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Deputy Prime Minister HOR Namhong: The JBC Meeting in Indonesia Fails Due to Thailand's Lack of Will



Cambodian Deputy Prime Minister H.E. HOR Namhong, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation (rights) and Deputy Prime Minister H.E. Gen. Tea Banh, Minister of National Defense (left), holds a press conference at a VIP Lounge at Phnom Penh International Airport.

Phnom Penh, April 10, 2011 AKP –The meeting to find resolution for Cambodia-Thailand border dispute in Indonesia on Apr. 7-8 achieved no result because Thailand has no will to resolve the issue peacefully.

Deputy Prime Min-

ister and Foreign Minister H.E. Hor Namhong told a Cambodian local TV in an interview on Apr. 9 in Indonesia.

There were three points on the agenda of the Cambodia-Thailand Joint Commission on Demarcation of Land Bound-

ary (JBC) in Bogor, Indonesia including the sending of a technical team to search for border posts numbered 1 to 23, the aerial photos taking to look for old border posts, and the opening of Stung Bot border crossing in Banteay Meanchey province,

he said, stressing that Thailand agreed only on the third point.

Thailand proposed to wait for the approval from its parliament of the last three minutes of the JBC meetings in 2008 and 2009, he added....

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CMC Condemns Thai Use of Cluster Munitions in Cambodia

Phnom Penh, April 6, 2011 AKP –

Based on two separate on-site investigations, the Cluster Munition Coalition (CMC) has concluded that Thailand used cluster munitions on Cambodian territory during the February 2011 border conflict. Thai officials confirmed the use of cluster munitions in a meeting with the CMC on Apr. 5.

This is the first use of cluster munitions anywhere in the world since the 2008 Convention on Cluster Munitions entered into force and became binding international law, according to a CMC news release.

The CMC condemns any use of cluster munitions, and urges Thailand and Cambodia to immediately commit to no future use and to accede to the global treaty banning the weapons.

“It’s appalling that any country would resort to using cluster munitions after the international community banned them,” said Laura Cheeseman, director of the CMC.

“Thailand has been a leader in the global ban on antipersonnel mines, and it is unconscionable that it used banned weapons that

indiscriminately kill and injure civilians in a similar manner.”

In a meeting on 5 April, the Thai Ambassador to the UN in Geneva confirmed Thai use of 155mm Dual Purpose Improved Conventional Munition (DPICM) cluster munitions. The Ambassador said Thailand used cluster munitions “in self-defense”, using the principles of “necessity, proportionality and in compliance with the military code of conduct”. He alleged heavy use of rocket fire by Cambodian forces against civilian targets in Satisuk, in the Khun Khan district of Thailand.

In February and April of this year, CMC members conducted two separate missions to cluster munition contaminated areas in Cambodia including in Svay Chrum Village, Sen Chey Village and around the Preah Vihear temple hill, and witnessed unexploded submunitions and fragmentation damage caused by cluster munitions. Norwegian People’s Aid confirmed that unexploded M42/M46 and M85 type DPICM submunitions have been found.

Atle Karlsen of Norwe-

gian People’s Aid said, “There are around 5,000 people living in Sen Chey village that are at risk from these unexploded weapons. Thailand must supply information to help clear affected areas and make them safe for civilians to return home.”

Sister Denise Coghlan, a CMC leader who took part in the first research mission said, “These cluster munitions have already robbed two men of their lives, two more have lost their arms and a further five were injured. The area must be cleared immediately to prevent more suffering. Cambodia must make every effort to ensure the safety of civilians.”

The CMC has urged Thailand to provide detailed information on the results of its inquiry, including the location of all cluster munition strikes, so that civilians can be adequately warned of the dangers and to assist the effective and efficient clearance of submunition remnants, which pose dangers like landmines. The CMC is also calling on Cambodia to accede to the Convention on Cluster Munitions and as interim steps commit to no use,

make known the types and quantity of cluster munitions in its stockpile and start destruction.

Cambodia and Thailand are not among the 108 countries that have signed the Convention on Cluster Munitions but each has joined the 1997 Mine Ban Treaty. Both countries participated in the “Oslo Process” to negotiate the Convention on Cluster Munitions and attended its First Meeting of States Parties in neighboring Lao PDR in November 2010.

