

**POST-1979 KAMPUCHEA AND VIETNAM :
THE PATTERN OF INTERDEPENDENCE** //

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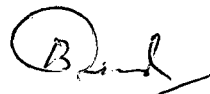
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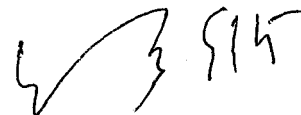
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C O N T E N T S

		<u>Page No</u>
PREFACE		
CHAPTER I THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND	1	29
CHAPTER II INTER-PARTY RELATIONS	30	55
CHAPTER III ECONOMIC CHOICES	56	83
CHAPTER IV SECURITY PERCEPTION	84	112
CHAPTER V FOREIGN POLICY APPROACHES	113	142
CHAPTER VI CONCLUSION	143	152
BIBLIOGRAPHY	153	161

PREFACE

A great deal is today talked about the three countries of Indo-China and their role in world politics. The three countries of Indo-China emerged as independent political entities after the Geneva Conference of 1954. However, the subsequent American involvement in Indo-China started a prolonged war of liberation in Vietnam and Cambodia and ended with the liberation of South Vietnam in 1975. In 1976, North Vietnam and South Vietnam were unified under the name of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam. But in Cambodia (renamed as Kampuchea in 1975), its economy and society continued to suffer due to the mass killings and the economic breakdown of the country during the Pol Pot rule (April 1975-December 1978). The situation improved in Kampuchea when in December 1978 the Vietnamese intervened, followed by the military overthrow of the Pol Pot Government and the installation of Heng Samrin regime on 7 January 1979.

Since the installation of the Heng Samrin regime the Kampuchean society and economy have progressed in a big way with the able assistance of countries like

Vietnam. The Vietnamese, too, have benefitted from this alliance in various ways, e.g. it has enabled them to cope up with hostile powers like China.

The aim of the present dissertation is to locate the various points of inter-dependence between Vietnam and Kampuchea with regard to inter-party relationship, economic interaction, security perception and foreign policy approaches of the two countries in the post1979 period. A variety of articles and newspaper reports have appeared in the Western Press, as well as in the Socialist countries, with regard to the Vietnamese military action in Kampuchea and its impact on the power politics of the region. However, there are few major published works on this period and even they move from one extreme to the other with regard to the present situation in Indo-China and its ramifications on world politics. It is for these reasons that research work was undertaken on this subject in an independent and objective manner. The study is based on primary, as well as, secondary sources.

In the first chapter, an attempt has been made to give a background of the present situation in Indo-

China, starting from the Geneva Conference of 1954. The role of the external powers like the United States and China after the French withdrawal from Indo-China, has been discussed at some length.

In the second chapter, the party relationship of the two countries after the formation of the Indo Chinese Communist Party in 1930 has been discussed. Attempt has been to show how the communist parties of the two countries developed identity of outlook on world and regional problems and cooperated in several spheres since 1979.

In the third chapter, the attempt is to unfold the manifold aspects of economic inter-dependence of the two countries, e.g. with regard to industries, agriculture, trade, technical collaboration etc. The purpose is to show how Kampuchea's economy has been rehabilitated following the war years and Vietnam's economy too, has benefited from this alliance.

In the fourth, chapter, it has been shown how Vietnam and Kampuchea share common security concerns

with regard to the regional problems and inter-regional issues. The formation of an alternative Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea in June 1982, the recurrent fighting on the Thai-Kampuchean border and the role of the external powers like China have been discussed at length.

In the fifth chapter, an attempt has been made to highlight the common foreign policy approaches of the two countries. The relations of the two Indo-China countries with other South-East Asian countries and with the world powers like the United States, the Soviet Union and China have been discussed. The attempt is to show how ideological affinity and geopolitical realities have influenced the foreign policy behaviour of the two countries.

In the concluding chapter, while summarizing the discussion in the foregoing pages, the problems and prospects of the Indo-China region being converted into a zone of peace and prosperity have been examined. The interdependence of Vietnam and Kampuchea has, in fact, enabled them to override several of these problems and they stand to gain by these friendly ties of interdependence.

I would like to place on record my sense of gratitude to my supervisor, Prof. Parimal Kumar Das, for the valuable suggestions he offered me at difficult stages, for the organization and improvement of my work. Valuable, too, was the benefit of informal but periodic discussions with which I had with our Chairman, Professor Bimal Prasad, which subsequently helped me in streamlining my endeavour. I, herewith, acknowledge my deep sense of gratitude to him.

I am much thankful to my friends and colleagues for the valuable help and encouragement which they provided in course of my research work. In particular, I express my thanks to my friends Sanjay, Abhay, Purba, Ajay and Samuel for their kind help and cooperation.

I am also much thankful to the staff of the JNU Social Sciences Library, School of Languages Library, School of International Studies Library, Indian Council of World Affairs Library, and Nehru Memorial Museum and Library for their able assistance in locating the important books, journals press clippings and microfilm records.

The entire responsibility for whatever limitation and deficiency that remain in the present work is, of course, mine.

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CHAPTER I

THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

In 1979 the situation in two countries of Indochina - Vietnam and Kampuchea was much different from 1970 or even from 1975. While Kampuchea remained a shattered and debilitated country in 1979; Vietnam, having been subjected to the ravages of war and plunder till 1975, was undergoing a process of political unity and economic upliftment since then. Despite a population of about 7 million in 1970, and a territory of nearly 40,000 sq. miles, Kampuchea was regarded as small and an adjunct to events in Vietnam. Although a long series of political events brought Kampuchea into headlines in 1978-79, yet it was the Vietnamese leadership that sponsored a new regime in Kampuchea and introduced significant changes in subsequent years.

North Vietnam's interest in Kampuchea and in creating an Indochinese block can be traced back to the first Indochinese war. In April 1950, the Vietminh established a Central Committee for the Liberation of the Khmer people. In September 1951 a Cambodian Revolutionary Party was created in Kampuchea. Before the Geneva Conference held in April-June 1954, the Vietminh battalions were involved in skirmishes with Kampuchea on its

Northeastern frontier. However, by June 1954, North Vietnam agreed to withdraw its forces from Kampuchea and laws provided that the United States would not establish any bases there.¹ The final agreement was signed on 20 July 1954 at Geneva which ended the war in Vietnam between the French and the Vietnamese. Paragraph 7 of the Conference declared that "so far as Vietnam is concerned, the settlement of political problems, effected on the basis of respect for the principles of unity, independence and territorial integrity, shall permit the vietnamese people to enjoy the fundamental freedoms, guaranteed by democratic institutions established as a result of free elections by secret ballot".²

However, the American involvement increased in Indochina after the French debacle at Dien Bien Phu in 1954. The United States' containment strategy of the 1950s and 1960s was based on the assumption that a non-communist South Vietnam had to be supported in order to curb the Asian ~~communism~~ controlled by China.³

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1. Sheldon W. Simon, War and Politics in Cambodia: A Communications Analysis (Durham, 1974), p. 75.
 2. Quoted in the report "Vietnam: A Reporter's War" (Sydney, 1975), p. 87.
 3. Simon, n.l., p. 9.

