

Bangkok, 10 January 1998

## POSSIBILITY OF A CEASE-FIRE IN CAMBODIA

In his letter dated 24 December 1997 addressed to me, Mr. Alvaro de Soto, the United Nations Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs, quotes Cambodian Second Prime Minister Hun Sen as declaring to Mr. Lakhan Mehrotra, the UN Secretary-General's Representative in Cambodia, that "as a first step [to bring about peace] HRH Prince Ranariddh should order all his forces to stop fighting (...)" and after this, Mr. Hun Sen, "as Co-Commander in Chief of the Royal Cambodian Armed Forces (RCAF), would ensure a complete cessation of hostilities between the two sides". Mr. Hun Sen also reportedly expresses his "wish to hold further talks [with Sam Rainsy] on the matter if his proposals are accepted by Prince Ranariddh".

I have the pleasure to inform the Cambodian people and the international community that I spoke today (at around 4.00 p.m. Bangkok time) with HRH Prince Norodom Ranariddh who gladly accepted Mr. Hun Sen's proposal to order all his [Ranariddh's] forces to stop fighting, provided Mr. Hun Sen simultaneously orders all his [Hun Sen's] forces to stop fighting too. Prince Ranariddh added that the cease-fire should naturally and immediately lead to the opening of peace talks between the two factions of the RCAF.

I am hopeful that Mr. Hun Sen will accept Prince Ranariddh's legitimate and laudable suggestion about a simultaneous order to stop fighting, to be immediately followed by the start of peace negotiations between the parties in conflict in order to resolve all pending military problems related to the ongoing civil war. By so doing, all Cambodian political parties will be able to seriously, jointly and validly prepare the next general elections to be held on 26 July 1998.



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