ASEAN Troika Meeting.