The prolonged incursions between the United States, South Vietnam and the North Vietnam, Vietcong combine from 1965 to 1970 led to Kampuchea's involvement in the Indochina war. In the context of the American decision to gradually withdraw itself from the military burdens of the Vietnam war Kampuchea's had to bear the brunt of America's military attacks. This fact became obvious during the Non Lol period (1970-75) after the overthrow of Prince Sihanouk (March 1970).

By this time there was also an influx of Vietnamese refugees into the border areas of Kampuchea. This adversely affected the domestic economy of Kampuchea and dissidence and party rivalries increased there.⁴ In 1975, with the coming of the Pol Pot regime into power in Kampuchea there was a massacre of thousands of leftist intellectuals and its economy suffered due to famines and drought. This regime was involved in constant disputes with Vietnam over the border areas.

After Kampuchea's independence from France it had agreed to the "unjust and illegal" French frontiers based

4. Malcolm Caldwell & Lek Tan, Cambodia in the South-east Asian War (New York, 1973), p. 7.

on two conditions: (1) that the frontiers are non-negotiable, (2) that Kampuchea alone had the right to ask for minor readjustments in the French delineation of the frontiers or to resolve any ambiguities that might exist in that delineation.⁵ The posture adopted on the frontier issue taken by the Kampuchean leaders as the key indicator of Kampuchea's nationalism. But the Vietnamese did not consider the territorial gains made at the expense of Kampuchea during these years as a major domestic issue. Therefore they could afford to take a more flexible stand on the border question. As noted in Le Monde, the Vietnamese leaders viewed the border problem as a product of French monstrosity that had been imposed on them during the period of French colonialism.⁶

Since Sihanouk's accession to power the Kampuchean leaders had been demanding compensation from Vietnam for their territorial losses suffered since 1954. But the Vietnamese expected a mutual bargaining position in which the borderline was to be readjusted and rationalised

5. David W.P. Elliott, The Third Indochina Conflict, (Colorado, 1981), p. 22.

6. Le Monde, 26 January 1978.

for the benefit of both countries. In May 1967, Prince Sihanouk demanded that the Vietnamese make a unilateral declaration of respect for the recognition of Kampuchea's "existing borders". He further argued that Kampuchea had been given the sole right to interpret the "existing borders". He also published official maps of Kampuchea showing the newly "corrected" land frontiers. The Vietnamese failed to realise the significance of these steps. They did not publicly contradict or even make private protests against Sihanouk because they realised that such actions might diminish his zeal in their struggle against the United States.⁷

After June 1970 the United States had refrained from using American ground forces in Kampuchea. But the Lon Nol regime was forced to rely on ARVN forces and also depended initially on their Vietnamese supporters in their war against America. Thus until North Vietnam's Easter 1972 invasion of South Vietnam, Kampuchea became the main battle ground of the Vietnam War.⁸ But even

A 7. Elliott, n.5, p. 26.

S 8. Joseph, J. Zasloff & Macclister Brown ed., Communism in Indochina: New Perspectives, (Lexington, 1975), p. 252.

during the war, in the period 1970-75 the Khmer Rouge and the Viet Cong clashed over territorial issues, especially regarding the eastern provinces of Kampuchea.

How the Vietnamese view their border dispute with Kampuchea historically is obvious from this statement of the great mandarin than Thanh Gian made in the 1860s; "In principle, our intention is not to take possession of this country. We wish, following heaven's example, to allow the population to live and exist in peace. We do not wish the loss of this little kingdom as do some others.... The Combodians are savages whose nature is bad and vicious. As often as they submit, so often do they rebel, but they constantly follow the rule and the law".⁹ This perception has continued to guide the Vietnamese foreign policy outlook during the last 120 years.

The dispute between the armed forces of the two countries had begun in late 1971 itself, but the intensity of such disputes increased after April 1975.¹⁰

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- 6 9. Milton Osborne, Before Kampuchea: Prelude to Tragedy (Sydney, 1979), p. 193.
10. Ceylon Daily News, 5 January 1980.

Thus clashes occurred on land, in the sea and on offshore islands. Some of these clashes occurred in the Parrot's Beak province of Svoy Rieng and in the far northeastern provinces of Ratnakiri and Mundulkiri.

The Kampuchean leaders apprehended that the Vietnamese might then take advantage of the fluid political situation to make claims on territory north of the Brevie line. Hence at the beginning of May 1975, Kampuchean and Vietnamese patrol vessels exchanged fire off the coast of the island of the Phu Quoc.¹¹ Further clashes occurred on the island of Tho Chan, which lay south of the Brevie line, in May 1975. Despite occasional negotiations between Pol Pot and the Vietnamese official Nguyen Van Linh, the Vietnamese naval units attacked Kampuchean naval bases on Poulo Wai island which lay north of the Brevie line.¹² Poulo Wai remained in Vietnamese control until August 1975 when the island was returned to Kampuchea. Thereafter there were no further border clashes until April 1976.

11. Elliott, n. 5, p. 27.

12. Ibid., p. 29.

The Pol Pot regime which came to power in Kampuchea in April 1975, was given economic aid and military amunitions by China. The regime was also supported by Thailand and the United States which provided aid to Kampuchea through various relief agencies.¹³ The United States' objective was to reduce the dependence of Kampuchea on Vietnam for its economic reconstruction and thereby to isolate the Vietnamese economy. But these efforts had the effect of putting Vietnam more and more into the Soviet camp.

A technical conference was held in Phnom Penh in May 1976 to discuss the two countries' border problems. But owing to differences over the demarcation of territorial frontiers the Pol Pot leaders announced a suspension of the talks.¹⁴ The Vietnamese also realised that the Kampuchians were not going to reconsider and open the dialogue. Thus while in early 1977 the Kampuchean troops increased their pressure on the disputed border, the Vietnamese also reinforced their military position on the border as was widely reported.¹⁵

13. Osboine, n.9, p. 197.

14. Ibid., p. 199.

15. Hindustan Times, 9 March 1977,
Times of India, 6 March 1977.

The Kampuchean troops soon started striking at Vietnamese borders (April-May, 1977). The diplomatic initiatives of both sides having failed, it was apparent that they were heading for a military confrontation. In late July and early August 1977, the Vietnamese launched several raids on the Kampuchean armed forces and struck reportedly into Kampuchean territory.¹⁶ At this stage Vietnam sent General Vo Nguyen Giap to the frontier areas. In early September 1977 the Vietnamese troops launched fresh raids into Kampuchea. The Kampuchean troops thereupon carried out a number of quick raids into Vietnamese territory, reaching as far as 7 Kms.¹⁷

The Vietnamese then decided to attack Kampuchea's eastern frontier areas. They gathered an estimated 30,000 to 60,000 troops with complete air, artillery and armoury support. The Vietnamese military preparation received significant attention in several newspaper reports.¹⁸ Vietnam's major objective was to overthrow the Pol Pot regime which had earned notoriety for genocide, Maladministration and to replace it with a new government

16. The Times, 6 August 1977

17. Washington Post, 5 January 1978.

18. Deccan Chronicle, 5 February 1978.

having a popular base. By early 1978, the Vietnamese communists had come to the conclusion that the Kampuchean troops were left with only two choices: either to back down and negotiate on Vietnamese terms, or to face the destruction of a major part of their army and the replacement of their frontier administration by a new and hostile one. This is clear from an article published in the Deccan Chronicle.¹⁹ Thus it was the deteriorating socio-economic situation in Kampuchea that prompted the Vietnamese leaders to intervene there. The border conflict which further escalated in July-August 1978 also added to the gravity of the situation in Kampuchea.

