Fifteenth special session
Items 9, 12, 13 and 15 of the provisional agenda*

REVIEW AND APPRAISAL OF THE PRESENT INTERNATIONAL SITUATION, ESPECIALLY IN THE LIGHT OF THE VITAL OBJECTIVE OF TERMINATING THE ARMS RACE AND THE PRESSING NEED TO ACHIEVE SUBSTANTIAL PROGRESS IN THE FIELD OF DISARMAMENT

ASSESSMENT OF DEVELOPMENTS AND TRENDS, INCLUDING QUALITATIVE AND QUANTITATIVE ASPECTS, RELEVANT TO THE DISARMAMENT PROCESS, WITH A VIEW TO THE ELABORATION OF APPROPRIATE CONCRETE AND PRACTICAL MEASURES AND, IF NECESSARY, ADDITIONAL PRINCIPLES, TAKING DUE ACCOUNT THE PRINCIPLES AND PRIORITIES ESTABLISHED IN THE FINAL DOCUMENT OF THE TENTH SPECIAL SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, THE FIRST SPECIAL SESSION DEVOTED TO DISARMAMENT


RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN DISARMAMENT AND DEVELOPMENT, IN THE LIGHT OF THE ACTION PROGRAMME ADOPTED AT THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

Letter dated 31 May 1988 from the Permanent Representative of Democratic Kampuchea to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith the message of His Royal Highness Samdech Norodom Sihanouk, President of Democratic Kampuchea, addressed to the third special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament (see annex).

* A/S-15/10.
I should be grateful if you would distribute this message as an official document of the fifteenth special session of the General Assembly.

(Signed) THIOUENN Prasith
Permanent Representative
ANNEX

Message dated 26 May 1988 from the President of Democratic Kampuchea to the fifteenth special session of the General Assembly, the third special session devoted to disarmament

The third special session of the United Nations General Assembly devoted to disarmament marks a new and remarkable stage in our world Organization's tireless search for ways to halt the arms race, in accordance with its principal purpose of maintaining international peace and security. I wish to take this opportunity to express to all the participants in this important world assembly my warmest greetings and most sincere wishes that their significant work will help to establish peace and stability on our planet based on security for all, mutual trust and reciprocal respect among all States and peoples, whether large or small, powerful or weak, rich or poor.

Since the end of the Second World War, the fact that there has not been another world-wide conflagration does not mean that there has been peace and security for all. While we have gone on talking about disarmament and worrying about the apocalypse that would result from a possible nuclear war, conventional local and regional wars have continued to break out in all regions of the world, causing terrible destruction and killing tens of millions of people. Today, a number of these wars are still going on and even worsening, while new ones are breaking out. The international situation remains tense. International peace and security are still being threatened.

Our world urgently needs a concerted strategy of peace and security for all, a main pillar of which is disarmament.

The stockpiling of weapons leads to power politics, expansionism and domination to the detriment of the smaller and weaker countries that have become victims of this policy. It undermines the efforts of peace-loving and justice-loving peoples and countries to establish a more stable new international order. It engenders mistrust and confrontation. It consumes large amounts of human, material, economic and financial resources which could have been used to improve the well-being of the people domestically and of other peoples who are now starving, undernourished, homeless and illiterate. It has become a factor in the economic, social and political destabilization both at home and for its victims.

Meanwhile, the determined, relentless struggle of the subjected peoples, together with that of the entire international community, has demonstrated the failure of a policy based on the force of weapons and the uselessness of the frenetic arms race. Experience has shown that if one is always seeking to become stronger, there will always be someone even stronger, or at least as strong.

The international community welcomes the signing, in December 1987, of the Treaty between the United States of America and the Soviet Union on the Elimination of Their Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles as a first encouraging step. The Soviet Union has been forced to withdraw its invasion forces from
Afghanistan by the heroic and resolute struggle of the Afghan people and its mujahedin, with the firm and constant support of the international community and the tireless efforts of the United Nations, its Secretary-General, Mr. Javier Pérez de Cuéllar and his personal representative. As a result of all these united efforts, brute force - which for all its power is senseless - is collapsing under its own weight. The policy based on the force of weapons has led to social, economic and political consequences that have been disastrous not only for the victims but also for the aggressors.

No progress has been made, however, in the reduction of conventional weapons. Many regional conflicts initiated and maintained by conventional weapons remain unresolved. The conventional arms race is accelerating.

Progress cannot be made in disarmament unless there is a climate of international trust. In the current world situation, where national and international security are closely interrelated, wars of aggression to satisfy colonialist and expansionist aims and the denial of the right to self-determination of peoples, wherever they occur in the world, threaten peace and security both regionally and internationally. They represent additional barriers to the disarmament process and could degenerate into a nuclear conflagration if the problems that they create are not quickly and appropriately solved.

To eliminate all these dangers, the principles of the Charter of the United Nations must be rigorously respected, and all States Members of our Organization must work together in good faith to strengthen its role and realize its noble purposes, chief among which is "to maintain international peace and security, and to that end: to take effective collective measures for the prevention and removal of threats to the peace, and for the suppression of acts of aggression or other breaches of the peace, and to bring about by peaceful means, and in conformity with the principles of justice and international law, adjustment or settlement of international disputes or situations which might lead to a breach of the peace; ...".

It is in this spirit that I invite the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam, which started the war which has been ravaging my country since December 1978, only 15 months after it became a Member of the United Nations, to respect the noble purposes of the Charter by accepting a political settlement of the problem of Kampuchea on the basis of the relevant United Nations resolutions, which call for the total withdrawal of foreign (that is, Vietnamese) forces from Cambodia to allow the Cambodian people to exercise their right to self-determination.

The rejection of these resolutions by Viet Nam and its refusal to negotiate a political settlement with the Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea only reveal its duplicity and total scorn for the international community's desire for peace. They do nothing but aggravate regional and world tension, and counteract efforts to establish a true disarmament process.

It is high time for the leaders in Hanoi, for the good of the Vietnamese people, to put an end to their expansionist and adventurist policy, their occupation of Cambodia and their ambition for an Indochinese federation, and to
participate in good faith with all the other States of the region in restoring regional peace, security and stability on the basis of peaceful coexistence, equality and mutual respect.

The international situation requires appropriate, effective and verifiable measures of nuclear, conventional, chemical and other forms of disarmament in order to maintain just and lasting peace and security for all. That can be brought about by rejecting the use of force and strictly respecting international law and the principles of the Charter which govern relations among States and peoples.

I wish to reaffirm here the profound attachment of the people of Cambodia and its Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea to the maintenance of international peace and security based on absolute respect for the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of each country without exception, and on equality and mutual interest. Democratic Kampuchea and its Coalition Government reaffirm their firm support for the noble and tireless efforts of the United Nations and the international community towards disarmament, progress and the maintenance of world peace.