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U.N. Rejects Move To Change Representation of Cambodia

Following is a statement made in the U.N. General Assembly by U.S. Representative John Scali on November 27, together with the text of a resolution adopted by the Assembly in votes on November 27 and November 29.

STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR SCALI

USUN press release 184 dated November 27

The issue presented to this Assembly by the two resolutions before us is in essence very simple. One resolution proposes negotiations without preconditions for a peaceful settlement of the tragic conflict in Cambodia. The other demands a one-sided solution and offers only the prospect of continued war and more suffering by the Cambodian people. Which of these alternatives is consistent with the purposes for which this organization was founded? Which of these paths does our charter stake out as the road to justice and accepted international law?

One resolution¹ would have the Assembly itself decide for the Khmer people that Cambodia is to be represented not by its present government, but by an exile regime located over 2,000 miles from Phnom Penh. It should come as no surprise that the only nation located anywhere near Cambodia which sponsors this resolution is the country in whose capital this exiled regime happens to be located.

The other resolution² is sponsored by 23 nations, five of whom are among Cambodia's closest neighbors. They advocate a basic principle spelled out in this resolution by these opening lines: that the Khmer people

¹ U.N. doc A/L.733.

² U.N. doc. A/L.737.

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have a right themselves to solve their problems peacefully, free from outside interference. This resolution, unlike the other, does not call on the United Nations or anyone else to prejudge the decision of the Cambodian people. Instead, it proposes that the United Nations contribute positively to settlement in Cambodia by calling on the parties themselves to begin negotiations. Further, it asks the Secretary General to lend appropriate assistance, as he has done so effectively in the past.

Finally, the resolution sponsored by Cambodia's neighbors calls on all U.N. member states to respect the outcome of these peaceful discussions between the Cambodian parties, as my government is prepared to do. The United States supports efforts toward an honest compromise solution in Cambodia.

I must, however, reply to some speakers who again, in discussing this item, have spread harsh and ugly charges against the United States. I reject these charges. They are false. If their accusations were true—that a brutal military dictatorship has been foisted on the Cambodian people—why is it that the Cambodian Government continues to operate effectively and that the Cambodian people continue to fight heroically and with increasing success against the invaders, all of this long after the United States has ended all air support and sharply reduced its military assistance? Could it be because the Cambodian people are fighting for their independence against foreign troops on their soil?

Attempts by some speakers to present their special version of Cambodian history, in our view, are an effort to divert this Assembly from the real questions—namely, which are the only foreign forces intervening in Cambodia today, and which action by this Assembly seeks to deprive the Cambodian people of their right to self-determination?

For those who are unaware of, or who forget, Cambodia's real history, it may be useful to recall:

—That Prince Sihanouk was not removed by a palace coup;

—That the Government of Cambodia

which dismissed Prince Sihanouk in 1970 had been formed by Sihanouk himself less than a year before;

—That the Khmer National Assembly which ratified the decision and voted unanimously to depose Sihanouk was composed of members whom Sihanouk had personally selected and supported for election;

—That all during that period while Cambodians fought for their continued independence the total American Government presence in Phnom Penh consisted of two diplomatic officers and three military attaches; and

—That negotiations between the Khmer Government and North Viet-Nam were broken off unilaterally by North Viet-Nam on March 25, 1970. Four days later North Vietnamese and Viet Cong forces attacked Khmer police and military posts. The present hostilities in Cambodia date from those attacks.

The United States is proud of the role it has played in helping the Khmer Government and people to stave off the continuing military attacks by insurgents and foreign military forces. We have also, however, stressed the need to initiate negotiations to end this conflict and to bring reconciliation, harmony, and self-determination to all of Cambodia. The United States is quite prepared to see Cambodia ruled by whatever government the Cambodian people may freely decide upon.

On August 12 President Ford told our Congress that the United States hopes to see an early compromise settlement in Cambodia. It is not the United States, but others, who have refused to leave Cambodia to the Cambodians.

Certainly the Government of the Khmer Republic has not put any obstacle in the way of a negotiated settlement. On July 9, 1974, that government offered to enter into negotiations without conditions at any time, with any representatives of the other Cambodian party, in order to bring the conflict to an end.

