

The exact nature of this aid is now under study by CIDA. As part of that process, an officer from our Embassy in Bangkok is currently in Cambodia with representatives of Canadian non-governmental organizations to examine how best to resume an aid relationship there.

In the short-term, these programs will be small scale and focussed on humanitarian needs. Over the longer term their expansion will be predicated on progress towards peace and the political realities in the areas affected. We will not have Canadian aid channelled into the military efforts of any group. Nor will we permit it to be used by groups or governments whose records demonstrate a fundamental disrespect for basic human rights. We will, for example, insist that no Canadian aid be distributed in areas controlled by the Khmer Rouge.

The central problem in the Cambodian conflict remains how to deal with the Khmer Rouge in an eventual settlement process. The reign of terror of the Pol Pot regime was one of the most brutal chapters in human history. Each position we, as a government, have taken on the question of Cambodia has been grounded in a determination never to allow the Khmer Rouge back into power.

We have called upon the Chinese, Soviet and other military suppliers to the Cambodian parties to cease their support. There is no benefit to Cambodia to be found in the further import of weapons. The people of Indochina have seen enough implements of war to last for all of history.

Two major developments broke the old impasse respecting Cambodia. The first was the recognition by the Parties themselves, and countries close to them, that war would yield no winner, but would hold back the development of Cambodia and its neighbours. The second was the decision to treat the search for peace as a regional responsibility and lift it beyond the immediate combatants. Seminal to that process were the Jakarta informal meetings which brought the six nations of ASEAN directly into the process, working with the Cambodian Parties, Viet Nam and LAOS.

The next step was to make that search for peace a genuinely international preoccupation, moving beyond the region, to involve permanent members of the Security Council, and other countries with a particular interest or contribution. The Paris Conference was convened. Canada was invited because of our unique experience in peace-keeping, our extensive relations in the region, and our acknowledged reputation as a trusted and moderate nation.

The Paris Conference succeeded in getting the agreement of all parties to involve the offices of the United Nations, in the form of a fact-finding technical mission sent to Cambodia. It also made substantial progress in the design of an international control mechanism and in refining the complex of tasks that such a mechanism will have to address. Canada co-chaired that Committee with India, and Parliament can take pride in the skill and effectiveness of the officials in the Canadian delegation. That first Committee produced the agreement that could well be the basis of further progress now.