

Standing Committee Minutes, March 11, 1976

Documentation Center of Cambodia Catalogue Number: D7562

[Unofficial translation by Bunsou Sour; edited by Prof. David Chandler]

**MINUTE OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE
THE FRONT**

11 March 1976

PARTICIPANTS: COMRADE SECRETARY GENERAL [Pol Pot]

COMRADE DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL [Noun Chea]

COMRADE VORN [Vorn Vet]

COMRADE KHIEU [Son Sen]

COMRADE HEM [Khieu Samphan]

COMRADE DOEUN

COMRADE TUM

COMRADE TOUCH

AGENDA: SIHANOUK'S RESIGNATION FROM HIS POST

I. Report on the Resignation of Sihanouk

Comrade HEM reported to the Standing Committee on the resignation of Sihanouk. Sihanouk has sent two letters written in French:

- The first letter conveys his resignation and explains the important reason for which he is resigning. In particular, he emphasizes his various health problems, which do not allow him to continue his work.

- The second letter is a statement addressed to the people of Democratic Kampuchea informing them that he wishes to resign from his post before the 20th March 1976.

During his meeting respectively with the Ambassadors of Mauritania and Senegal, Sihanouk has also indicated that he categorically resigns. But during his meeting with the Chinese Economic Delegation he grumbled about his illnesses...

II. Angkar's Opinion

1. Reason for his Resignation.

There are two: in the long term and in the short term.

A. In the Long Term: it is the difference of "classes", the difference between the grass roots of the Revolution and his own person and family. He cannot live with us. If in the past he was able to remain with us, it was simply because of his strategy. As we no longer go along with his strategy, he can only remain provisionally with us. It is not the first time that Sihanouk has resigned. He did that in 1971 already.

B. In the Short Term: It is a strategic difference together with the grass roots difference. An example was the case when we dispatched our Ambassadors abroad without consulting him. The incident has no importance but he would have thought that we no longer have any need for him. Thus the wrangle over position continues.

But the situation has evolved more thoroughly than before. Outside the country, Sihanouk can work with us. While inside the country he feels completely lost without any future. He is very frustrated. He lacks work, he is bored and the environment that surrounds him, in particular his wife who cries constantly, pushes him to the point that he cannot endure any longer. In the case that he decides to remain with us, that cannot last either, at the most 1 or 2 years. As he wishes to leave, his leaving now is the best.

2. POSITIVE and Negative aspects of his Resignation

A. Positive Aspects for our Revolution :

- All the people of Kampuchea will feel a huge surge of relief. The same applies to all our cadres and military. As far as the world is concerned, there won't be any problem.

- We can resolve the problem of the nomination in our State Organisation easily. And under these conditions we can work peacefully without any obstacles.

- Our work in External Affairs will thus be improved because henceforth we will make the decisions ourselves, we will express our position by ourselves. Without Sihanouk we are clean-cut.

B. Negative Aspects for our Revolution

- On the one hand, Vietnam attacks us and treats us as being too far to the left. Sihanouk has helped us, so why should we drop him? Vietnam will point out to others, saying something bad about us, but good about themselves. But it is a provisional problem only. If in the final analysis we remain very close to them, we shall certainly have no problem.

- On the other hand, the enemy is about to attack us, but we should let them be for say half a month. But even if Sihanouk had not resigned the enemy will always attack us, their spies still exist. If the enemy does not cease attacking us, are we going to suffer? No, because they cannot isolate us.

3. MEASURES to be Taken: two directives

A. First directive: We don't reject him. We ask him to remain in the same position. If he wishes to remain with us, he could remain for 5 months, 1 or 3 years, as long he would like. If he cannot resist, it is not because of us, it is not our fault. In fact he won't be able to remain with us. He and his family can see very well that they won't have well-being. We don't give him any choice, if he does not wish to remain, too bad for him.

Thus we must go and see him and ask him to excuse us for being unable to pay him visits as often as we would like, because we were very busy. We SHOULD acknowledge reception of his letter. That is why we come together to see him. The Situation of our country is very difficult, very poor, the country must face tremendous difficulties. We must resolve all the problems with national dignity. It is in this way that we can be truly independent. Our position, including that of the government, is of always recognizing his noble contribution, HIS deeds and efforts for the country, in particular in the international arena.

