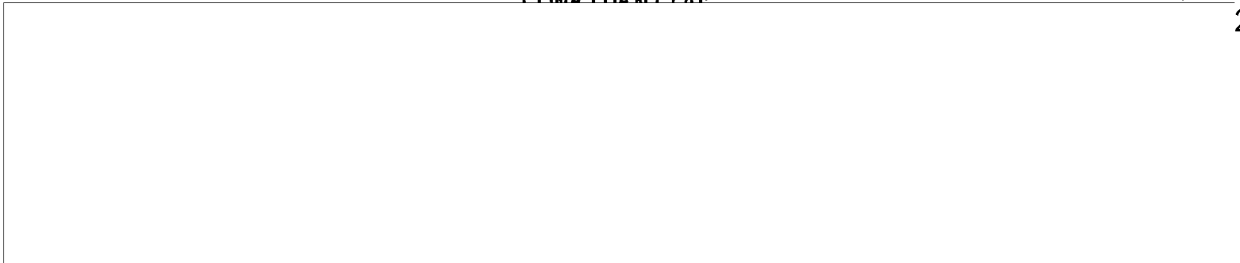


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TAGS: PREL, ASEAN, CB, VN, SN
SUBJECT: MFA ~~DISCUSSION ON THE ASEAN FOREIGN MINISTERS~~

- 1. C-ENTIRE TEXT.
- 2. SUMMARY: ACCORDING TO PETER CHAN, SECOND PERMANENT SECRETARY AT THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, THE ASEAN MEETING IN BANGKOK PROVIDED AN OPPORTUNITY FOR ASEAN TO EXPRESS ITS SOLIDARITY WITH THAILAND AND TO AIR PUBLICLY ITS CRITICISM OF VIETNAM'S CONTINUED OCCUPATION OF CAMBODIA. THE MINISTERS AGREED ON THE NEED FOR CONTINUED MILITARY AND POLITICAL SUPPORT FOR THE COALITION GOVERNMENT OF DEMOCRATIC KAMPUCHEA

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(CGDK), WITH ALL OF THE ASEAN PARTNERS, INCLUDING INDONESIA AND MALAYSIA, CONCURRING THAT GREATER EMPHASIS SHOULD BE PLACED AT THIS STAGE ON INCREASING MILITARY PRESSURE ON VIETNAM. AT THE SAME TIME, THEY RECOGNIZED THAT THEY SHOULD MAINTAIN A FLEXIBLE DIPLOMATIC POSTURE. CHAN DESCRIBED THE MINISTERS' TWO-HOUR MEETING WITH THE THREE LEADERS OF THE CGDK AS EXCELLENT AND UPBEAT. CHAN SAID THE CGDK LEADERS WERE CONFIDENT THEY COULD HOLD THE BORDER AREA. SIHANOUK HAD EXPLICITLY ADDRESSED THE SUSPICIONS OF HIS CGDK PARTNERS CONCERNING AN ALLEGED SECRET DEAL BETWEEN SIHANOUK AND THE VIETNAMESE BY RULING OUT THE POSSIBILITY OF SEPARATE TALKS WITH HANOI. CHAN NOTED THAT ASEAN SUPPORTED SIHANOUK'S CALL FOR FOUR-PARTY NEGOTIATIONS, BUT DOUBTED THAT TALKS WOULD OCCUR BECAUSE OF VIETNAMESE RELUCTANCE TO DEAL WITH THE KHMER ROUGE. THE FOREIGN MINISTERS ARE SATISFIED WITH THE US ROLE IN SOUTHEAST ASIA, BUT WANT THE US TO BE MORE ACTIVE. ASEAN WOULD WELCOME ALL US EFFORTS SHORT OF DIRECT MILITARY INTERVENTION DESIGNED TO LIMIT SOVIET INFLUENCE IN SOUTHEAST ASIA AND CAUSE VIETNAM TO EXTRICATE ITSELF FROM CAMBODIA. CHAN CHARACTERIZED THE RESPONSE OF SOVIET AMBASSADORS IN THE REGION TO THE ASEAN DEMARCHE AS SOFT. CHAN EXPRESSED SATISFACTION THAT THE UN SECRETARY GENERAL'S TOUR OF THE REGION HAD ENABLED HIM TO BECOME BETTER ACQUAINTED WITH THE CAMBODIAN SITUATION. DURING HIS MEETING WITH FOREIGN MINISTER DHANABALAN, CHAN HAD NOTED VIETNAM'S INTENTION TO START WITHDRAWING FROM CAMBODIA IN TWO YEARS' TIME. CHAN EXPRESSED INTEREST IN BETTER TIES WITH THE US. CHAN DESCRIBED THE SECRETARY GENERAL'S ATTITUDE TOWARD CAMBODIA AS MORE REALISTIC THAN THAT OF UNDER SECRETARY RAFAEUDIN AHMED. END SUMMARY.