The conflict between the communist regimes of Vietnam and Kampuchea in the period ending December 1978 did not arise out of a plan of alleged global expansion by the Soviets nor out of a design for Vietnamese aggrandizement. Rather the conflict got escalated when the two neighbours were trying to cope with the internal upheavals of revolutionary transformation. As negotiations failed each side made use of force Kampuchea's attacks

19. Ibid.

across the border were met by Vietnam's counter attacks.²⁰ Their rivalry increased with the Chinese support to the Pol Pot government (April 1975- December 1978) while the Soviet Union strengthened its economic and military ties with Vietnam during this period.²¹

The situation took a new turn on 16 December 1978 when a full scale war started between the Vietnamese and the Kampuchean troops. The Vietnamese initially advanced with ease as the Kampuchean border forces were taken aback and withdrew. But the Pol Pot troops did not give up easily. They began guerrilla warfare publicly condemned Vietnam and suspended diplomatic relations with it.²² The situation, however, improved with the overthrow of the notorious Pol Pot regime and the installation of the Vietnamese backed Heng Samrin regime in January 1979.

Thus the period 1975-78 was characterised by suspicion and mistrust of each of the two country's actions. The Kampucheans had come to believe, though erroneously,

20. Nayan Chanda, "The Kampuchean Syndrome", Far Eastern Economic Review (FEER), 25 January 1980, p. 16.

21. Richard Butwell, Southeast Asia (London, 1979), p. 251.

22. Ibid, p. 260.

that Vietnam wanted to establish an "IndoChina Federation" under Vietnamese domination but the Vietnamese had argued that they merely desired a "special relationship" between Kampuchea and Vietnam. In other words, the Vietnamese desired to protect Kampuchea from the atrocities of the Pol Pot regime and help in rebuilding the nation.

Certain trends regarding the freedom struggle in the two countries need to be noted. In Vietnam the communist movement became the sole representative of Vietnam's nationalism during the struggle against France. The Vietnamese communists tended to deemphasise class conflict and class struggle and to emphasize continuity with the premodern tradition of peasant opposition to foreign rule. Their main aim was to build socialism carefully and with a minimum of class conflict. At the same time they intended to maintain their nationalist identity.²³

In 1951 the Communist Party of Kampuchea was founded which preoccupied itself with armed struggle

23. Stephen R. Heder "Origins of the Conflict", in the document New War in Southeast Asia (New York, 1979), pp 37-8.

during the Sihanouk period. During this period (1960-70) the party structure remained weak and it could not solve any of the major socio-economic problems in the country.²⁴ Hence, the Kampuchean communist could not build up a popular lease for their armed struggle. Sihanouk kept Kampuchea a closed country and restricted its foreign relations. In fact, before 1970, the Kampuchean liberation movement presented a mixed picture of radical class and nationalist elements. But after 1970 the movement was broadened and a full-fledged Revolutionary Army was also formed.²⁵

In 1930 itself a Communist Party existed in Vietnam drawing its main influence from the Soviet Union. In the next two decades the Vietnamese communist received aid from China and the Soviet Union for their struggle against the French, and later against the United States.²⁶ The Vietnamese leaders laid much stress on the creation of a socialist bloc and believed that the existence of this block required much cooperation and coordination among the member states.

24. Ibid., p 38.

25. Timothy Micheal Carney ed. Communist Part Power in Kampuchea: Document and Discussion, (New York, 1977), p. 22.

26. Ibid, p. 23.

Both Khieu Samphan and Hu Nim provided much continuity to the Kampuchean liberation movement through their leadership and writings in the 1950s and 1960s. But the party leaders started a brutal "break to the land" programme since April 1975 which again showed the lack of a popular organisation in Kampuchea. The party leaders also took some radical steps by abolishing monarchy and the role of Buddhism in early 1976.

The regime in Kampuchea exposed its brutal record when an estimated three million Kampucheans died between April 1975 and December 1978 as is obvious from various reports.²⁷ With China's support Pol Pot and his associates like Teng Sary gained full control of the Kampuchean communist movement. In 1978 the Pol Pot leaders transferred about half a million Kampucheans to the west of Vietnam's border. Many of these deportees were assassinated in the western province of Pursat. This is clear from a report published in The Times.²⁸ All this caused widespread social dislocation at the cost of the rural population.

27. Times of India, 28 August 1979.

28. n. 16, 2 July, 1980.

The Pol Pot officials, expressed the ideals of middle class Kampuchean nationalism. In 1977-78 they openly declared that Kampuchea would not only become a strong state again but would also win back "lost territories" from Thailand and Vietnam.²⁹ They initiated a large-scale programme for the suppression of non-Khmer national minorities. This involved the killing of nearly 20,000 local Vietnamese and the slaughter of several ethnic Chinese and Chan Muslims.

In the 1960s it was not the Communist Party of Kampuchea that received substantial material or vocal support from the Soviet Union and China. These countries rather supported the Sihanouk regime. This made the Kampuchean Communist Party leaders realise, in the 1970s that radical policies, including struggle against revisionists within the party were necessary if the revolution was to be carried forth.³⁰

Thus animosity and mistrust has characterised Vietnam. Kampuchean relations¹¹ at least during the

29. n.10, 5 January 1980

30. Elliott, n.5, p. 39.

period 1970-78. In the 1960s itself, the Vietnamese communists failed to recruit the Kampucheans into the Communist Party of Indochina but rather inducted the ethnic Vietnamese of Kampuchea.³¹ When the Communist Party of Kampuchea was formed in 1951, the Vietnamese opposed its anti Sihanouk Policies in the 1960s. The Lon Nol coup of March 1970 brought about a temporary alliance between the Vietnamese and the Kampuchean communists, although both sides differed regarding the terms of this alliance.

The Kampuchean leaders therefore doubted the effectiveness of having close links with Vietnam in the 1970-78 period. But the Vietnamese insisted on the creation of a regional bloc in Indochina which will keep the Indochina region secure from external intervention.³²

In short, the Vietnamese enjoyed the advantage of running a state in the north and having a strong bureaucratic set-up. But Kampuchea experienced violent class struggle launched against the bureaucracy during the

31. Ibid, p. 40.

32. Philippe Devillers, The Present and Future of the Socialist Block in Indochina (Tokyo, 1980), pp 84-5.

regime of Prince Sihanouk (1966-70) and Non Loi (1970-75) A country already subjected to American bombardment since 1970, experienced further purging of intellectual and a shortage of skilled and technical personnel during the Pol Pot regime (1975-78).³³ The regime relied on disruptive and even violent mass struggles to resolve social contradictions including those between city and countryside and between mental and manual labour.

The Vietnamese insistence on a "special relationship" was first seen as a double threat by Kampuchean leaders like Sihanouk. They perceived the Vietnamese insistence as implying a subservience of their domestic and foreign policies to those of Vietnam.³⁴ It also meant that Kampuchean's economy and social structure would be subordinated to Vietnam. However, events since 1979 have proved that the Kampuchean leaders' fears were not justified.

In 1975 itself, the Kampuchean leaders had realised that there were elements within the Communist Party of Kampuchea and the Kampuchean army and civil administration

33. Carney, n. 25, pp 10-1

34. Heder, n. 23, pp 41-5.

which had been trained and influenced by the Vietnamese. But when political strife occurred especially on the Vietnam-Kampuchean border since early 1977, men like Ieng Sary viewed them as Vietnamese subversion.³⁵ These events followed the Kampuchean suspension of the border talks in May 1976 and coincided with the increasing clashes along its border. This made the Vietnamese feel that the Pol Pot was eliminating the elements more friendly to them and was inimical to their interests.

The Pol Pot regime regarded the Vietnamese as their dangerous enemy and since early 1977 increased the military clashes on its border.³⁶ But these leaders miscalculated in escalating the conflict against Vietnam.

By early 1978, the Vietnamese officials and emissaries had realised that a military uprising was essential to overthrow the unpopular Pol Pot regime. Still they proceeded with caution for fear that such a step might encourage China's military intervention against Vietnam. At the same time a massive exodus of the Hoa community to Vietnam and a build-up of the Chinese troops

35. Ibid., p. 46.

36. Osborne, n. 9, p. 193.

on their border created further problems for Vietnam.³⁷
 The Pol Pot leaders were being delivered fresh armaments by China. The Pol Pot troops made several raids on Vietnamese civilian settlements in March and April 1978 despite Vietnam's offer for negotiations. The Phnom Penh regime, backed by China during this period (1975-78) was not willing to negotiate with Vietnam.³⁸

By the middle of 1978, the Vietnamese leadership was convinced that the Pol Pot regime was trying to extend its stronghold over entire Kampuchea and carry an aggressive warfare with Vietnam. Only the use of Vietnamese troops would prevent this situation which Hanoi viewed as a threat to its security. Hence the Vietnam leaders took certain steps in June 1978. The Hanoi radio broadcasted some articles in Khmer and English as reported in several dailies. It called the Pol Pot regime "the most ferocious murderer in the history of mankind", and called on the world leaders to "stop this self genocide".³⁹ On 28 June 1978 Vietnam joined the COMECON.

37. Ibid. p. 195.

38. Sheldon W. Simon. "Conflict in Indo-China", Problems of Communism (Washington, D.C.) September-October, 1978, pp 20-36.

39. n. 16, 9 August, 1980.

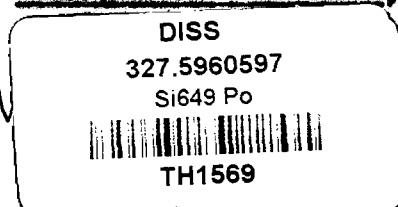
The current crisis therefore came to involve the Soviet Union and China on the side of Vietnam and Kampuchea respectively. Peking viewed Hanoi's moves with concern, as that of a nation whose whole history had been spent in China's shadow.⁴⁰ Vietnam had refused to recognize its historical links with China and was moving increasingly to the Soviet bloc. This became more apparent after the signing of the Soviet-Vietnamese Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation in November, 1978. Thus as discussed in a newspaper editorial, the Vietnamese wanted to increase their sphere of influence over the Indo-chinese peninsula for which they relied on the Soviet Union.⁴¹

During the latter half of 1978 Vietnam's main effort was directed towards subverting the Pol Pot regime by a military uprising. But they kept these plans a secret. Assured of Soviet help, they wanted to improve their global image by launching a successful attack on Phnom Penh.

The Vietnamese wanted to be assured of an effective safeguard in the event of an external aggression on Vietnam.

40. Ibid.,

41. Malaya News Service, 21 October 1978.



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They wanted that such a clause be inserted in an agreement between the Soviet Union and Vietnam calling for "appropriate and effective measures" if either country was attacked.⁴² The Soviet Vietnamese Friendship Treaty of November 1978 served most of these purposes. It provided Vietnam the support of a superpower that it was looking for Vietnam agreed to open its ports and airbases to Soviet warships and aircrafts for refuelling purposes. The two countries also agreed to cooperate for constructing military communication facilities.⁴³ In return for these concessions, the Soviet Union agreed to take action in response to a threat to Vietnam's security.

The Pol Pot leaders viewed these developments with concern. They suffered from a long fear of being dominated by Vietnam and eventual incorporation into Vietnam. In fact, the 'intense nationalism and radical self-reliance' of the Pol Pot leaders made it extremely difficult for them to have bilateral negotiations - with Vietnam on a cordial basis.⁴⁴

42. Treaty of Friendship and co-operation between the Socialist Republic of Vietnam and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, Vietnam Information Bulletin (New Delhi), Vol. 19, no. 39, 10 November 1978.

43. Ibid.

44. Heder, n. 34, p. 41.

When the frontiers and the control of the offshore resources of oil and natural gas started getting disputed, the Vietnamese realised that the Khmer Rouge incursions along their frontiers needed to be checked. By the latter half of 1978 the Vietnamese leaders realised that further negotiations with the Khmer Rouge leaders were useless. As reported in some dailies two options were open to them: either to exert pressure on the Pol Pot through military force and make them agree to negotiate, or to encourage dissident elements within Kampuchea for asserting their claims against Pol Pot.⁴⁵

Hanoi's first dry season offensives against the Pol Pot regime were launched in December 1977 itself. It gave the impression, according to International Herald Tribune, that Hanoi's aim was limited to occupying a zone along the frontiers, to serve both as a buffer zone against the Khmer border attacks and as a means of increasing the pressure on Pol Pot.⁴⁶ Later on, Prime Minister Phan Van Dong, while visiting ASEAN countries on a goodwill mission, stressed the need for Vietnam's friendship and amicable relationship with all the ASEAN

45. n. 41, 11 November 1978, pp 6-7.

46. International Herald Tribune, 27 December 1978.

countries. This, however, could not mitigate the suspicions of Pol Pot and China about Vietnam's aggressive designs.⁴⁷

By the beginning of December 1978, Hanoi had come to the conclusion that there was little "political risk" in attempting the overthrow of Pol Pot regime. This assumption was based on five factors: (i) The widespread condemnation outside Kampuchea of Pol Pot violation of human rights; (ii) the consequent dissatisfaction and alienation of a substantial part of the Kampuchean population, (iii) the decline in Chinese support for the leadership of Pol Pot, (iv) the friendship treaty signed with Moscow in November 1978 which assured Vietnam of Soviet support in case of any Chinese aggression, (v) the formation in December 1978, under the leadership of a Khmer officer of an anti-Pol Pot front.⁴⁸

On 3 December 1978 the Kampuchean United Front for National Salvation was formed in the "liberated zone" of Kampuchean. It consisted of about 600 sq. miles of Krek, Memot and Snoul districts held by the Vietnamese

47. Beijing Review, vol. 22, No. 3, 19 January 1979.

48. Gary Hansjergen, "China and Indochina: The Realities behind the Headlines", in the document "New War in Southeast Asia" (New York, 1979) pp 71-5.

troops. The Vietnamese launched their major offensive on 25 December 1978, pouring in more than 100,000 troops and a section of the air force into the Kampuchean territory. By 10 January 1979 they entered Phnom Penh and advanced to capture Kompong Chhang.⁴⁹ During the next two days they managed to capture this important military base of Democratic Kampuchea and also gained control of major towns and land routes. Thus the Pol Pot was overthrown and a new regime led by Heng Samrin was installed with Vietnam's support.

These events brought fundamental changes in Vietnam's relations with the great powers and the Southeast Asian countries. It brought Vietnam closer to the Soviet Union, their relationship became more strategic in nature. During this military operation the Soviets sent major military ammunition to the Vietnamese, and a naval task fleet into the Vietnamese waters.⁵⁰ These events also caused a setback to the Vietnamese hopes for normalization of relations with the United States. Also, it was the Chinese invasion of Vietnam in February 1979, which ended Vietnam's hopes of dividing the United States from China on the Kampuchean issue.⁵¹

49. FEER, 9 February 1979, p 10-1. Richard Nations, "Vietnamese caught in the 'American trap'".

50. Nayan Chanda, "The timetable for a takeover", FEER 23 February 1979, pp 33-4.

51. The International Herald Tribune, 26 September, 1979.

The ASEAN states expressed open criticism of the overthrow of the Pol Pot regime and the continued Vietnamese military presence in Kampuchea. This was given wide coverage in several newspapers.⁵² Thus Vietnam's Foreign Minister, Nguyen Co Thach, speaking at the Non-Aligned Ministerial Conference in Havana in September 1979, expressed his anger at "some ASEAN countries" who were joining with China and Japan to request that the United States maintain its military presence in southeast Asia, and that the Vietnamese troops withdraw from Kampuchea.⁵³

The present regime in Kampuchea is firmly established now with Vietnam and Kampuchean governments warning other governments to resist any intervention in Kampuchea. In a statement issued in August 1979 by the Vietnamese government, it warned that all attempts to hold an international conference "to discuss a solution to the Kampuchean problem will certainly fail".⁵⁴ The Vietnamese Foreign Minister made repeated statements that the Vietnamese forces are in Kampuchea at the request of the Phnom Penh government to fight "interference from the Chinese reactionaries and imperialists" and will be removed "after the threat of the Chinese expansionists has ceased".⁵⁵

52. n.16, 25 September, 1979.

53. Ibid .

54. The Patriot, 28, August.1979.

55. Ibid .

The Vietnamese action leading to the overthrow of the Pol Pot regime has also been criticised by China, the United States and the Western press. However, leaders like Mr. Ngu Yen Co Thach and Mr Van Lau (Vietnam's permanent representative, at the United Nations) have justified Vietnam's stand at several international forums including the United Nations. Explaining Vietnam's position in January 1980, party leader Phan Van Dong compared Vietnam to the Soviet Union in the first two decades after 1917. The Soviet Union was "the victim of a violent campaign and of all kinds of attacks coming from all directions, but emerged from it bigger and stronger...." Vietnam, he said, would also "emerge stronger, much stronger than before".⁵⁶

Early in 1980, the Khmer Rouge leaders Khieu Samphan and Seng Sary made repeated appeals to the Western nations, to forget the past and strongly support Kampuchea against Vietnam's attack. But both of them agreed that the regime of Pol Pot committed several errors.⁵⁷

56. Elliott, n.5, p. 112.

57. See Reports in Times of India, 4 March, 1980. The Hindu, 19 March 1980.

The errors included the destabilisation of the social structure, the purging of the intellectuals and the breakdown of the economy. Thus due to the strains caused to Kampuchea's economy and society during 1975-78, it needed Vietnam's help to recover which Vietnam provided readily.

The Vietnamese troops continue to face challenges with fighting being reported inside Kampuchea on the Thai border.⁵⁸ For some time they were involved in a combat with the guerrillas of the ousted Pol Pot in the Malai Hills about 25 Kms to Southeast of Kampuchea. Clashes were also reported, between anti-communist free Khmer soldiers and the Vietnamese in the Northern Kampuchean province of Oddar Mean Chey.⁵⁹

The Kampuchean are generally more sceptical about the past sufferings and dislocation caused during the Pol Pot rule and do not want to its removal. Besides, the Vietnamese scarcely interfere in the day to day life of the Kampuchean people. As a Kampuchean official confessed, "The people have to work in the fields and the Vietnamese are around protecting them. The Vietnamese

58. The Statesman, 27 June 1980.

59. Ibid.

do not interfere with us".⁶⁰ This attitude of the Kampuchean people was well summed up in The Times.

The ASEAN countries have frequently raised the demand for the establishment of a neutral government in Kampuchea and the withdrawal of Vietnamese troops from there.⁶¹ But the fact remains that an estimated 30,000 to 40,000 guerrillas of Khmer Rouge are still active in the mountain regions near the Thai border which provides Vietnamese troops the task of maintaining border security.

The Vietnamese action in Kampuchean encouraged several questions and raised suspicion from the side of the ASEAN countries, China and the Western nations. However, since 1979 Kampuchea's economy has grown and infrastructure have benefited greatly from Vietnamese support. Vietnamese itself has benefited from this alliance; it has helped lessen the Chinese influence in Kampuchea, and the Communist movement has expanded in Kampuchea much to Vietnam's satisfaction. The solidarity of the two countries has, in fact, grown over the years.

60. n.16, 2 July 1980.

61. Financial Times, 26 September 1979.

CHAPTER II

INTER PARTY RELATIONS

The repository of political power in Vietnam and Kampuchea are the two parties, viz., the Communist Party of Vietnam and the People's Revolutionary Party of Kampuchea which are organised on the basis of mass membership and democratic centralism. The unity of the two countries of Indo-China bloc, in fact, becomes more obvious at party levels. Although the Communist movement in these two countries began at different periods, yet the common struggle against the French till 1954 and then against America in 1950 and 1960s gave the party members identity of outlook and strengthened their role to cope with the existing economic and social problems.

The Communist Party of Indo-China existed since 1930, its founding place was Macao in October 1930. The Party was organised on the basis of freedom and equality of the three countries of Indo-China and believed in granting these nations the right of self-determination after driving out the French imperialists from Indo-China.¹ However, after the establishment of the Democratic

1. Wilfred Burchett, The China Cambodia Vietnam Triangle (Chicago 1981), p. 14.

Republic of Vietnam in September 1945 the Indo-China Communist Party was formally dissolved. In its place a separate Vietnamese Lao Dong (Workers) Party was formed in February 1951. The same year also saw the formation of the Cambodian Communist Party whose most of the members initially were the Vietnamese living in Kampuchea and therefore it depended greatly on the Vietnamese Worker's Party's support and guidance.²

After the withdrawal of the French and the American from Indo-China and the unification of Vietnam in 1976, the Vietnamese Workers' Party resumed the name of Communist Party of Vietnam (December 1976). The Fourth National Party as the sole national political force in Vietnam. It was organised on the basis of collective leadership having a politburo of 17 members and a central Committee with 133 members.³ In Vietnam as a whole the Communist Party had a much wider base in the north which is obvious from the fact that South Vietnam had remained much hostile to the north till their unification in 1976.

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2. Werner Draguhn, "The Indo-China Conflict and the Positions of the countries Involved", Contemporary Southeast Asia, V. 5, No. 1, June 1983, p. 98.
 3. Philippe Devillers, The Present and Future of the Socialist Bloc in Indo-China, Tokyo, 1980, p. 89.

The Cambodian Communist Party initially comprised of membership which had grown up during the liberation struggle against the French. Its leadership worked closely with North Vietnam since 1951. The party analysis and programme shows a continuity in the writings of Khieu Sam Phan and Hu Nim in the late 1950s to mid 1960s. Both of them became important party leaders during wartime and post-war Kampuchea.⁴

Elements of party organization and ideology in Kampuchea became conspicuous through domestic radio broadcasts and pamphlets. Increasing steps towards collectives were taken since March 1976.⁵ For a few years after 1975, the Party was afraid of popular reaction to the measures being taken under the label "Communism". But as the internal situation improved with the education of cadre and the lessening need for tight security measures since 1979, the Communist Party of Kampuchea became popular and publicly entered the international circle of fraternal communist parties.

4. Communist Party Power in Kampuchea: Documents and Discussion, New York, 1977, p. 16.

5. Dennis Duncanson, "Ideology, Tradition and Strategy in Indo-china's foreign Policy, Asian Affairs, Vol. XV, Part 1, February 1984, pp 42-3.

The communist movement in both these countries thus emerged from protected struggle for liberation against the French and the Americans. The two parties came to exist in Vietnam and Kampuchea since 1930 and 1951 respectively at a time when political tensions were created due to the existence of a common enemy namely the French. After 1954 communist power in both these countries became too firmly entrenched to face any known political opposition. But opposition to the two parties did arise from the time to time ~~eg.~~ in South Vietnam before the unification of Vietnam in March 1976 and in Kampuchea during the period of economic and political dislocation caused during the Pol Pot rule (1975-78).⁶

Since the installation of the Heng Samrin regime in Kampuchea in January 1979, there has been a frequent interchange of the policies and programmes of the Communist Party of Vietnam and the Peoples' Revolutionary Party of Kampuchea (deriving its name from the Cambodian Communist Party founded in 1951). Quite frequently telegrams are received at the Revolutionary People's Party's

6. Douglas Pike, "Vietnam in 1980: The Gathering Storm", Asian Survey, Vol. XXI, No. 1, January 1981, pp 132-51.

headquarters in Phnom Penh (Kampuchea), which are usual instructions from Vietnam on how to resolve domestic issues and what position to take on world events.⁷

The Vice-Ministers of the Heng Samrin regime Kong Koim and Prach Sun pass on the directives to the relevant Chairman of the 14 departments where another 15 Vietnamese advisers supervise the day-to-day work of Kampuchean administration.

Thus although the membership of the People's Revolutionary Party of Kampuchea remains small, (about 700 according to a statement made by the Planning Minister Chea Soth in July 1981),⁸ but the Party carries out the directives received from Hanoi for carrying out its day to day administration.

The fraternal relations of the Communist Parties of the two countries can also be seen from the fact that the Communist Party of Vietnam has assisted the People's Revolutionary Party of Kampuchea in achieving three major revolutions in both these countries. (1)

7. Paul Quinn-Hudge, "Cambodia: Bureaucrats from B68" FEER, 15 October 1982., p 11.

8. Ibid, p. 12.

Revolution in the "production relations", i.e. passage from private capitalist ownership to collective ownership and "large productive units". (2) Revolution in science and technology introduction and extension of modern science and technology in production, to make a backward Vietnam and Kampuchea a modern industrial state. (3) Revolution in ideology to make Marxism-Leninism prevail over "old" and "reactionary" ideologies.⁹

Both the Communist parties have socialist industrialisation as their basic long-term economic objective. The Communist Party of Vietnam has been aiding Kampuchea to build a strong socialist economy, which is capable of satisfying the needs of its people.

The party leaders of these countries believe in creating "something new" and in replacing "the old with the new". In other words, their endeavour has been to rehabilitate their country's economy with mutual assistance and to make their country strong, stable and united.¹⁰ In Kampuchea the party leaders have also been attempting since 1979 to preserve the country's fine traditions which often means "folklore dances" and "tales of class struggle".

9. Devillers, n.3, p. 95.

10. Justis M Vander Kroef, "The Kampuchean Problem: Diplomatic Deadlock and Initiative", Contemporary Southeast Asia, Vol. 5, No. 3, December 1983, p.269.

An important objective of the two communist parties is to "create the new socialist man", which means that they mobilize the masses on the basis of the principles of Marxism-Leninism and attempt to create unity and unanimity among the people. The directives given to the People's Revolutionary Party of Kampuchean leaders by the Communist Party of Vietnam is to ensure that there is political security and stable social order in Kampuchea. Thus moral welfare and economic upliftment of Kampuchea under the Heng Samrin regime has been the primary consideration of the Vietnamese leaders.¹¹

The party leaders of the two countries have also build up a naive and optimistic concept of the future. This is based on the production targets and growth rates of the two countries. The Vietnamese party leaders have therefore propounded the concept of a "Zone of Genuine Independence, Peace and Neutrality" to promote peace and stability in Southeast Asia.¹²

In the V Congress of the Vietnamese Communist Party which was held in March 1982, it was felt that a

11. Report of a Finnish Enquiry Commission, Kampuchea in the Seventies, Helsinki, 1982, pp 30-1.

12. Draguhn, n.2, p. 111.

deep crisis was undermining the unity of the party at the level of political leadership and in the structure of the party. A report presented by Le Due Tho called for remedies to regenerate the party which was suffering from two evils - corruption and incompetence.¹³

The V Congress reaffirmed the position of the Communist Party of Vietnam that the situation in Indo-China was irreversible and that the Party will maintain total alliance with the Soviet Union. Party leaders expressed the view that Hanoi's ties with the countries of Indo-China will be strengthened. Thus Le Duan stated, that "Vietnam does not intend giving up its special relations with Laos and with Kampuchea".¹⁴ Expressing similar sentiments Heng Samrin, General Secretary of the People's Revolutionary Party of Kampuchea, stated that "the Khmers regarded the cooperation with Vietnam as the apple of their eyes".¹⁵ The leaders also underscored the need to preserve the Vietnam Kampuchean relations "from generation to generation" which is "vital for the destinies of the two peoples".

13. Thai Quang Trung, "The V Congress of the Vietnamese Communist Party", Contemporary Southeast Asia, Vol. 4, No. 2, September 1982, p. 233.

14. Ibid, p. 243.

15. Ibid, p. 243.

Later on, the Foreign Ministers of Laos, Kampuchea and Vietnam meeting in Vietnam on 2 July 1984 expressed the view that the situation in recent months has been favourable for each country's national reconstruction and defence. It highlighted the achievements of the People's republic of Kampuchea in economic, political, military and diplomatic fields and extended full support to the measures taken by the Socialist Republic of Vietnam to repel the Chinese attacks on its borders.¹⁶

The close affinity between the Communist parties of the two countries was also evident at the fourth Congress of the People's Revolutionary Party of Kampuchea (held in May 1981) where Le Duan declared, "The alliance among the three peoples, Khmers, Laos and Vietnamese, is henceforth a monolithic bloc with which no measure however perfidious it may be, will be able to break".¹⁷ The leaders of the two parties thus entered into fraternal relations of cooperation and mutual exchange of views from time to time.

