

**Minutes of Meeting of the Standing Committee
The Front**

11 March 1976

Composition: Comrade Secretary Comrade Deputy Secretary Comrade Vorn វ៉ែន
Comrade Khieu ខៀវ Comrade Hêm ហែម Comrade Doeun ជឿន
Comrade Tum តុំ Comrade Touch តូច

Agenda: Sihanouk resignation

I. Report on the Sihanouk Resignation

Comrade Hêm ហែម reported to the Standing Committee on the resignation of Sihanouk. Sihanouk sent two letters in the French language.

- One letter asks for an opinion, and explains the important reasons that led him to resign. In particular, he emphasized the matter of his various diseases which do not permit him to go on.

- Another letter is an announcement sent to the people of Democratic Kampuchea saying he would resign prior to 20 March 1976.

- When he met with Romanian and Senegalese diplomats, Sihanouk told them that he was absolutely going to resign. While meeting with the Chinese Economics and Commerce Delegation he complained about his diseases ---

(Page 2)

II. Opinions of Angkar

1. The reasons which led Sihanouk to resign:

There are two, namely: the long term and the immediate.

A. The long term reason: Fundamental class conflict between him and his family and the revolution. He cannot live with us. In the past, he could, only as a tactic. Since we operated tactically he could go along with us. He did not just resign one time. He resigned since 1971.

B. The immediate reason: Tactical conflict in addition to the fundamental conflict. Example: Us having the diplomats [embassies] leave the country without asking him. That was a small matter; he assumed that we no longer needed him. So, the conflict of wanting to continue in a position.

But the situation developed more strongly than before. Outside the country, he could join with us. But inside the country, he saw that everything was gone, that there was no future at all. He was very tense in his heart. He had no work to do, he was lonely, and the atmosphere surrounding him, in particular his wife's constant crying, pushed him to the point he could not tolerate it. If he remained, it would not be for long, at most one or two years. If he had to go anyway, to go ahead and go and would be better.

2. Good and bad factors resulting from the resignation of Sihanouk:

A. Good factors for our revolution: For one thing, the entire Kampuchean people have sighed for their last time. All our cadres, all of the Army are the same. The peoples of the world have no problem either.

- Another thing, we have resolved the organization of our state organizations easily, and through this, we work easily and have no further entanglements.

- Third, our foreign affairs work will be better than before since we do it ourselves because there is no Sihanouk. We are clear-cut.

(Page 3)

B. Bad factors for us:

- For one thing, Vietnam attacks us saying we are leftists. [They say] Sihanouk helps us, why get rid of Sihanouk. They say other revolutions bring up good things about them [the Vietnamese], and put us down. But this matter is temporary. It is the final problem, and as long as we stay close to them, they will not say anything.

- Another thing, our enemies attack us, and [we] gave them half a month. But if Sihanouk does not resign, they will still attack us just the same. They will keep up their espionage. If they attack us like that, is that difficult for us, or not? It is nothing, because they cannot isolate us.

3. Our measures: The directions of measures are two:

A. First direction: We do not push him. We let him stay as normal if he wants to stay with us; if he wants five months, one year, three years, that is alright. If he cannot stay, it is not because of us. In fact, he cannot stay. He himself and his wife clearly see that there cannot be any further happiness for them. We gave him this route, he stays, he goes, and it is up to him to stay or go.

Therefore, we must meet him and tell him that we are busy and cannot come often and [ask him] to forgive us. We have received his letters. Because of that, we gathered to meet him. The situation of our country is poor in every way. He must resolve all problems with national honor. That is exactly why we are now independent. The stance of all of us, all the government, is that he is beneficial to the country, especially on the international stage. That he is beneficial to the nation has been decided by the General Conference. We collectively respect [him] very much, and what [he] says is how it will be. But we request that he remain with the people further. The people still recognize his beneficence to the country. We welcome and will strive with all our hearts to implement the decision of our General Conference.

B. A second direction: In case he still does not agree:

We thank him. For many years we have stood shoulder to shoulder together.

(Page 4)

If he quits, we will regret it very much. We will convene a meeting of the Cabinet of Ministers to decide.

If he quits, do not let him leave. If we allowed him to leave, that will mean complications for China. The enemy curses us constantly. If we do not let him leave, let them curse us for a month. Sihanouk is alright, he has some patriotic spirit, but his wife has none at all. Therefore, if we do not resolve this clearly, it is still stuck to our tails and will lead to many complications for us.

Therefore, leave through exit number one. If not through exit number one, then leave through exit number two.

III. Opinions of Angkar, Meeting of the Evening of the 13th:

Comrade Hêm អ៊ែម reported to the Standing Committee on the Sihanouk problem. He has decided absolutely to resign his position. He explained that Angkar should take pity on him, that he would even crawl and show the gesture of respect, whatever, just let him resign. This resignation is not done in opposition to us ... [ellipsis in original text]

Comrade Secretary explained that this problem is a major one; leave it for our Center to decide. But the Comrade Secretary outlined the principle ideas on which the entire Standing Committee had already agreed, as follows:

- 1 - Do not let Sihanouk leave [the country]. This is the first measure.
- 2 - Must convene the Cabinet of Ministers. Report to the Cabinet of Ministers to decide, then go meet with Sihanouk again with Pên Nut ប៉េន នុត participating.

If the option is open for him to make a voice recording, that is even better. We must say whatever necessary to give him hope and agree to make a recording. We will keep it as a document.

3 - Send a wire for his children to come immediately, explaining that they are coming for the New Year's and the independence celebrations. We want to resolve this problem cleanly. We must resolve it like this to the benefit of the revolution.

4 - How is our decision in terms of revolutionary morals?

(Page 5)

A. Is this revolutionary moral or is this in revolutionary interests? Revolutionary morals must stand upon the interests of the revolution. Being revolutionarily moral is to benefit the revolution. Letting him leave is a loss to the revolution.

In fact, Sihanouk is a tame tiger, with only skin and bones, no claws, no fangs, and his whiskers have been pulled out as well. Therefore, he is just waiting for the day of his death.

But if this old tiger is released to walk along the road, the children will certainly be frightened, and some adults who don't know that he is only a tame tiger will be frightened as well.

B. He joined with our revolution, even though he had conflicts with us. This is why the Party decided for him to be Chairman of the Presidium of State, but he did not agree. So, whether he stays or goes, it is his matter.

We keep him as a dignitary. We do not kill him. But for the nation and the people he bears serious guilt, in his status of a killer of the people.

Therefore, our decision is reasonable in every way.

We will maintain him, but if he keeps on struggling to free himself, we must end it.

5 - The direction of the development of the revolution: We must end feudalism, just like this. The chess game has gotten to that point. The entire feudalist regime has been permanently smashed and dug out by the revolution. The kings existing over 2,000 thousand [sic] years must, in the end, be clean. [ស្តេចដែលមានមក ២០០០ ពាន់ឆ្នាំ ហើយ ទីបំផុតត្រូវស្អាត។] We have no way out other than this one.

There clearly will be some reaction, but we must walk along the road which benefits the revolution.

6 - Another measure: Beginning today, cease meeting with foreign diplomats. We must prolong things, using appropriate pretexts.