Thirty-seventh session
Item 54 of the preliminary list

CHEMICAL AND BACTERIOLOGICAL (BIOLOGICAL) WEAPONS

Letter dated 27 April 1982 from the Permanent Representative of
the Lao People's Democratic Republic to the United Nations
addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to forward herewith the declaration made by the spokesman of
the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Lao People's Democratic Republic concerning
fallacious allegations made by the Reagan administration on the so-called "use of
chemical weapons in Laos".

I should be grateful if you would have this letter and its enclosure
circulated as an official document of the General Assembly under item 54 of the
preliminary list.

(Signed) Soubanh SRITHIRATH
Ambassador Extraordinary
and Plenipotentiary,
Permanent Representative

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DECLARATION MADE BY THE SPOKESMAN OF THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
OF THE LAO PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC CONDEMNING THE FALLACIOUS
ALLEGATIONS OF THE REAGAN GOVERNMENT CONCERNING THE SO-CALLED "USE
OF CHEMICAL WEAPONS IN LAOS"

Lately, the Reagan Administration has been very busy intensifying its
propaganda on "the use of poison gas and chemical warfare in Laos, Kampuchea and
Afghanistan". In response to this defamatory charge made by the Reagan Government,
the spokesman of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Lao People's Democratic
Republic officially declares that the father of the use of chemical weapons in the
countries of Indo-China is none other than United States imperialism itself. For
the use of these weapons was part of the global strategy of Washington aimed at
repeating the war of mass extermination. As for the so-called "agent Orange" in
Indo-China, it will be remembered that over ten years ago, "agent Orange" was
introduced by the very same diabolic, imperialist circles in the United States,
which chose the peaceful land of Indo-China as a proving ground for their criminal
weapons and used as guinea pigs millions and millions of innocent people in the
three countries of Indo-China, who became atrocity victims of these poisonous
chemicals "made in USA".

In Viet Nam, the United States imperialists used over 100,000 T of poison gas,
murdering thousands upon thousands of Vietnamese. Over 2 million were casualties
of that first trial run and 1,300,000 hectares of arable land and thick forest land
representing 45 per cent of the total area of the country were destroyed.

In Kampuchea, during the United States war of aggression, 800,000 of the
civilian population were massacred and 240,000 others maimed, and 80 to 85 per cent
of thick forest land was devastated by American poison gas.

In Laos, the use of chemical weapons by the United States imperialists began
in December 1976 on order of the High Command of the American Forces in Saigon,
then under the command of General V. WESTMORELAND. The chemicals were dumped on
rivers, thick forests and on wide stretches of arable land for public use, thus
jeopardizing the economy; the people are still feeling the effects today.

It is plain, therefore, that this propaganda from Washington, as base as it is
misleading, is intended to divert world public opinion from those monstrous and
unforgettable crimes committed against the peoples of Laos, Viet Nam and Kampuchea.
Its despicable purpose is also to justify speeding up the mass manufacture of
chemical weapons, to milk the American taxpayer for the 1983 financial year to the
tune of the more than $800 million required for that purpose, to speed up completion
of the project for the "strengthening of chemical weapons" estimated to total
expenditure of $4,000 million from the national budget.

The United States of America, flagrantly and shamelessly violating the
1925 Geneva Convention, is continuing to stock a large quantity of chemical weapons
capable of inflicting immeasurable losses on mankind.
In short, the Reagan Administration is insidiously attempting to divert the attention of world opinion from its crimes against the peoples of the three countries of Indo-China, crimes illustrated by the most massive use of chemical weapons history has ever known.

The spokesman of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Lao People's Democratic Republic categorically rejects the slanderous allegations made by the United States aimed at discrediting the Lao people and at erasing the atrocities it committed against the three peoples of Indo-China. Those allegations are merely being used as a pretext for concealing its infamous schemes for stepping up production of chemical and bacteriological weapons and putting off the signing of a treaty prohibiting the production and stockpiling of those weapons.

Vientiane, 6 April 1982

The spokesman for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs