

CONFIDENTIAL

*of Kampuchea: Oct 79 Situation*  
*(2)*



*Prime Minister*  
*The line the FCO suggest you*  
*take is signed on page 2.*

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

26 October 1979

*Dear Michael,*

*Andrew*

*mt*

Cambodia: Withdrawal of Recognition from Pol Pot Regime

In the course of the Prime Minister's briefing meeting this morning before Premier Hua's visit, Mr Blaker explained that Lord Carrington believed it was no longer politically defensible for the Government to recognise Pol Pot's regime in Cambodia. Quite apart from the situation in Cambodia itself, we were facing mounting criticism for continuing to do so despite the regime's appalling human rights record. There would be no question of transferring recognition to the Heng Samrin regime installed by the Vietnamese, but an early change of policy would raise the question of what should be said to the Chinese on the subject during Hua's visit.

The Prime Minister commented that she would not wish to tell Premier Hua of such a change in policy while he was in London. He would be bound to interpret it as a slap in the face and the impact on the atmosphere of the visit would be bad. Mrs Thatcher thought we should put off saying anything until some weeks after Hua had left. She could side-step the issue herself if it is raised in the House of Commons before an announcement is made.

In the absence of Lord Carrington, Mr Blaker agrees that there are important factors which we need to consider carefully before making any public announcement. He is arranging for the Nine, the ASEAN countries, the old Commonwealth, and the Americans and Japanese to be informed that we are considering an early announcement that we no longer recognise the Pol Pot regime. While making it clear we would be willing to take account of their views, there would be no question of our implying that an announcement could be delayed much longer.

The most immediate problem is how to deal with the Chinese aspect of the problem. The Chinese have been Pol Pot's main supporters and their attack on Vietnam earlier this year was at least partly a reply to Vietnam's invasion and occupation of Cambodia. Our decision to withdraw recognition from Pol Pot

/will be

M O'D B Alexander Esq  
10 Downing Street

CONFIDENTIAL





CONFIDENTIAL

will be unwelcome to them and it would be doubly so if it coincided with the visit to this country of President Hua Guofeng. The Chinese see their support for Pol Pot in terms of their dispute with the Russians, and anything we might do which could be interpreted as giving any encouragement to Hanoi, and therefore to the Russians, would be damaging to our relations. Mr Blaker thinks that at this stage it would be sufficient if the Prime Minister were to indicate at the first session of talks on 29 October our distaste for Pol Pot and his regime, and our doubts about the extent to which he controls any part of Cambodian territory or commands the obedience of its people. It would also be useful if she could point out that it is becoming increasingly difficult for us to justify recognising a regime in such circumstances. At the same time it would be helpful if the Prime Minister could stress that we fully share China's concern about Vietnamese activities in Indochina and Vietnamese ambition to exercise hegemony throughout Indochina. We believe that the Vietnamese must get out of Cambodia and that, as is set out in the brief, the only hope for a peaceful solution lies in the establishment of a truly neutral regime in that country. It would also be useful to make it clear that we regard the Heng Samrin regime as a Vietnamese puppet and that we have no intention of recognising the regime put in by Vietnamese aggression.

(G G H Walden)

M O'D B Alexander Esq  
10 Downing Street

CONFIDENTIAL