3. MFA SECOND PERMANENT SECRETARY PETER CHAN CALLED IN THE AMBASSADOR FEBRUARY 13 TO BRIEF HIM ON THE RECENTLY CONCLUDED ASEAN FOREIGN MINISTERS' MEETING IN BANGKOK. CHAN CHARACTERIZED THE MEETING AS USEFUL SINCE IT HAD PROVIDED THE MINISTERS WITH THE OPPORTUNITY TO EXPRESS THEIR SOLIDARITY WITH THAILAND AND TO AIR PUBLICLY THEIR CRITICISM OF VIETNAM'S CONTINUED OCCUPATION OF CAMBODIA. THE MEETING SOUGHT TO DEMONSTRATE THAT VIETNAM WAS INTERESTED ONLY IN A PARTIAL SOLUTION TO THE CAMBODIAN PROBLEM. CHAN SAID INDONESIA WOULD RETAIN ITS MANDATE TO ACT AS ASEAN'S POINT OF CONTACT WITH VIETNAM, ALTHOUGH MALAYSIA, AS CHAIRMAN OF THE ASEAN STANDING COMMITTEE, WAS ALSO AUTHORIZED TO PROBE VIETNAMESE INTENTIONS THROUGH THE VIETNAMESE AMBASSADOR IN KUALA LUMPUR. ACCORDING TO CHAN, ONE OF THE MAIN OBJECTIVES OF THE MEETING WAS TO HIGHLIGHT INTERNATIONAL ISOLATION, AS WELL AS TO HIGHLIGHT

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THE FACT THAT ~~EVOLUTIONARY CHANGES IN SUPERPOWER~~
~~RELATIONS MIGHT WORK TO VIETNAM'S DISADVANTAGE IF~~
~~VIETNAM PERSISTED IN PURSUING A MILITARY SOLUTION TO~~
~~THE CAMBODIAN PROBLEM.~~ CHAN POINTED OUT THAT
 COUNTRIES TRADITIONALLY FRIENDLY TOWARD VIETNAM, SUCH
 AS FRANCE AND SWEDEN, HAD MOVED TOWARD A TOUGHER
 POSTURE SINCE THEY HAD GOTTEN NOWHERE WITH THEIR
 EFFORTS TO ENCOURAGE VIETNAM TO PURSUE A NEGOTIATED
 SOLUTION. CHAN STATED THAT THE FOREIGN MINISTERS
 DECIDED TO CONTINUE BOTH POLITICAL AND MILITARY
 ASSISTANCE TO THE COALITION GOVERNMENT OF DEMOCRATIC
 KAMPUCHEA (CGDK). ACCORDING TO CHAN, THERE WAS NO
 DISAGREEMENT ON THIS POINT, AND EVEN INDONESIA AND
 MALAYSIA HAD CONCURRED WITH THE NEED SUBSTANTIALLY
 TO INCREASE SUPPORT FOR THE CGDK.

