RECOGNITION OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF KAMPUCHEA

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While the People's Revolutionary Council has been improving living conditions in the People's Republic of Kampuchea and making significant advances toward national reconstruction, Imperialism's and its Beijing allies' continuous aggression against that country has been stepped up.

The country is being stabilized as the economic recovery program goes into effect, and the people are gradually and systematically returning to their homes and taking up their former work. Therefore, it is very difficult for the enemy to make much headway against the consolidation of the new people's government.

This is why the aggression has been more apparent and far-reaching in the area of international political relations — especially concerning the international community's controversial recognition of the People's Revolutionary Council and its consequent representation in such international bodies as the United Nations and its specialized organizations.

This facet of Imperialism's and the Chinese hegemonists' aggressive policy against the People's Republic of Kampuchea had a serious setback during the 6th Conference of Heads of State or Government of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, held in Havana in September 1979, for the Summit Conference approved a resolution leaving Kampuchea's seat vacant until an ad hoc committee analyzed the situation in the country and made its recommendations to the Movement's Conference of Foreign Ministers, to be held in New Delhi in early February 1981.

The 35th UN General Assembly, however, reaffirmed its previous year's decision to continue recognizing the delegates of the deposed genocidal Pol Pot regime as Kampuchea's representatives to that international body.

This decision, a product of the pressure exerted by imperialism and other equally reactionary forces, was based on highly questionable arguments and alleged aspects of the procedural legal order followed in the United Nations and was a basic violation of the principles set forth in the United Nations Charter and in international law.

In international political relations, the government that, in fact, holds sovereign power in a given country is usually considered to be that state's representative, and a government should always be recognized if it holds effective authority over a national territory and its inhabitants and is capable of meeting the country's international obligations, making other commitments and respecting the duties established by international law.

The effectiveness of a new government is the most important factor to be considered for recognizing it, because that is usually understood to mean its possession of real state power. The new government must show vitality and really exercise power with complete independence.

On examining these common denominators for recognizing a new government, we see that the People's Revolutionary Council of Kampuchea meets all the requisites for being accepted by the international community.

Not even the worst critics of People's Kampuchea can deny that the Phnom Penh government is the only one that, in fact, exercises power with full sovereignty all over the country. Its ability to meet its treaty obligations, agreements and other commitments is unquestionable.

What, then, is the basis for the denial of recognition and of the rights inherent in its investiture?

The answer is simply the mammoth anticommunist propaganda campaign of lies, confusion and tricks that brings all kinds of pressure to bear on many members of the international community.
One of the “arguments” that is advanced most frequently against the Kampuchean government is that it is a puppet regime of the communist government of Hanoi and that the Vietnamese invaded Kampuchea in order to impose a government that would follow Soviet interests.

Nothing could be more absurd.

The international press — both socialist and capitalist — has published endless reports on what took place in Kampuchea under the genocidal regime of Pol Pot and his Chinese advisers, and all agree that three million people were brutally killed.

In a legitimate and essential action, the people of Kampuchea rebelled against their exterminators. The Vietnamese people gave them their internationalist aid — as a socialist country that has successfully fought a long war for its independence is duty-bound to do. There was nothing underhanded, twisted or illegal in providing that aid to the suffering Kampuchean people.

Why, then, have the facts been distorted and the international community been pressured to keep it from acknowledging the true representatives of the Kampuchean nation?
Imperialism, the Chinese hegemonists, certain capitalist powers and other equally reactionary forces are using the controversial question of Kampuchea in general and its representation in particular in order to obstruct the work of the Non-Aligned Movement, divide the international community within the United Nations, diminish the prestige of the heroic Vietnamese people, create conflicts among the underdeveloped countries, divert attention from really serious problems and set a precedent for similar cases that may arise in other countries and continents.

There are no valid legal impediments to the delegates of Heng Samrin's government's representing Kampuchea — unless, of course, you want to fall back on the archaic Tobar Doctrine, according to which any government that reaches power through civil war or revolution is to be denied recognition.

Many books and treaties provide that those seeking recognition can be granted it only when their appearance in the international arena does not contravene basic principles of international law.

Moreover, the refusal to recognize the People's Republic of Kampuchea could be classified as an illegitimate act in light of paragraph 2 of Article 1 of the United Nations Charter, which includes among the organization's purposes and principles: "to develop friendly relations among nations based on respect for the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples, and to take other appropriate measures to strengthen universal peace."

It is clear that a web has been woven around the question of recognizing the people's government of Kampuchea in an effort to prevent it from being completely clarified. This is a maneuver involving imperialist political goals that can never be sustained on the basis of internationally recognized juridical norms, no matter how the facts are twisted.

Take, for example, the much-touted "reports" on the existence of an alleged "Kampuchean government in exile," spread to confuse world public opinion and make it possible to apply the United Nations principle that "A government operating abroad because of a war (a government in exile) continues to be considered the legal government of the occupied country."
Since Kampuchea is not occupied by an enemy army, though, the principle that applies in the present situation in that country is the one that states, "The arbitrary recognition of governments in exile for political ends constitutes an act of intervention in internal affairs."

If we take into account that "The recognition of a new government following an abnormal change may be de jure or de facto" and that the United States, China and other countries have given — and continue to give — material aid to the Kampuchean counterrevolutionary bands based in Thailand that are led by the genocidal Pol Pot and his associate Ieng Sary (thus granting practical recognition to the alleged clandestine government of nonexistent Democratic Kampuchea), then the United States, China and other countries are flagrantly violating the sovereignty of the People’s Republic of Kampuchea and shamelessly intervening in its internal affairs.

This is what is really happening.

The People’s Republic of Kampuchea is a legal entity; it exists and has a territory and a recognized population.

The nonexistent Democratic Kampuchea cannot show that it possesses either territory or population. Its representatives have Chinese passports and are accompanied by Chinese diplomatic officials, and their trips are financed by imperialism and the Beijing hegemonists.

The truth is coming out — slowly but surely. The representatives of a regime that murdered three million people, employing the most barbarous and brutal methods, have no place in the international legal order.

Supported by international law, the international community should purge its ranks of the group that, serving the base interests of imperialism and its Chinese allies, is violating the principles of the United Nations Charter and the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries.