

REPORT ON THE SDC  
HUMANITARIAN MISSION  
TO CAMBODIA  
24.2 - 7.3.1992

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## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 A SDC mission consisting of Messrs. L. Lavizzari, SDC Regional Coordinator, Bangkok, R. Fankhauser, Coordinator Swiss Disaster Relief Unit, Bern, P. Fuhrmann, SDC Humanitarian Aid Section, Bern, and Toan Ton That, SDC Civil Engineer at the Interim Mekong Committee, Bangkok visited Cambodia during 24.4 - 7.3.1992 to assess the most urgent humanitarian needs and to identify areas of possible SDC assistance.
- 1.2 The detailed terms of reference of the mission are contained in Annex I while the itinerary and a list of the persons met during the mission are available in Annex II.

## 2. Summary of conclusions

- 2.1 The prevailing and most urgent humanitarian requirements of Cambodia appear clearly to be related to decades of conflicts and war as well as the fast accelerating peace process.
- 2.2 Thus it is possible to identify 3 most needy groups, for which humanitarian assistance is urgently required in order to help them resuming a normal life; they are:
- a) the 380'000 refugees living since years in camps in Thailand at the border with Cambodia and whose repatriation is now imminent,
  - b) the 180'000 internally-displaced persons, who fled their villages for temporary settlements inside Cambodia when the 3 guerrilla groups started their offensive along the border with Thailand after the withdrawal of the Vietnamese force in 1989. This group, too, is keen to return and has indeed slowly started returning to their villages,
  - c) the 150-200'000 soldiers (including their families) soon to be demobilized from the 4 conflicting armies in accordance with the Paris Peace Agreement.
- 2.3 In the near future there are valid reasons to believe that the humanitarian requirements will be greatest and most urgent in the 4 provinces of Battambang, Pursat, Banteay Mean Chey and Siem Reap, where the majority of the internally displaced people is located and to where the majority of the refugees wants to return.
- 2.4 There is a number of urgent requirements and problems affecting the above mentioned target groups in the 4 key provinces:



- a) there are millions of land mines hidden in the 4 priority provinces. Mines continue to take a heavy toll in the form of a growing number of casualties and disabled people. The mission found first hand evidence for the massive occurrence of mines along roads, under bridges, in rice fields and villages as being the most formidable obstacle against the resettlement of internally displaced persons and the refugees from Thailand. Contrary to expectations UNAMIC has managed to contribute very little to the solution of this problem. Demining is now said to be the task of the not yet deployed UNTAC. But there is a growing recognition that even under the best circumstances UNTAC will not be in a position to go much beyond the formulation of a master plan and some training and subsequent demining in some strategically important locations. Thus the landmine problem is there to stay for many years, specially in villages and around forests, and demining will be a long term process necessitating the cooperative efforts of NGOs and UN agencies also in the "post UNTAC period";
- b) There is a serious security problem as evidenced by gangs of soldiers of the Phnom Penh as well as the various guerrilla's armies indulging in banditry and other illegal activities. There is a widespread, and in the mission's opinion, justified fear that this problem will increase when tens of thousands of former troops lacking job skills, money or land to return to are demobilized from the various army factions during the implementation of the peace plan. In the absence of a fully deployed UNTAC and an effective reintegration programme many of these ex-soldiers are in fact expected to turn to banditry as a means of subsistence;
- c) Contrary to the prevailing view that land is plentiful in Cambodia, it appears now that in fact there is hardly any land available for the repatriates from Thailand. The majority of the land initially identified as "available" for the refugees is, in fact mined, has no (safe) access roads, is unfit for agricultural use or simply belongs to others. Many officials and relief workers estimate that in the process the majority of the repatriates may not have another alternative but to go to Phnom Penh or to other cities such as Battambang and Siem Reap;
- d) The infrastructure of Cambodia is in a desperate state: roads are beyond repair, bridges are collapsing, medical facilities, drinking water supply and schools are non-existent in many villages. The reintegration of refugees,



displaced people and demobilized soldiers as well as the deployment of the logistics of UN and other aid relief agencies are expected to further greatly exacerbate the dismal situation of the country's infrastructure. The mission appreciates that without major repair/rehabilitation of the national highways and secondary road network in the 4 provinces, it will be very difficult for UNHCR/WFP to repatriate and specially to provide the resettled refugees with the envisaged relief in the next 16-18 months or so. At village level the lack of adequate and the stress on the non-existing or insufficient infrastructure, specially schools but also health facilities and to some extent drinking water, may discourage the resettlement process or may result in the repatriation becoming a source of conflict between repatriates and the villagers.