4. CHAN DEFENDED THIS POSITION BY NOTING THAT A
 STRONG DIPLOMATIC POSITION REQUIRED AN EQUALLY STRONG
 MILITARY STANCE. PREVIOUSLY, ASEAN'S POSITION ON
 THIS MATTER HAD BEEN IMPLICIT, BUT ~~ASEAN HAS NOW~~
~~PREPARED TO TAKE GREATER POLITICAL EMPHASIS ON ITS~~
~~MILITARY SUPPORT FOR THE CGDK.~~ ACCORDING TO CHAN,
 INDONESIAN FOREIGN MINISTER MOCHTAR, IN EXPRESSING
 HIS AGREEMENT, HAD SAID, "WE SHOULD HELP THE
 CAMBODIAN PEOPLE TO REGAIN THEIR FREEDOM IN THE SPIRIT
 OF TRUE INDONESIAN TRADITIONS." CHAN SAID THE
 MALAYSIANS HAD ALSO STRESSED THAT GREATER EMPHASIS
 SHOULD NOW BE PLACED ON THE MILITARY STRUGGLE,
 ALTHOUGH IT HAD ALSO CALLED ON ASEAN TO MAINTAIN
 FLEXIBILITY IN ITS OVERALL APPROACH TO THE SITUATION.
 CHAN ADDED THAT THE SOURCE OF MILITARY AID WAS
 IMMATERIAL; THE IMPORTANT POINT WAS TO ENSURE THAT
 SUFFICIENT QUANTITIES WERE SENT TO THE RESISTANCE
 FORCES TO ALLOW THEM TO OPERATE EFFECTIVELY. THE
~~MINISTERS AGREED THAT THAILAND SHOULD CONTINUE~~
~~TO SERVE AS THE CONDUIT FOR THE RESISTANCE FORCES~~
~~MILITARY SUPPORT.~~

5. THE MINISTERS HAD ALSO DISCUSSED ARRANGEMENTS FOR
 INCREASED COORDINATION AMONG THEMSELVES, AS WELL AS
 BETWEEN ASEAN AND THE THREE FACTIONS OF THE CGDK.
 THE MINISTERS WEIGHED THE QUESTION OF ~~THE CGDK~~
~~COULD RAISE ITS VISIBILITY IN THE US AND BRITAIN.~~
~~CONSIDERED THE POSSIBILITY OF ALLOWING THE NON-~~
~~COMMUNIST KHMER TO OPERATE FROM AN OFFICE IN THE~~
~~US EMBASSY IN WASHINGTON.~~ CHAN REMARKED THAT THE
 CGDK'S LIMITED DIPLOMATIC RESOURCES SHOULD BE UTILIZED
 IN COUNTRIES OTHER THAN ASEAN, SINCE THE ASEAN
 NATIONS WERE ALREADY CONVERTED TO THE CGDK CAUSE.
 MEETING WITH THE CGDK LEADERS

6. CHAN DESCRIBED THE ASEAN MINISTERS' TWO-HOUR
 MEETING WITH THE LEADERS OF THE CGDK AS EXCELLENT
 AND UPBEAT. ACCORDING TO CHAN, THE THREE MOVEMENTS

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(A TERM WHICH SIHANOUK SAID HE PREFERRED OVER FACTIONS) WERE NOW COOPERATING WELL. FOR EXAMPLE, SON SANN HAD STATED THAT HE HAD ORDERED HIS SUPPORTERS TO REFRAIN FROM HARASSING SIHANOUK LOYALISTS. THE KPNLF HAD AFFIRMED THEIR INTENTION TO MOVE AWAY FROM FIXED CAMPS ALONG THE BORDER AND TO INFILTRATE INTO THE INTERIOR OF CAMBODIA. ~~THE THREE FACTIONS INTENDED TO CONCENTRATE THEIR EFFORTS IN THE TONLE SAP REGION, THE KHMER ROUGE, WITH APPROXIMATELY 20,000 MEN OPERATING AROUND THE TONLE SAP, WERE THE PREDOMINANT FORCE IN THE INTERIOR, ALTHOUGH THE ANS CLAIMED TO HAVE INFILTRATED 4000 MEN. THE KPNLF WAS STILL ORGANIZING ITSELF FOR THIS PURPOSE.~~ CHAN SAID THERE WERE INDICATIONS THAT AS A RESULT OF THE INCREASED EFFECTIVENESS OF THE RESISTANCE FORCES OPERATING IN THE INTERIOR, VIETNAM WAS EXPERIENCING DIFFICULTY IN MAINTAINING CONTROL OVER SOME VILLAGES. AT THE MEETING, KHIEU SAMPHAN HAD SAID THAT THE KHMER ROUGE WOULD REMAIN IN THE INTERIOR REGARDLESS OF THE SITUATION ON THE BORDER, WHERE KHIEU SAMPHAN SAID THE KHMER ROUGE MAINTAINED AN ADDITIONAL 20,000 MEN.

