

# PRESS RELEASE



# COMMUNIQUÉ

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

CANADA

MINISTÈRE DES AFFAIRES EXTÉRIEURES

No.45

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
MONDAY, AUGUST 22, 1966.

STATEMENT BY THE HONOURABLE PAUL MARTIN  
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

Message from the International Commission in Laos to the  
Co-chairmen of the 1961-62 Geneva Conference.

The Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Honourable Paul Martin, today released a letter dated June 14, 1966 from the Chairman of the International Commission for Supervision and Control in Laos to the two Co-chairmen of the 1961-62 Geneva Conference which has been transmitted to the Canadian Government by the British Co-chairman.

In releasing the letter, Mr. Martin made the following statement:

The letter conveys to the Co-chairmen the results of an investigation carried out by the Commission into an attack on a Laotian Government officers' training school by North Vietnamese troops. The Commission was requested by the Royal Laotian Government to investigate the attack, which took place in March 1965, and the Commission's team, in the course of its investigation, interrogated nine North Vietnamese soldiers who had been captured by Laotian forces.

The prisoners, who, in the opinion of the team, gave their evidence freely and voluntarily, testified that they were nationals of North Vietnam who had been conscripted into the armed forces of North Vietnam; that they had entered Laos with other troops and with arms and ammunition; and that they had attacked the reserve officers' training school at Dong Hene in Laos. According to the team, most of the prisoners stated that before leaving North Vietnam, they had been ordered to proceed with their units to South Vietnam and that, to do this, they had to pass through Laotian territory.

A Commission message of September 16, 1965 reported to the Co-chairmen that regular units of the armed forces of North Vietnam entered Laos during 1964 with arms and ammunition, and that they had engaged in hostilities with Laotian Government forces on Laotian soil. The Commission's report on the Dong Hene incident provides a further example of a serious violation of the provisions of the 1962 Declaration on the Neutrality of Laos and its Protocol. The Canadian Government is concerned not only about these specific violations of Laotian neutrality but also by the evidence provided by the latest report that violations are taking place on a continuing basis.

ANNEX

RELEVANT ARTICLES OF THE 1962 PROTOCOL ON LAOS

Article 4

The introduction of foreign regular and irregular troops, foreign para-military formations and foreign military personnel into Laos is prohibited.

Article 6

The introduction into Laos of armaments, munitions and war material generally, except such quantities of conventional armaments as the Royal Government of Laos may consider necessary for the national defence of Laos, is prohibited.

Article 8

The Co-Chairmen shall periodically receive reports from the Commission. In addition the Commission shall immediately report to the Co-Chairmen any violations or threats of violations of this Protocol, all significant steps which it takes in pursuance of this Protocol, and also any other important information which may assist the Co-Chairmen in carrying out their functions. The Commission may at any time seek help from the Co-Chairmen in the performance of its duties, and the Co-Chairmen may at any time make recommendations to the Commission exercising general guidance.

The Co-Chairmen shall circulate the reports and any other important information from the Commission to the members of the Conference.

The Co-Chairmen shall exercise supervision over the observance of this Protocol and the Declaration on the Neutrality of Laos.

The Co-Chairmen will keep the members of the Conference constantly informed and when appropriate will consult with them.

Article 16

For the exercise of its functions the Commission shall, as necessary, set up inspection teams, on which the three member-States of the Commission shall be equally represented. Each member-State of the Commission shall ensure the presence of its own representatives both on the Commission and on the inspection teams, and shall promptly replace them in the event of their being unable to perform their duties.

It is understood that the dispatch of inspection teams to carry out various specific tasks takes place with the concurrence of the Royal Government of Laos. The points to which the Commission and its inspection teams go for the purposes of investigation and their length of stay at those points shall be determined in relation to the requirements of the particular investigation.