- 2.5 The mission must report a high degree of unpreparedness for the imminent repatriation of refugees. In the past the most quoted conditions were that repatriation of refugees had to be voluntary, that security arrangements against the occurrence of banditry and mines had to be in place and that land for the refugees (2 ha/head of family) was to be identified before the repatriation could start. Today, few days before the beginning of the repatriation operation, it is quite clear that with the exception of the first the other conditions cannot be fulfilled, at least for the time being. This unpleasant situation together with the UNHCR repatriation plan remaining massively underfunded may well cause the entire operation to come to a halt in the various reception centers (not yet completed and partly without water supply) a few weeks after its start.
- 2.6 According to the peace plan the repatriation of refugees must be completed by next November, when the registration for the election is supposed to start in order to lead to fair and free elections in the spring of 1993. Any delay would in fact prolong UNTAC's presence in Cambodia and add to the already enormous UNTAC's costs that nobody wants to bear. Thus the political calendar seems to have got priority over the humanitarian one. UNHCR is under pressure to move the refugees back and as a result many relief workers are predicting further unnecessary anguish and hardship for the repatriates.
- 2.7 WFP is well positioned to start the repatriation process and has already imported and secured enough food for this purpose. But UNHCR, the organization actually entrusted with the lead in the repatriation operation, partly because of the time frame imposed by the Peace Agreement and partly due to the delay in the deployment of UNTAC, is now hastily deploying its network in the 4 provinces and implementing a number of preparatory



measures on an emergency basis. But there are still several crucial aspects of the repatriation plan (like how to find demined and accessible land suitable for agriculture production, how to provide access to safe drinking water for the refugees, etc.) which would need clarification before the operation can be implemented. In this regard the task of UNHCR is hampered by the absence of officials with knowledge and experience in the country. Moreover, very few UNHCR officials are presently actually posted in the 4 critical provinces, while the majority of the officials are still in Phnom Penh. However, UNHCR must be credited for having realized the necessity of adopting a revised plan of action and is now embarking on the implementation of a modest but more realistic first phase of the repatriation process.

- 2.8 It is also hard to find anyone in Phnom Penh with something close to a real overall view on the entire UN peace keeping and repatriation operation. Nobody seems to know who is to undertake demining how and when, who is to repair which roads and which bridges and in general how the activities of the numerous relief agencies are to be coordinated. Recently, however, a Joint Support Unit has been established with that task in mind and UNHCR has taken the lead in organizing a conference in Battambang with the various agencies and donor countries to try to address this issue. This is a first positive step in trying to boost what continues to remain - to quote a senior relief worker in Phnom Penh - "an unbelievably bad coordination" between the various relief and peace keeping agencies.

- 2.9 After an appraisal of the proposals made during the previous missions of the Swiss Ambassador and the SDC Coordinator later last year, the mission identified the following projects/programmes respectively organizations, which it would like to propose for SDC humanitarian support:

A. Construction / Rehabilitation / Extension of Schools / Class rooms in selected villages

This programme, to be financed and implemented by the SDR in cooperation with UNICEF, aims at facilitating the reintegration of refugees and internally displaced persons in their villages through the provision of educational facilities. The proposed SDR contribution amounts to SFr. 750'000.--.

B. Demining in selected villages

SDC is presently financing through UNHCR a highly successful mine verification/survey programme implemented by the British charity organization, Halo Trust; this programme, which is also one of the only efforts presently being undertaken to address the problem of land mines, shall now be



supplemented by a SDR contribution to a component (radio network and other equipment) of a further project of Halo Trust aiming at the training and employment of demobilized soldiers as deminers. The proposed SDR contribution amounts to SFr. 300'000.--.

- C. Construction of Bailey Bridges on the No. 5  
The miserable condition of the transportation network (roads and bridges) is expected to severely hamper the deployment of the international relief aid unless repair is undertaken on an emergency basis. Of strategic importance are the numerous bridges on the crucial National Highway number 5 between Battambang and Pursat. SDR shall therefore in cooperation with the Ministry of Communication provide a support for the replacement of a number of existing bridges with temporary bridges of the bailey type, which are easy to order, transport, construct and dismantle. The proposed SDR contribution is estimated at SFr. 1.2 mio.
- D. Food for Work  
One of the main mission's goals was also to identify projects which would cover vulnerable groups such as the rural poor, internally displaced persons and refugees. In this respect, the Family Food Production Programme (FFP) could fulfil this need. This is an ongoing venture managed by UNICEF and the Ministry of Agriculture's FFP Committee. For the past three years WFP has been supporting the FFP with food for work assistance aiming at the reconstruction of the infrastructure especially in the water sector (digging ponds) in rural areas of the western provinces where many repatriates will return to. It is proposed to support this Food for Work Programme of WFP with a humanitarian contribution of SFr. 700'000.
- E. Support to Swiss NGOs (SRC, HEKS, SKIP)

(i) HEKS

SDC shall continue to support the humanitarian component of the Practical Farming Center Project with a contribution of SFr. 75'000.- for 1992.

(ii) SRC

The support for the provincial hospital in Takeo shall be maintained as suggested for the next two years with a budget of SFr. 1.23 million.



(iii) SKIP

SKIP cares about the repatriation of unaccompanied Khmer children in Cambodia. This programme, which is complementary to the UNHCR operation, shall be supported in the next three years by SDC with a total amount of SFr. 932'000.-.

F. ICRC operations

ICRC has a fully deployed logistics in the 4 provinces and is rendering invaluable assistance inter alia in the medical and orthopedic field. The repatriation process will certainly augment the demand of ICRC services and for this reason the SDC contribution to the ICRC operations in Thailand and Cambodia for 1992 and 1993 should remain at least at the same level as in the previous year, i.e. SFr. 1 mio.

G. UNHCR operations (including UNBRO/UNHCR Thailand and UNHCR Cambodia)(i) UNHCR repatriation operations

In anticipation of the huge financial requirements involved with the repatriation it is proposed to provide UNHCR, in 1992, with an unearmarked cash contribution of SFr. 2.0 mio.

(ii) UNBRO/UNHCR in Thailand

It is proposed to maintain an adequate level of SDC contribution to the activities of UNBRO in the border camps. Tentatively a figure of SFr. 1 mio. should be earmarked for this purpose. The final amount will however depend on the revised requirements of UNBRO and ultimately on the pace of implementation of the repatriation process.

At the moment is also difficult to discern UNHCR and UNBRO activities, as UNBRO is, at present, being integrated into UNHCR, but nonetheless still responsible for certain elements of an outgoing programme. Should any funds remain once UNBRO has been completely integrated into UNHCR, these should be transferred to UNHCR.

The proposed SDC support in the above mentioned fields is discussed in details in the following section.



### 3. The details of the proposed SDC supports

#### 3.1 Construction, Rehabilitation and Extension of Primary Schools in selected villages

##### 3.11 Ausgangslage

UNICEF hat seine Aktivitäten vor allem auf Zentral-Kambodscha konzentriert, weil dort 3/4 der Bevölkerung lebt. Das Hauptgewicht der Projekte liegt bei Health, Education and Water. Für die Jahre 92/93/94 ist ein Budget von total \$ 90 Mio voranschlagt.

In den Flüchtlings-Camps in Thailand leben ca. 180'000 Kinder, davon ca. 120'000 im Primarschulalter. Die Reintegration der Kinder wie auch der Lehrer wird grosse Probleme mit sich bringen, wird doch allgemein angenommen, dass der Standart in den Lagerschulen höher liegt als im schwachen kambodschanischen Schulsystem.

##### 3.12 Funds available

UNICEF will fund on district level the construction of approx. 2000 new primary schoolrooms and the rehabilitation and extension of existing schoolbuildings.

The overall budget is approx. \$ 2 Mio, of which \$ 200'000.- are already covered. The construction works will be undertaken by the villages with the participation of the villagers and under the control of NGO's.

Dieses UNICEF Programm wird u.a. vom Schweiz Komitee fuer UNICEF finanziell unterstuetzt.

##### 3.13 Auswahl der Standorte der Schulen

Ein erster Survey wurde bereits gemacht um die Standorte der neuen Schulen bestimmen zu können. Dieser ist jedoch mit Vorsicht zu geniessen, weil noch unklar ist, wo sich die Rückkehrer schlussendlich ansiedeln werden. Die definitive Auswahl der Standorte wird durch das MoE und das UNHCR und UNICEF vorgenommen.

##### 3.14 A tentative Time Table

A rough estimate shows that the project may be completed late 1993:

- March 92: complete collection of information and data
- April 92: complete construction of experimental buildings
- May 92: complete visits to proposed sites and discussions with officials



- August 92: complete arrangements for training Khmer staff, complete the first construction and repair works
- December 92: complete construction of approx. 40% of classrooms in the most needed areas
- December 93: complete project

### 3.15 Proposed SDR support

UNICEF wird mit einer Anfrage an das SKH gelangen Baufachleute und Logistiker für das Projektmanagement zur Verfügung zu stellen.

Vorgesehen ist ein Projektleiter/Administrator in Phnom Penh und voraussichtlich sechs Baufachleute im Felde einzusetzen.

Die totale Einsatzdauer dürfte bei etwa 84 Mann-Monate liegen.

Eine erste Kostenschätzung liegt bei SFr. 750'000.-

Die Hauptprobleme neben der Wahl der Standorte und dem Problem der Mienen, dürften im Beschaffen der grossen Mengen Baumaterialien sowie deren Transport und Verteilung liegen. Der Bau eines Prototypen eines Schulhauses mit der Anwendung von lokalen Ressourcen, soll die wirtschaftlichste Lösung aufzeigen.

### 3.16 Langfristige Perspektiven für die EZA

Precious follow up assistance to this SDR support could come from the SDC TA team expected to be soon involved in the implementation of the education sector reform project in next door Laos. This would also augur well for the possibility of this proposed SDR support in Cambodia being eventually converted in a SDC supported development cooperation in future.

## 3.2 The HALO Trust Demining Programme

### 3.21 Ausgangslage

Some 380'000 refugees will return from the border camps in Thailand and some 180'000 internally displaced persons will return to their origin places. Assuming that most of them will become engaged in crop production a total area of some 250'000 ha of land will be required. The main locations of returnee concentration will be the four provinces in the western and northwestern part of Cambodia: Pursat, Battambang, Banteay Mancheay and Siem Reap.

Within the areas already identified as potentially available, a survey identified the following areas with different degrees of risk:



Probably clear of mines	30'200 ha
Probably mined	29'300 ha
Heavily mined	10'200 ha

It should, however, be noted that this identification is not yet completed. Further mine assessment and verification in potentially available land will be done as a matter of urgency.

Any programme or project to develop resettlement areas should be planned within the framework of a global regional development plan which will not only benefit returnees but the whole population.

### 3.22 The role of UNAMIC and UNTAC

UNAMIC is among other duties in charge of the demining while the army of New Zealand is presently undertaking the training of local personnel in the "art of demining". These deminers will be taken over by the HALO Trust to start the first phase of the mineclearance programme in March 1992.

Later on UNTAC will be in charge for the organization of the demining in Cambodia.

### 3.23 The Projects of HALO TRUST

The HALO TRUST is a humanitarian organisation specialised in the field of demining and with extensive experience from operations in North-East Africa and Afghanistan. HALO TRUSTS is presently implementing a highly successful mine verification/survey programme financially supported by SDC with a contribution to UNHCR.

The HALO TRUST is presently seeking financial support for two long term programmes in Cambodia:

- a) The HALO Humanitarian Mineclearance  
Project: \$ 1,320,537.- for 10 months

Based at Mongkol Borei this programme was launched with \$ 108'000.- donated by the Swiss charity "Pro Victimis" matched by another \$ 108'000.- from the British ODA. It is awaiting the first batch of trained mineclearers to come from UNAMIC but the financial shortfall from 1 April 1992 for the next 10 months is not yet covered.



