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IZVESTIYA: USSR SUPPORTS CAUSE OF NORODOM SIHANOUK

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[M. Ilinskiy commentary: "The Courageous Struggle of the Cambodian Patriots"]

[Text] It is now almost 10 months since peace was restored in Vietnam. National concord has been achieved in Laos. But the military conflagration which was kindled by the imperialist aggressor and by the forces of the internal reaction, still continues on Cambodian soil.

As is known, after the proclamation of independence in November 1953, this Indochinese state embarked on the road of independent development. At the 1954 Geneva Conference, in whose work and in the convening of which the Soviet Union had played an important role, Cambodia solemnly declared its refusal to aline itself with any military alliance and it confirmed its intention to pursue a policy of neutrality.

From the very outset, Cambodia's development along the path of independence encountered opposition on the part of imperialist circles. On 18 March 1970, forces of internal reaction, taking advantage of Washington's support, affected a coup d'etat and announced that Norodom Sihanouk, the legitimate chief of state, had been dismissed from power.

The Cambodian people rallied around the National United Front of Cambodia (NUFC) and rose in a resolute struggle against the imperialist aggression and the reactionary Phnom Penh regime. At the beginning of May 1970 the Royal Government of the National Union of Cambodia (RGNUC) was created and the political program of the NUFC was adopted. In a greetings telegram sent to Norodom Sihanouk on 10 May 1970, A.N. Kosygin, chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers, stressed that "the formation of the NUFC and the strengthening of the united anti-imperialist front of the peoples of Indochina are welcomed in the Soviet Union...the struggle which you are waging together with the country's patriotic forces against the aggressor and for freedom, independence and neutrality, will continue to find sympathy and support in the Soviet Union."

When the U.S.-Saigon incursion into Cambodia began on 30 April 1970, the Soviet people came out actively in support of the Cambodian patriots and sincerely welcomed the determination of the peoples of Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam to strengthen fraternal solidarity in the struggle against imperialist aggression.

The patriots of Cambodia, defending the interests of their people, created combat-capable armed forces, successfully developed an offensive, and retained the initiative in all strategically important sectors in the country. In the liberated regions, which now cover 90 percent of Cambodia's territory and with a population of 5.5 million, democratic organs of power have been consolidated and exercise the full spectrum of power.

The patriotic forces of Cambodia now in fact control all the country's most important regions and roads, and are tightening the blockade around the major cities of Phnom Penh and Kompong Cham.

The successful actions of the patriots, guided by the NUFC, and the broad international movement in support of the noble struggle of the Cambodian people compelled the Pentagon to halt the bombing of Cambodia on 15 August 1973. In recent months the position of Lon Nol's regime has been growing increasingly grave.

The national congress of patriotic forces which took place this July in one of the liberated regions was a great event in the life of the Cambodian people. The NUFC and the RGNUC, the congress' appeal stressed, are the only legitimate representatives of the Cambodian people. The NUFC and RGNUC are waging a struggle for the restoration of independence and peace for enhancing the material well-being of the populace, and for granting to the entire people the right to freedom and democracy, not only in the politico-economic and cultural spheres, but also in material and moral respects on the basis of national unity and without distinction as to political views, religion or denomination.

The foreign policy of the NUFC and of the RGNUC is built upon the principles of peace and neutrality, nonparticipation in any kind of blocs or groupings, the prohibition of any foreign bases on the territory of Cambodia, and the establishment of relations with all countries on the basis of mutual benefit, respect and noninterference in internal affairs.

The just struggle of the Cambodian patriots enjoys broad support not only within the country, but also outside it. The UN General Assembly's decision to include the restoration of the legitimate rights of the RGNUC in the United Nations as an item on the agenda of the present 28th session and to examine this question at its plenary session served as evidence of the legitimacy (of the Cambodian patriots). The delegations of 69 countries, including the Soviet Union and other socialist countries, voted for this decision. In this connection Prince Norodom Sihanouk, the Cambodian chief of state and chairman of the NUFC, noted in his statement that he considers the USSR's vote in favor of the question of Cambodia's representation being included on the agenda of the UN General Assembly session to be "confirmation of the Soviet Union's support for his Royal Government of National Union."

The Soviet people have always stood and do stand on the side of the people of Cambodia who are struggling for freedom and independence. The Soviet people wholly support the courageous struggle of the Cambodian patriots who are rallied together under the banner of the NUFC and RGNUC, which are the only genuine representatives of the freedom-loving people of Cambodia, and which express their interests and aspirations.

Appreciation to the Soviet Union for the assistance and support was expressed in a greetings message from the Norodom Sihanouk, chief of state and chairman of the NUFC, and from Penn Nouth, chairman of the NUFC Political Bureau and prime minister of the RGNUC, addressed to the Soviet leaders in connection with the 56th Anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution.

The Soviet people believe in the triumph of the just cause of the Cambodian people and wish them new successes in the struggle for freedom and independence.