

TEXT

During the past two years, the international community has found it necessary on a number of occasions to focus its attention on the tragic situation in Kampuchea. Ten years of war, deprivation, genocide and extraordinary abuse of human rights, famine and foreign invasion and occupation have changed a once peaceful land into a country beset by hostilities, a country which has had to depend on massive supplies of international humanitarian relief and whose government is totally subservient to foreign control.

It is unfortunate that the situation in Kampuchea continues to be such that we must come together again. Unlike previous meetings, however, which were concerned primarily with humanitarian relief for the Kampuchean people, this conference is attempting to come to grips with the basic causes of the problems in Kampuchea. We have previously treated the symptoms manifested through refugee outflows, starvation and deprivation. It is now time to treat the underlying problem itself. Within this framework, I am pleased to address the representatives of more than 60 countries and parties concerned with the situation in Kampuchea. I also wish to express my appreciation to the Secretary-General for having convened this conference in accordance with General Assembly Resolution 35/6 of last fall. Canada co-sponsored that resolution and has strongly supported the convening of this conference in the intervening months. I regret that the political situation in Kampuchea is no different now from the situation in October 1980 when United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) Resolution 35/6 was passed and, indeed, has not changed since January 1979 when the forces of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam invaded and occupied Kampuchea. In fact, actions have been taken to try to legitimize the present régime in Phnom Penh, actions which Canada does not recognize.

During the past three years, Canada has spoken out emphatically and forcefully before the United Nations General Assembly and the United Nations Commission on Human Rights and in other international fora regarding the misfortunes which have befallen Kampuchea and the Kampuchean people. The vast majority of the international community has shared this view and has supported resolutions at UNGA 34 and 35 which provided the groundwork for a return to peace and stability in Kampuchea and throughout Southeast Asia. This overwhelming desire by the international community to achieve peace and stability in Kampuchea and Southeast Asia is the result of a deeply shared belief in the principle enunciated in the United Nations Charter with respect to the national independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of all states and the principle