- b) The HALO Mine Verification Project:  
 \$ 1,386,228.-  
 Details see in Annex III

### 3.24 Proposed SDR Support

To ensure a smooth operation of the HALO Humanitarian Mineclearance Programme the following equipment is required and could be purchased and installed by SDR: radio network consisting of 2 HF radios software, 10 VHF radios and 1 Inmarsat.

Together with the equipment a SDR experts for the installation of the equipment and the training of the local operators for 3 to 4 months should be put at HALO Trusts disposal.

Assistance from SDR to Halo Trust shall be considered as a part of the UNAMIC/UNTACs mandate for the demining in Cambodia.

It has to be noted that the HALO Trust is not a Swiss based NGO. Therefore it shall be considered to sign a bilateral agreement between SDR and the Cambodian Government/Supreme National Council or UNAMIC/UNTAC for the assistance to Halo Trust.

The tentative estimate: SFr. 300'000.-

The details of the HALO Humanitarian Mineclearance Project are contained in Annex III.

### 3.25 Further exploratory work required

Contacts with UNAMIC/UNTAC, which are mandated with the demining operations shall ensure the compatibility and coordination of the HALO project with the demining master plan to be elaborated by UNTAC. A discussion between HALO, SDR and PRO VICTIMIS is to take place early April in Geneva/Bern.

## 3.3 Construction of Bailey Bridges on the National Road Nr.5

### 3.31 The Problem

The Repatriation of approx. 380'000 refugees, to be transported by buses in groups of about 11'000 persons per week to 6 Reception Centers (also called Transit Center) in Cambodia:

- Transit center OTAKI, 1'000 persons,  
on N5 about 14 km north of Battambang
- Transit center TOURMACA, 4'000 persons,  
on N5 south of Battambang



Further transportation of refugees from transit centers to villages on provincial and district roads (laterite roads, partially unpracticable during the rainy season due to a large number of damaged bridges) and provision of relief aid, food, water, health services, etc. during 16-18 months.

Resettling of about 43'700 families (approx. 187'000 persons) in the province of Battambang.

### 3.32 The condition of the roads

Priority road: National road N5: (Asphaltic partly, laterite partly in very poor conditions, road width: 6m)

- a) from Poipet (at the border with Thailand) to Srisophon, 40 km, in the province of Bantey Meanchey
- b) from Sisophon to Battambang, 73 km,  
30 km in the province of Bantey Meanchey  
43 km in the province of Battambang
- c) from Battambang to Pursat, 105 km  
71 km in the province of Battambang  
34 km in the province of Pursat

### 3.33 The condition of the bridges

- a) between Poipet and Sisophon, Thai army is carrying out the repairs of bridges (under bilateral aid)
- b) between Sisophon and Battambang according to province authorities, urgent need for repairs of 7 bridges
- c) between Battambang city and the border of the two provinces Battambang/Pursat, urgent need for repairs of 5 to 7 bridges (length of bridges varies from 5 to 9 m).

### 3.34 The Solutions

The Ministry of Communication has a limited number of well trained people in the provinces and has enough machines and equipment available. But the Ministry has a very limited budget for operation costs and no provision for investment outlays.

UNHCR has available a budget of \$ 1'115'000.- for repairs of roads and bridges.

This budget is definitely not sufficient for the rehabilitation of the following priority roads:



N5: Poipet-Sisophon-Battambang-Pursat  
 N6: Sisophon-Siem Reap  
 69: Sisophon-Thmar Puok-Bant Chhmar-Samrong  
 68: Samrong to N6  
 58: Sisophon-Pailin  
 10: Battambang-Pailin

The British Government will give to UNHCR in April 1992 an amount of \$ 2.6 mio. to be used for repairs of roads and bridges (\$ 1.5 mio. out of the total amount to be used for repairs of bridges). UNHCR can use the money where they need. As the time which remains until the beginning of the repatriation of refugees (30.3.1992) is very short, UNHCR informed that they will only concentrate on repairs but not on replacement of bridges (Bailey bridge). They will have a group to deal quickly with repairs of bridges during the first phase of the repatriation (from April to June 1992) and also during the rainy season.

