

**Statement by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General
for Human Rights in Cambodia, Ambassador Thomas
Hammarberg
23 January 1998**

The Second Prime Minister of Cambodia today presented to the media four persons who he identified as being listed as killed in my report regarding the political violence of July 1997. Those presented today were named as Chao Keang, Chin Vannak, So Lay Sak and Ang Borith.

On 22 August 1997, I presented a memorandum to the Royal Government of Cambodia regarding the events in July and their aftermath. In that memorandum, there is no mention of an Ang Borith. A Chin Vannak and a Lo Lay Sak are listed as missing and their whereabouts unknown. A Chao Keang is listed as having been executed. The report on Chao Keang was based on the testimony of his family members who said they had identified his remains.

I today asked staff of the Cambodia Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights to recheck the facts in this case. They advise me that in investigating the deaths of two of the three Chao brothers there was an error of transliteration from Khmer to English. The reference to Chao Keang should have been to his brother, Chao Khong who was indeed killed in the July violence. The 22 August memorandum gives the age of the person killed as "about 25" which is confirmed as the age of Chao Khong.

However, these names are only a small number of the 41 persons listed as killed in the 22 August memorandum. I recall that the Second Prime Minister welcomed that report and promised that the government would conduct a thorough investigation into the matters raised in it.

I continue to believe that such an investigation is essential and welcome the Second Prime Minister's acceptance today of the offer by the High Commissioner for Human Rights, Mary Robinson, to provide an expert in criminal investigation to review the Government's inquiry to date with a view to helping it progress further.

A fully investigation of the violence in July as well as of the grenade attack on 30 March would contribute significantly to improving the atmosphere for the elections proposed for later this year.