The [Khmer] Nation owes him its gratitude for his highly patriotic contribution, something which our Assembly has already noted in its resolutions. We respect a lot [our] collective decisions once they have been adopted. But we request that he remains with the people. The people will preserve his nationalist undertakings and we also will congratulate him and will do our utmost to implement the resolution of our extraordinary session of the National Assembly.

B. Second Directive: in the event that he insists on resigning. We thank him. In the recent past we fought together, shoulder to shoulder. We very much regret his resignation. We shall convoke a meeting of the Council of Ministers to take a decision. If he resigns we won't allow him to leave the country. His departure will render the situation complicated to China. The enemy does not cease to condemn and criticize us. If we refuse to allow him to leave, the enemy can criticize us at least for one month.

Certain reasonable attitudes of Sihanouk show a patriotic spirit, but his wife has no patriotic spirit at all. Consequently, if we are not clear in solving this problem, it is possible that unresolved questions will complicate our tasks later on. Thus we should go for the first solution and if that does not work, adopt the second one.

III. ANGKAR'S OPINION (meeting of 13 March 1976)

Comrade HEM made several reports to the Standing Committee on the Sihanouk problem. He has made a categorical decision to resign. He asks Angkar that it TAKE PITY ON him. HE lowers

and humbles himself only requesting Angkar that it accepts his resignation. This resignation is not against us...

Comrade Secretary General pointed out that it is an important question to be decided by the Central Committee of the Party. But Comrade Secretary General has already prepared a number of ideas, which WERE supported by the Standing Committee:

1. To forbid Sihanouk from leaving the country is the first measure to be taken.
2. It is necessary to call a meeting of the Council of Ministers to submit to it reports on the matter, in order for the latter to make a decision and, then, to meet Sihanouk once again, with the presence of Penn NOUTH

It is necessary that arrangements be made to record the conversation with Sihanouk. It is necessary to speak to him in such a way for him to keep UP his hopes and allow the recording of his conversation. It is for our documentation.

3. To dispatch telegrams to the sons of Sihanouk asking them to return as soon as possible, pointing out that they must come for the New Year and the National Day celebration. We must solve this problem once and for all. We must also solve it for the interests of our revolution.

4. Is Our Decision TRUE TO Revolutionary Morality?

a. As the morality of the Revolution or the interests of the Revolution. The morality of the revolution must be based on the interests of the revolution. It is a gain for the revolution. To allow Sihanouk to leave is a loss for the Revolution. In reality, Sihanouk is a meek tiger, which only has its skin and bones left, without claws and the fangs. HIS beard has also been shaven. Thus all that remains is to wait for the day of his death. But if this old tiger is freed in the street, all the children would certainly be afraid of it. Certain old men that did not know this meek tiger would also be afraid.

b. Sihanouk participated with us in our Revolution despite his differences with us. That is the reason why our Party decided that Sihanouk should become President of Democratic Kampuchea. But Sihanouk refuses. Thus it is up to him, he can remain or not, it is his problem.

We consider him as a Senior Personality. We shall not kill him. But vis-a-vis the people and the Nation, Sihanouk must also be punished for his fault of having massacred the people.

Thus our decision is reasonably taken in every respect. We shall not change it. But if he continues to resist us, we shall take measures to liquidate him.

5. Direction of the Evolution of our Revolution:

Consequently, it is necessary to put an end to feudalism. We have reached this stage. The whole feudal regime has been destroyed and definitively dismantled by the Revolution. The Monarchy existing for over 2000 years has finally been dismantled. We do not have any other alternatives. Reactions will certainly take place, but we must follow the path of the Revolution in order to win.

6. Another Measure to be Taken:

Henceforth, Sihanouk shall not be allowed to meet foreign diplomats. We shall give them valid reasons to explain the situation.

- i Cambodia's Strategy of Defence against Vietnam
- i DK Constitution
- i KR Assembly, April 11-13, 1976 Session
- i Nuon Chea Statement, July 1978
- i Security File Circular