We have heard from some speakers a claim that the opposition forces in Cambodia control 90 percent of that country's territory and 80 percent of its people. If this is true,

then why, we must wonder, has the opposition no capital, no government, no machinery, no parliament—in fact, none of the normal attributes of a government? Why, indeed, has their nominal chief of state taken refuge in a foreign capital? Why does he not go home to receive the acclaim of the people, who, we are told, are eagerly awaiting his return? This seems to me a reasonable and fundamental question.

Reviewing the record I find, surprisingly, that these same speakers one year ago made identical claims in the debate in this hall. One year ago they claimed their proteges controlled 90 percent of the territory and 80 percent of the population. One would have expected that a year of alleged new victories would have been reflected in more impressive statistics this year. Why not claim 98 percent of the territory and 95 percent of the people this year? Indeed, why not ignore the hard reality of the existence of the Government of Cambodia altogether and claim 100 percent?

The fact is that despite the best efforts of a foreign inspired and assisted insurgency, and of the North Vietnamese Army, the Khmer Government has never ceased to maintain control over the vast majority of Cambodia's people and over the territory in which they live. North Vietnamese troops and their Cambodian supporters do indeed range through many areas of north and east Cambodia, but Sihanouk's supporters have neglected to explain to us that those areas of the country are very sparsely populated. The truth is that Prince Sihanouk does not return to lead his people because he has no safe haven in Cambodia, no real government or real following to return to.

I would like to ask why should this Assembly be asked to choose between two rival claimants to Cambodia's seat in the United Nations, one of which happens to be located outside the country? It is our view the United Nations has no business deciding which is the legitimate government of any member state.

I urge all members of this Assembly to consider carefully the views so eloquently set forth during this debate by the Asian

neighbors of the Khmer Republic. Surely the vast majority of U.N. members must share their desire to see peace in their part of the world by allowing Cambodia to determine its own destiny. Surely we will heed their warning about the dangers of continued conflict and join in their call for a negotiated settlement to the present hostilities. There is a decision which deeply involves their own security and their own future. We who live elsewhere, particularly those far away, have a responsibility to respect their views if we are to expect equal consideration in connection with problems in our areas.

The U.S. Government believes that the United Nations has a fundamental obligation to support the process of negotiation as the best means of resolving disputes and settling conflicts, wherever and whenever they arise. We are convinced that such a process serves the real interests of all parties to a dispute, in Cambodia as elsewhere. A negotiated settlement in Cambodia is overdue. This process should begin now.

Surely no one of us can really wish to prolong the agony of that country or its people. Surely we can all agree that it is time for the fighting to stop, for negotiations to begin, for compromises to be reached, and for compatriots to be reconciled.

TEXT OF RESOLUTION³

Restoration of the lawful rights of the Royal Government of National Union of Cambodia in the United Nations

The General Assembly,

Recalling the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations,

³ U.N. doc. A/RES/3238 (XXIX) and Corr. 1. On Nov. 27 the Assembly adopted by a vote of 56 (U.S.) to 54, with 24 abstentions, draft resolution A/L.737/Rev. 1 as revised, with the exception of the fifth preambular paragraph, a separate vote on that paragraph having resulted in a tie vote of 51-51, with 31 abstentions; on Nov. 29 the Assembly, by a vote of 102 (U.S.) to 0, with 32 abstentions, rejected the paragraph, which reads, "Considering that the lawful rights of the two Governments are only valid if it is determined that these rights emanate from the sovereign people of Cambodia as a whole." Priority having been given to draft resolution A/L.737/Rev. 1, draft desolution A/L.733 was not pressed to a vote.

Recognizing that the situation in Cambodia is of concern to all Member States and especially to the countries situated close to the area,

Taking into account that, while the Royal Government of National Union of Cambodia, presided over by Prince Norodom Sihanouk, exercises authority over a segment of Cambodia, the Government of the Khmer Republic still has control over a preponderant number of Cambodian people,

Believing that the Cambodian people themselves should be allowed to solve their own political problems peacefully, free from outside interference,

Believing also that such political settlement should be reached by the indigenous parties concerned, without external influence,

1. *Calls upon* all the Powers which have been influencing the two parties to the conflict to use their good offices for conciliation between these two parties with a view to restoring peace in Cambodia;

2. *Requests* the Secretary-General, after due consultation, to lend appropriate assistance to the two contending parties claiming lawful rights in Cambodia and to report on the results to the General Assembly at its thirtieth session;

3. *Decides* not to press for any further action until Member States have an opportunity to examine the report of the Secretary-General.