### 3.35 The proposed SDC support

To prepare a programme for replacement of 5 to 7 bridges on the national highway N5 with Bailey bridges to be put in place during the next dry season (from November 1992 to June 1993) in cooperation with the Ministry of Communication and the Provincial Road Department. A list of priority bridges in the Battambang Province is contained in Annex IV.

The SDC contribution shall cover the costs of:

- a) 5 to 7 pcs. of bailey bridges incl. transport and required civil works SFr 1.1 Mio
- b) 1 civil engineer for 3 to 4 months incl. flights, transportation, accommodation, etc. SFr 100'000.-

Total estimated cost: US\$ 800'000.-/ SFr. 1.2 Mio

### 3.36 Further preparatory work

In case of a positive decision a SDR project finalization mission shall visit Cambodia in the near future. For this purpose SDR could quickly avail itself of the services of the SDC civil engineer at the Mekong Committee.

### 3.4 Support to Swiss NGOs

- (i) HEKS

The practical farming centre project in Kop Sorau as well as the emergency food programme (which has been supported, in 1991, with a contribution of SFr. 150'000.-) have been visited by FUP. The latter is coming to an end now. Both programme



left a positive impression. The visit of the farming project has proved that the comments made in the Report on the fact-finding mission to Cambodia (28 August to 12 September 1991) are entirely correct.

(ii) SRC

The SRC provincial hospital at Takeo has been visited by FA and FUP. Here again, it can be stated that the comments and the recommendations in the above-mentioned report of Mr. Luciano Lavizzari are valid. There remains to add that since several months the staff has not received their salaries. As with other hospitals, the service of the hospital are no longer entirely free of charge. Discussions with the Deputy District Commissioner who is responsible for the Takeo hospital informed that money was available for the payment of salaries. However, this had not been done as it was pending authorization from Phnom Penh. A discussion with these government officials and with responsible Khmer staff of the hospital indicated what mentioned under point 12 in the report of LAV. The bringing up of this very subject showed quite a lot of fears of these responsible persons.

(iii) SKIP

SKIP: unfortunately this project which is under active consideration by SDC since last December could not be visited in Pursat this time. As far as we could ascertain, through UN partners as well as NGOs in Phnom Penh and in the field, SKIP is considered as being a very effective and serious NGO. SKIP wishes to repatriate unaccompanied Khmer children from the border camps in Thailand and reintegrate them in Cambodia. This is a complementary programme to the UNHCR activities and is also highly appreciated by UNHCR. The outline of the project is attached as Annex III.

### 3.5 UNHCR Operations in Thailand and Cambodia

#### 3.51 Epidemiologist/Disease Control Officer

The repatriation of over 350'000 Cambodians from Thailand poses health risks to this population, both, during their movement as well as once they have returned to their sites of final destination. The majority of the returnees have no immunity to malaria and in addition will be at risk from waterborne diseases. The present provincial disease reporting system in Cambodia is inadequate to cope even with present health needs, let alone an influx of potentially vulnerable returnees.



This system must be strengthened in western Cambodia, to allow targeting of prevention strategies as well as permitting a coordinated early response to any health needs.

For this purpose an epidemiologist/disease control officer is needed.

### 3.52 Medical Logistician

As the lead agency for the repatriation of some 350'000 Cambodians from Thailand, UNHCR is responsible for the coordination and the monitoring of their health care in six reception centers.

The implementing partner for health services in these reception centers is the Cambodian Red Cross, who will staff and manage clinics to serve the needs of the returnees during their transit through the centers. The Cambodian Red Cross has limited capacity for the procurement and ongoing supply of equipment and medication to the above clinics. UNHCR will therefore become responsible for such supply, and the monitoring of its use by the Cambodian Red Cross.

In addition, there will be a need to procure supplies for UNHCR coordinated health programmes during the reintegration phase of the operation as well as ensure that there are sufficient stocks to respond to any emergency medical needs.

For this purpose a medical Supply/Logistics Officer is needed.

### 3.53 Proposed SDR support

SDR shall provide the service of an Epidemiologist/Disease Control Officer and a Supply/Logistics Officer for the period of one year to UNHCR. An official request will be made by UNHCR to SDR in the near future.