16. "Communique of the Conference of Foreign Ministers of Laos, Kampuchea and Vietnam", New Times, Vol. 42, No. 30, July 1984, pp 31-2.

17. 'Vietnam: Towards the Party Congress' New Times, Vol. 40, No. 11, March 1982, pp 12-3.

There is also an interdependence between a "regional alliance" (the Indo-China bloc) and an international alliance (the Socialist bloc led by the Soviet Union). Thus socialist Indo-China with a strong Vietnamese influence is part of the global strategy of the Soviet Union. This was also obvious from the political report presented by Le Duan to the Fifth Congress.

During the last five years the Communist parties in the two countries have been able to achieve several major tasks of socio-economic reconstruction. The Communist Party of Vietnam was able to repulse the Chinese invaders who attacked Vietnam in February 1979, it safeguarded independence and socialism in Vietnam and actively defended national independence and peace in Kampuchea.¹⁸ The Peoples' Revolutionary Party of Kampuchea was also able to launch a struggle against the threat of imperialism and external aggression posed by countries like China and Thailand during the last five years. Despite the formation of the Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea in June 1982 backed by China and the ASEAN countries, the Party leaders in Kampuchea have

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18. Pao-Min Chang, "Beijing versus Manoi: The Diplomacy over Kampuchea", Asian Survey, Vol. 23, No. 5, May 1983, pp 598-603.

maintained political stability and social progress in Kampuchea. For this the party leaders and the people of Kampuchea duly acknowledge the contribution of Vietnam which has helped them in checking the threat posed by the Khmer Rouge and the insurgencies on the Thai-Kampuchean border.¹⁹

However, the fact remains, that only the Communist Party of Vietnam has been enjoying a mass membership so far, but the People's Revolutionary Party of Kampuchea has only a limited membership. This implies that the party in Kampuchea cannot count on universal support for its measures taken for socio-economic rehabilitation in recent years. But the shortcomings at the party level in Kampuchea were caused by the social and economic dislocation during the Pol Pot regime (1975-78) and the war against the United States and France earlier.²⁰ Thus while in the past five years the two communist parties have carried out the tasks of leading their people towards building socialism and defending their country against external aggression, problems like factional rivalries and dissident party leadership has made the task of national revival slow and difficult.

19. Finnish Enquiry Commission, n.11, p. 30.

20. Duncanson, n.5, pp 48-4.

In recent years, cordial relations and mutual cooperation between the two countries in political economic and cultural fields have been increasing . Exchange of goods has been increasing between Vietnam and Kampuchea. After the signing of the Vietnam-Kampuchean Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation in April 1979 the two countries have benefitted from mutual contacts at party levels.²¹

All these years the party relationship and military alliance of the two countries have sought to defeat all schemes and acts of sabotage, division and aggression from the side of China or the ASEAN countries. The Fifth Congress of the Vietnamese Communist Party expressed hopes, that "the militant solidarity and fraternal cooperation between our country, and other countries in the socialist community have undergone a new qualitative development since our country became a full member of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance. In the forthcoming period we shall do our utmost together with the fraternal countries to achieve good cooperation in the framework of bilateral treaties and agreements and promote an unceasing development of this cooperation in the process of

21. Communiqué, n. 16, p. 31.

plan and policy coordination among the member countries of COMECON.²²

The party leaders of the two countries believe that the present struggle to retain national independence and socialism in Indo-China is going to be a long and arduous one. They feel that the requirements of the people's life, national defence and building the material and technical basis for progress are the immediate and urgent tasks. But they hope to achieve this with the strength of the unity of the three countries of Indo-China.

The presence of the Khmer Rouge and the formation of the Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea have caused serious concern among the party leaders in Kampuchea. With vietnamese help they have been launching major offensives against the Khmer Rouge along the Kampuchean, Thai borders as reported frequently.²³ The Vietnamese party leaders have stated several times that main obstacle to an amicable solution of the Kampuchean issue is China and hoped that Beijing will not be able to prevent talks if the ASEAN countries agree for that.²⁴

22. Trung, n.13, p. 260.

23. See Times of India, 21 April 1984, Indian Express 5 April 1983.

24. Nhan Dan, 21 July 1982.

Thus these party leaders have realised that political stability cannot be guaranteed in their countries unless they continue to cooperate to minimise the threat posed by China and other powers.

Every year since 1979 the United General Assembly has been passing resolutions affirming the sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence of Kampuchea and the withdrawal of all foreign troops from Kampuchea. Addressing the UN General Assembly on 19 October 1981 the United States' permanent representative Jeanne Kirkpatrick alleged that the Vietnamese administrators deny all human rights to the Khmer people. All decision making process in the People's Revolutionary Party of Kampuchea is influenced by the Vietnamese Communist Party.²⁵ She even stated that economic breakdown has accompanied Vietnam's army occupation of Kampuchea.

But on the contrary, the situation appears to be near normal in Kampuchea. Not only does the Vietnam-Kampuchean treaty of Friendship and Cooperation signify the mutual contacts between the two communist parties

25. Jeanne J. Kirkpatrick, "Kampuchea: Communist Aggression in Asia", World Affairs, Vol. 144, No. 3, Winter 1981-82, p. 249.

but also the advisers send by the Communist Party of Vietnam to Phnom Penh have been assisting in its administration since then.²⁶ Even men of the relief agencies of the Western countries including CARE and OXFAM agree that the situation in and around the capital is normal. Despite the formation of the Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea headed by Prince Norodom Sihanouk in June 1982 the People's Revolutionary Party of Kampuchea has been functioning with much political stability.

The Heng Samrin régime, with the active military and financial cooperation from Vietnam, has succeeded in restoring normalcy in Kampuchea. Markets, educational institutions Government offices and factories are working smoothly.²⁷ There is also no shortage of essential commodities and industrial goods which are being supplied by Vietnam. But the country faces a shortage of skilled and technical personnel who, as the newspaper reports indicate, were purged by the Pol Pot.²⁸ However, Vietnamese communist party leaders have transferred some skilled and trained personnel to Kampuchea who are working in its several industrial establishment.

26.. Timothy Carney, "Kampuchea in 1982: Political and Military Escalation", Asian Survey, Vol. 23, No.1, January 1983, p. 79.

