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SSEA'S STATEMENT ON THE RECENT INCURSION BY VIETNAMESE MILITARY UNITS INTO THAILAND

The Secretary of State for External Affairs, Mark MacGuigan, who is currently attending meetings with the Foreign Ministers of the ASEAN* countries in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, has authorized the following statement expressing grave concern about the recent incursion by Vietnamese military units into Thailand.

The SSEA stated that recent events underline the gravity of unresolved problems in Indochina which continue to have both security and humanitarian dimensions. He noted that Thailand has generously extended first asylum to hundreds of thousands of Indochinese refugees since 1975, and that the Vietnamese action caused needless suffering and deaths among Kampuchean refugees and Thai nationals along the border.

He also stated that Canada has supported efforts to resolve the problem of continuing political instability in Indochina. Canada co-sponsored a resolution in the United Nations General Assembly in November 1979 which called for the cessation of hostilities in Kampuchea, the withdrawal of foreign forces from Kampuchea, and the Secretary-General to use his good offices in the search for a peaceful solution.

Despite this resolution, 200,000 Vietnamese soldiers remain in Kampuchea. Mark MacGuigan said that the withdrawal of these forces by Vietnam is an essential element for a peaceful settlement of the situation in Kampuchea.

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* Association of Southeast Asian Nations composed of Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore and Thailand.