7. THE PRIMARY PURPOSE OF THE MEETING WITH THE CGDK LEADERS, REMARKED CHAN, WAS TO URGE THEM TO IMPROVE COMMAND, CONTROL, AND DISCIPLINE. CHAN SAID THAILAND WAS PROVIDING SUPPORT IN THIS AREA. HE INDICATED THAT THE KHMER ROUGE LEADERS WERE CONFIDENT THAT THEIR FORCES COULD HOLD THE BORDER. CHAN ADDED THAT AN EBULLIENT SIHANOUK HAD SPOKEN OF THE POSSIBILITY OF A FOUR-PARTY ARRANGEMENT WITH THE VIETNAMESE, BUT PROMISED TO REFRAIN FROM TALKING TO VIETNAM ON HIS OWN, THUS ADDRESSING THE SUSPICIONS OF THE OTHER CGDK FACTIONS THAT HE MIGHT HAVE ENTERED INTO A SECRET DEAL WITH THE VIETNAMESE, SUSPICIONS FED BY THE VIETNAMESE FAILURE TO ATTACK THE SIHANOUKIST CAMP AT TA TUM. CHAN REMARKED THAT SIHANOUK DENIED THERE WAS ANY SUBSTANCE TO THESE ALLEGATIONS.

8. ACCORDING TO CHAN, SIHANOUK HAD PROPOSED THAT HE AND SON SANN TRAVEL MORE IN THE FUTURE, BUT SON SANN HAD BEEN NONCOMMITAL ABOUT HIS TRAVEL PLANS. CHAN SAID ~~SIHANOUK HAD PROPOSED TO HOLD DIRECT TALKS WITH THE CGDK, BUT HE SAID THIS WAS UNLIKELY BECAUSE OF VIETNAMESE RELUCTANCE TO DO ANYTHING TO DO WITH THE KHMER ROUGE.~~

US ROLE IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

9. WITH CHANGE NOW TAKING PLACE IN SUPERPOWER RELATIONSHIPS, CHAN SAID THE FOREIGN MINISTERS AGREED THAT CONDITIONS IN THE REGION WERE FAVORABLE FOR THE US TO BECOME MORE ACTIVELY INVOLVED. PRESSED ON JUST WHAT THE ASEAN MINISTERS HAD IN MIND, CHAN SAID THERE WERE ADDITIONAL THINGS THAT THE US

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COULD DO TO DEMONSTRATE ITS SUPPORT FOR THE ASEAN POSITION VIS-A-VIS CAMBODIA. AS AN EXAMPLE, HE REFERRED TO A SPEECH "THE PREVIOUS DAY" BY THE SEVENTH FLEET COMMANDER DETAILING WHAT THE SOVIETS WERE DOING IN CAM RANH BAY. AMONG OTHER THINGS, ~~ASEAN FELT THE US COULD DO MORE IN THE WAY OF PUBLIC STATEMENTS DESIGNED TO CAUSE VIETNAM TO SEE THE LIGHT.~~ CHAN REMARKED THAT CHINA WOULD ALSO LIKE TO SEE A MORE ACTIVE US ROLE IN SOUTHEAST ASIA, WHICH WOULD HELP LIMIT THE IMPACT OF THE INCREASED SOVIET PRESENCE IN THE AREA. CHAN SAID THAT WHILE IT WAS IMPORTANT THAT THE US SHOULD NOT BE PERCEIVED AS SENDING THE WRONG SIGNALS TO VIETNAM OR OTHERWISE OFFERING FALSE HOPES, ~~ASEAN HAD NO PROBLEM WITH DIRECT COMMUNICATION BETWEEN THE US AND VIETNAM ON TECHNICAL ISSUES SUCH AS THE FATE OF POW/MIAs.~~ CHAN OPINED THAT ASEAN WOULD SUPPORT ALL US EFFORTS SHORT OF DIRECT MILITARY INTERVENTION TO REDUCE SOVIET INFLUENCE IN SOUTHEAST ASIA AND TO ASSIST VIETNAM IN EXTRICATING ITSELF FROM CAMBODIA.

