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REPUBLIC OF KHMER

Sihanouk Explains His Decision to Remain in Peking

147 The Cambodian Information Agency (AIC) in French to Southeast Asia on 16 Aug released an article entitled "It is My Compatriots of the Resistance Inside the Country Who Expressly Asked Me to Continue My Mission in Peking." The article said in part: "Certain diplomats (whose governments have not recognized the Royal Government for the National Union of Kampuchea) and almost all journalists and television teams who have had the opportunity to interview me in Peking or Hanoi have asked me the following question: Why don't you return to Cambodia now that you have acquired a vast liberated zone, well defended by the people's armed forces of NUFK?"

After recalling various periods in the thirty years of his political career as Cambodia's head of state, Sihanouk continued:

"It cannot be said that I led a quiet life between 1941 and 1971! It would consequently be grossly unjust to suspect me of cowardice. In fact, since Mar 70 I have approached the competent authorities several times to ask them to help me return to my country and share the dolorous life of my people. The only possible path, of course, is the Ho Chi Minh trail! I have made it quite clear that I would assume complete responsibility for risk of accident throughout this passage. My latest message to RGNUK inside the country and the Commander in Chief of the Cambodian People's Armed Forces, dated 23 Mar, asked them to effect immediately my transfer to the liberated zone in Cambodia."

"RGNUK inside the country and the CNPLAF Commander in Chief replied to this message in a long explanatory message which concluded that I must remain in Peking and maintain my general headquarters here. To put an end to tendentious comments on my prolonged sojourn outside the country, I deem it indispensable to show everyone the text of Zie Amphan's message dated 30 Apr 71. I present it to readers without comment."

"Samdech Norodom Sihanouk, Head of State, Chairman of NUFK, Peking. We received the telegram from Samdech Head of State of 19 Apr 71. Summoned for a meeting from the front and remote bases throughout the country, all members of RGNUK in Cambodia and I myself have examined the questions raised on the basis of our overall capabilities and an objective analysis of the situation. We take the liberty of presenting to Samdech Head of State the following conclusions. We ask you to kindly forgive any possible errors in our analysis."