

*Mufaxed to Chequers
8.45am, 7/12*

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

4 December 1987

*Dear Charles**COF
7/11*

Prime Minister's meeting with Mr Gorbachev :
7 December : Cambodia

The Prime Minister will wish to be aware of a further development over Cambodia before she meets Mr Gorbachev on 7 December. The Foreign Secretary has not seen these papers but will do so over the weekend.

As you will know, Prince Sihanouk of the Cambodian resistance held talks near Paris from 2-3 December with Hun Sen of the Heng Samrin regime in Phnom Penh. These were the first direct contacts between opposing Cambodian factions since the Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia. The two leaders issued a joint communiqué after their meeting setting out their approach to a political solution to Cambodia. This laid emphasis on the need to reach agreement among the Cambodian parties, following which an international conference should be convened to guarantee that agreement and the independence of Cambodia. They also agreed to meet again in France next year and thereafter to meet in Pyongyang. Although no firm dates were given for further meetings, the meeting in France may take place as early as January. A French Government spokesman has welcomed the prospects which the meeting seemed to have opened up for the start of a process leading to a settlement of the Cambodian conflict.

We have reservations about the results of the meeting as set out in the communique. There is no reference in it to the central role of Vietnam, nor to the need for Vietnam to withdraw its troops and enter into negotiations for a settlement. It appears that Prince Sihanouk may have given away more to the PRK side than will be acceptable to other members of the resistance, to ASEAN, or to China.

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We continue to believe that in any discussion of Cambodia with Mr Gorbachev, it would be right for the Prime Minister to remind him that we look to the Soviet Union to persuade Vietnam to withdraw its troops and to participate directly in talks about a settlement.

Yours ever

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'R N Culshaw', with a large flourish at the end.

(R N Culshaw)
Private Secretary

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