10. CHAN SAID ASEAN WAS NOT CONCERNED ABOUT THE IMPLICATIONS OF A MORE ACTIVE US ROLE SINCE ASSOCIATION WITH THE US WAS NO LONGER SEEN AS A LIABILITY. THE CAMBODIAN SITUATION HAD EVOLVED FROM A REGIONAL ASEAN-VIETNAM ISSUE INTO AN INTERNATIONAL ONE WITH BROADER IMPLICATIONS. ALTHOUGH INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT FOR ASEAN'S POSITION HAD SOLIDIFIED, CHAN NOTED, ASEAN CANNOT BECOME COMPLACENT. HE SAID JAPAN SHOULD NOT PROCEED FROM THE ASSUMPTION THAT IT WAS "DOING FAVORS" FOR ASEAN IN EXCHANGE FOR ITS SUPPORT. ON THE CONTRARY, IT SHOULD ACT MORE LIKE A BIG ASIAN POWER THAT WAS INTERESTED IN AN EQUITABLE SOLUTION TO THE CAMBODIAN PROBLEM IN ITS OWN RIGHT.
DEMARCHE TO SOVIET AMBASSADORS IN ASEAN

11. ACCORDING TO CHAN, MOCHTAR SAID INDONESIA HAD MOVED SOONER THAN EXPECTED IN MAKING ITS DEMARCHE TO THE SOVIET AMBASSADOR IN JAKARTA BECAUSE OF THE FIERCE VIETNAMESE ATTACKS ALONG THE BORDER. MOCHTAR HAD TOLD THE PRESS THAT INDONESIA HAD AGAIN CALLED IN THE SOVIET AMBASSADOR ON FEBRUARY 6, BUT CHAN SAID IT WAS UNCLEAR WHETHER THE INDONESIANS HAD, IN FACT, MADE A SECOND DEMARCHE. CHAN CHARACTERIZED THE RESPONSE OF THE SOVIET AMBASSADOR IN SINGAPORE TO THE DEMARCHE AS SOFT RATHER THAN HARD.
UN SECRETARY GENERAL'S VISIT TO SOUTHEAST ASIA

12. TURNING TO THE RECENT VISIT OF UN SECRETARY GENERAL (UNSG) PEREZ DE CUELLAR TO SOUTHEAST ASIA, CHAN SAID IT HAD PROVIDED THE UNSG WITH THE OPPORTUNITY TO GAIN A FIRST-HAND FEEL FOR THE CAMBODIAN SITUATION. THE SECRETARY GENERAL NOW HAD

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A BETTER SENSE OF THE SITUATION, ALTHOUGH THERE WERE STILL GAPS IN HIS UNDERSTANDING OF THE POSITIONS OF THE MAJOR PARTIES INVOLVED. DURING PEREZ DE CUELLAR'S MEETING WITH FOREIGN MINISTER DHANABALAN, THE SECRETARY GENERAL HAD NOTED VIETNAM'S STATED INTENTION TO START ITS OWN WITHDRAWAL FROM CAMBODIA IN TWO YEARS REGARDLESS OF THE STATUS OF NEGOTIATIONS. THE WITHDRAWAL WOULD BE COMPLETED WITHIN FIVE YEARS. CHAN SAID PEREZ DE CUELLAR ALSO HAD MENTIONED VIETNAM'S INTEREST IN IMPROVING RELATIONS WITH THE US. CHAN EXPRESSED THE HOPE THAT THE UN SECRETARY GENERAL WOULD NOT ATTACH TOO MUCH CREDIBILITY TO VIETNAM'S DIPLOMATIC MOVES. HE SAID VIETNAM'S ACTIONS MUST MATCH ITS WORDS. NEVERTHELESS, CHAN DESCRIBED THE SECRETARY GENERAL'S ATTITUDE TOWARD THE CAMBODIAN SITUATION AS MORE REALISTIC THAN THAT OF UNDER SECRETARY GENERAL RAFEEUDIN AHMED.
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