“This conflict should spur both countries to take urgent action to denounce the weapons and join the ban treaty,” said Cheeseman.

The Convention on Cluster Munitions entered into force as binding international law on 1 August 2010, banning the use, production, stockpiling and transfer of cluster munitions, while requiring states to destroy stockpiles, clear contaminated land and assist victims and affected communities. Of the 108 countries that have signed the Convention since it opened for signature in December 2008, 55 countries have already ratified. –AKP

Indonesia Urges Thailand to Consider Soon the Sending of Indonesian Observers

Phnom Penh, April 11, 2011 AKP –

Indonesian Foreign Minister H.E. Marty Natalegawa will arrive in Thailand on Apr. 11 to ask Thailand to consider as soon as possible the sending of Indonesian observers to Cambodia-Thailand border.

Cambodian Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation H.E. Hor Namhong told reporters at Phnom Penh International Airport upon his return from the border meetings in Indonesia.

“Cambodia has nothing more to do because the country has already made maximum concession,” H.E. Hor Namhong said, adding that if Thailand has the

will, this issue will be solved soon.

The Cambodian deputy prime minister also expressed his disappointment towards the Cambodia-Thailand Joint Commission on Demarcation of Land Boundary (JBC) in Bogor, Indonesia, saying that it failed because Thailand had no will to resolve the issue peacefully. Thailand agreed only on the third of the three points on the meeting’s agenda – the opening of Stung Bot border crossing in Banteay Meanchey province.

Thailand proposed to wait for the approval from its parliament of the last three minutes of the JBC meetings in 2008 and 2009, he added.

This reflects Thailand’s

bad will to solve the border conflict peacefully and friendly as it has claimed before, said H.E. Hor Namhong, explaining that Thailand thinks that it will benefit a lot from the opening of Stung Bot border crossing as each year Thai goods worth over US\$2 billion are exported to Cambodia.

On the other hand, the General Border Committee (GBC) meeting co-chaired by Cambodian-Thai foreign ministers was not held because the Thai side did not attend the meeting without prior notification.

Indonesia, as the current Chair of ASEAN, has received the mandate from the UN Security Council to mediate the Cambodia-Thailand

border dispute.

At an ASEAN meeting in February, Cambodia and Thailand agreed to accept Indonesian observers to ensure a permanent ceasefire at the disputed border area near the Khmer sacred Preah Vihear Temple. But Thailand’s military in March refused to receive the observers.

Concerning the ASEAN-Japan Foreign Minister Meeting in response to the Earthquake and Tsunami in Japan, it focused particularly on the strengthening and expansion of the ties of friendship, solidarity and cooperation as well as experience exchange between ASEAN and Japan in preventing natural disasters. –AKP

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This reflects Thailand's bad will to solve the border conflict peacefully and friendly as it has claimed before, said H.E. Hor Namhong, explaining that Thailand thinks that it will benefit a lot from the opening of Stung Bot border crossing as each year Thai goods worth over US\$2 billion are imported to Cambodia, he explained.

The JBC meeting was co-chaired on the Cambodian side by Senior Minis-

ter Var Kimhong and on the Thai side by Asda Jayanama. On the other hand, the General Border Committee (GBC) meeting co-chaired by Cambodian-Thai foreign ministers was not held because the Thai side did not attend the meeting without notification.

Cambodia has already fulfilled its role to join the GBC meeting as invited by Indonesia even though Thailand did not attend the meeting, Cambodian Deputy Prime Minister and National Defense Minister H.E. Tea Banh told reporters on Saturday at Phnom Penh International Airport upon his return from the GBC meeting in Indone-

sia.

This is in conformity with the statement of the UN Security Council as well as that of the Chair of ASEAN on Feb. 22, 2011, he said.

"We have expressed our will to accept the Indonesian observers since the beginning. [...] I think they [Indonesia] will find ways to coordinate and push this plan [to deploy unarmed Indonesian Armed Forces personnel as observers to the conflict zone] to be achieved soon," he added.

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Regarding the upcoming Thai offshore military exercise on Apr. 21, H.E. Tea Banh said it is normal for a country to conduct a military exercise. But, if it affects Cambodia's maritime territory, we have the obligation to protect our territory. –AKP

Published in April 2011 by:



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