The tentative estimate: SFr 300'000.-

### 3.6 UNHCR operation in Cambodia

It is difficult to mentioned details for this particular support. As outlined in paragraph 2.7 above, the repatriation operation will commence with an initial case load of 5'000 families on 30 March 1992 and as far as the reception centres are concerned, there should be no major problems. Enough land, which is more or less demined, should be available for this caseload.



### 3.6.1 Crucial points of the programme

It seems almost impossible for UNHCR to carry out its mandated tasks within the given timeframe and the current sensitive political situation. One of the most crucial points, which may have been underestimated by the United Nations Organizations, is that demining will be a long-lasting process which will preoccupy this country for some ten years at least. The Paris Peace Accords did not take this aspect into account. Consequently, the free choice of destination and the return in safety and dignity cannot be adequately fulfilled. So far, only mine verification could be undertaken (with the Swiss contribution through UNHCR). A demining process demands the subsequent adequate training of staff, which should - according to the UN plans - be recruited mainly from the demobilized soldiers (see Security Council document S/23613 dated 19 February 1992 - paragraph 54(b), (d), 70, 80, 90 (e)). As demobilization has not yet taken place, the UN is constantly seeking other solutions. Thanks to the support given by UNHCR, it has been possible for Halo Trust to undertake a demining study but it is not, however, within the mandate of UNHCR to organize the demining as such. As the security is not given, UNHCR is forced to seek solutions other than the planned distribution of two hectares of demined land (this has already been considered in document S/23163 paragraph 143). This will, as a result, have an effect on the attitude of the repatriates in their choice of final destination. The above-mentioned example is only one of the difficulties UNHCR is confronted with. This leads to a permanent review of the plan of action. It appears that with Mr. Sergio Vieira de Mello, Special Envoy of the High Commissioner for Cambodia, UNHCR has found a key person who is capable and accepted. If all agencies involved were to have a positive attitude towards UNHCR action plan, there is a chance that this repatriation operation can still take place despite certain difficulties which it should be able to surmount. Positive steps to support this "constant art of improvisation" have been undertaken in the Joint Support Unit (JSU). We consider that Mr. Vieira de Mello took the right, and perhaps the only, decision to start the repatriation movement on 30 March 1992. Therefore, funding is urgently needed even if the appeal has not yet been presented to the donors (according to information from UNHCR, a budget has already been prepared but is still pending). Our suggestion to give an unearmarked contribution of SFr. 2 mio. to this repatriation programme is highly justified and needs to be effected within the next three months.

As far as field staff is concerned, we feel that it would be advisable for UNHCR to choose persons who are more field-oriented. It is felt that although there are staff members who do an excellent job at Headquarters in



Geneva, they are unable to operate in the same effective way in the field. There is also an obvious need for staff based in Phnom Penh to be sent out to the field offices from time to time in order to better understand the operation at this level. These points have already been mentioned to Mr. Vieira de Mello.

### 3.6.2 UNBRO/UNHCR joint operations for Khmer displaced persons repatriates in Thailand

With regard to paragraph 2.9g(ii), we consider that the explanations for our proposal are explicit enough. UNBRO gave an excellent impression of their work in Thailand but it seems that the merging of UNBRO with UNHCR has partly led to demotivation among the UNBRO staff. It appears that UNHCR was not very sensitive in that respect. Quite a number of UNBRO personnel who would be needed in the repatriation operation are now looking for another job elsewhere.

Nevertheless it is important to stress again that the support to UNBRO must be maintained and can only be gradually reduced in line with the implementation of the repatriation.

### 3.7 ICRC Operations in Thailand and Cambodia

It is proposed to continue our support to ICRC with an amount of SFr. 1 mio. The details of the ICRC programmes in Thailand and Cambodia are contained in Annex IV.

### 3.8 "Food for Work" for internally displaced People

The proposed WFP project is attached as Annex V. The World Food Programme and UNICEF are at the moment the only UN agencies which care about internally displaced persons, a target group which is not yet covered by any mandate of the United Nations. The attached programme is explicit enough. However the final approval of this SDC contribution shall be made conditional to the operational/sectorial sections of SDC being satisfied that the programme is on a sound technical footing.



Deckblatt mit Bericht

30. f