27. Hindustan Times, 23 September 1983.

28. The Statesman, 22 June 1983.

The Vietnamese and the Kampuchean party leaders have a carefully formulated strategy according to which while dealing with the Khmer Rouge incursions proper attention is paid to their border with Thailand. They consider the attack on the Khmer Rouge across the border as counter-productive, given the fact that such an attack would provoke sharp reaction among the ASEAN countries.²⁹

To meet the strains of war on the Kampuchean-Thai border and internal economic crises changes have been made in the two parties at high levels from time to time. In Vietnam some of these changes were introduced in February 1980 and involved more than 20 individuals at the Politburo, Central Committee/Cabinner level.³⁰ The sectors most affected were the economic sector, the armed forces and internal security. But overriding national security always held the party leaders together. The 17 men of the Politburo followed the principles of collective leadership, nevertheless, two men emerged as most prominent figures - Le Duan and Le Duc Tho. In subsequent years the Communist Party of Vietnam's two great strengths - the party control mechanism and the

29. The Statesman, 22 June 1983.

30. Douglas Pike, "Vietnam in 1980: The Gathering Storm", Asian Survey, Vol. 21, No. 1, January 1981, p. 85.

Politburo's pragmatic competence were held together, both in relation to interdependence with Kampuchea and in relation to the Soviet Union.³¹ The threat of a common aggressor viz., China and the challenge posed by the coalition government of Democratic Kampuchea backed by the ASEAN countries, provided sufficient political affinity for the two parties of Indo-China to remain together.

The People's Revolutionary party of Kampuchea is also manned by a Politburo but its main instruments are the state and the army. It has not been able to remodel its cadres, let alone transform the peasants for a total control over the national resources.³² However, its stabilization of political power in Kampuchea rests on the collective treaties signed with Vietnam and COMECON. Being signatories of these treaties, both Vietnam and Kampuchea have been able to face their collective security problems and negotiate with the ASEAN countries and in the world forums like the United Nations and the Non Aligned Summits (1979, 1983).

31. Ibid., p. 87.

32. Duncanson, n.5, pp 42-3.

Far from taking an uncompromising stand on Kampuchea, the party leaders in Vietnam had offered to meet the members of the ASEAN countries to discuss the Kampuchean issue in a "regional conference".³³ This proposal was made on 28 January 1981, at the Indo-China foreign ministers' conference held at Ho Chi Minh city. The Vietnamese party leaders also offered to offer some of their troops from Kampuchea provided the threat from the side of Khmer Rouge and China was minimised. This was given wide coverage in the local newspapers and the leading national dailies of India.³⁴ But the fact remains that guerrilla insurgencies are still active on the Thai-Kampuchean border and the Vietnamese party leaders suspect that any total pull out of troops from Kampuchea would be Khmer Rouge to return to power in Kampuchea and cause serious dislocation.

Expressing the views of the Communist Party of Vietnam, Mr Nguyen Co Thach, Foreign Minister of Vietnam said in Hanoi, "The three Indo-China countries more than anyone else, long for independence and peace. That all three have attained independence is due to their solidarity

33. Times of India, 2 August 1982.

34. Indian Express, 8 July 1982; Hindustan Times, 8 July 1982.

and mutual assistance in the struggle against the common enemy, on the basis of respect for each other's independence and sovereignty".³⁵ As reported in the local press, the leaders of the two countries believe that peace and cooperation in Southeast Asia can be ensured only by ending all mutual rivalries and promoting peace friendship and cooperation among the countries in the region.

The major concern of the party leaders in Indo-China has been the preservation of Indo-China unity bloc as a whole and to maintain peace and tranquillity in the region.³⁶ They want to settle the Kampuchean issue with the ASEAN states without any interference by the external countries like China and the United States of America. For this reason, they keep in mind as "independent" and "neutral" Southeast Asia.

The ASEAN countries, in the aftermath of the March 1983 New Delhi Non Aligned Conference, appeared to be internally divided over the issue of negotiating with Hanoi and its Indo-China allies. Also another

35. Nihan Dan. 30 June 1983.

36. Nguyen Duy Trinh, "The Way to Peace and Stability" in Southeast Asia", Problems of Peace and Socialism, Vol. 10, No. 3, March 1982, pp 12-3.

problem responsible for the present stalemate is the prolonged border incursions by the Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea which became more manifest since the first half of 1983.³⁷

It is important to note how the communist parties of Vietnam and Kampuchea view their country's future. The Communist Party of Vietnam intends to organize its future on the basis of full party control over the nation. It intends to keep assisting the administration of Kampuchea through party advisers and by sending technical personnel to Kampuchea.³⁸ Thus while the party intends to channelise the activities of the people towards "serving the country" it also sees the Vietnamese people as "collective masters" of their own country.

The People's Revolutionary Party of Kampuchea seeks to avoid personality cult and expresses its objective to institute collective leadership. Both Hong Samrin and Le Duan at the Fourth Congress of the Revolutionary People's Party, of Kampuchea (held on 21 May 1981), and in subsequent meetings like the Indo-Chinese foreign

37. Chang, n.18, pp 614-5.

38. Judge, n.7, 9,11.

Minister's Conference asserted that cooperation with Vietnam and maintaining the solidarity of the Indo-China block was vital for the Khmers which no manoeuvre from any country would be able to break.³⁹ Thus the collective leadership of the party in Kampuchea believes that co-operation with Vietnam is essential for economic revival and for solving other problems like these of the influx of refugees on the Thai Kampuchean border.

However, dissident factions and differences of approach exist within the two communist parties. Some leaders in the Communist Party of Vietnam believe that a "common denominator has to be discovered for all Vietnamese, for making all creeds converge for the sake of one people and one nation."⁴⁰ But there still exist leader who believe in the "strong hand" methods to reeducate the population and make them live according to their regulations.

The People's Revolutionary Party of Kampuchea's leaders are still beset with problems like poverty, hunger, intra-party disputes and the threat posed by the

39. Vander Kroef, n.10, p. 267; Communiqué, n. 16, p.32. The Statesman, 30 January 1984.

40. Devillers, n.3, p.99.

constant incursions of the coalition government of Democratic Kampuchea. Several times the party leaders have mooted their own proposals to resolve the present impasse in Kampuchea. At a meeting of the Foreign Ministers of the three Indo-Chinese countries in Phnom Penh (19 and 20 July 1983), the Foreign Minister of Kampuchea jointly made an offer to ASWAN countries to come for a dialogue without preconditions to bring peace in the region.⁴¹

The party leaders of the three Indo-China countries have agreed that the non-aligned summit resolution on Southeast Asia can form the basis for a successful dialogue between them and the ASEAN countries. The Foreign Minister of Kampuchea even offered to examine Thailand's proposals for resolving the problem caused by the refugees on the Thai-Kampuchean border.⁴² He also proposed to create mutual trust between the two nations, an issue which was discussed earlier in Bangkok (9 June 1983) in a meeting between the Foreign Ministers of Thailand and Vietnam. The Foreign Ministers of the three countries also welcomed the statements made by the ASEAN countries,

41. Keesing's Contemporary Archives, 1984, Vol. XXX, No. 2, p 32672.

42. Ibid

the Australian Prime Minister, and the efforts of the United Nations' Secretary General to restore normalcy in Indo-China. These statements were given wide publicity in the local press and the party newspapers.⁴³

Recently the Heng Samrin troops in Kampuchea, under the supervision of the Vietnamese party leaders have launched several offensives on the Thai-Kampuchean border to meet the incursions of the Khmer Rouge forces.⁴⁴ But while the Pol Pot forces have been losing several bases within Kampuchea, they continue to be backed by China and some ASEAN countries like Thailand. The civil war in Kampuchea is approaching a decisive climax but the cards are heavily in favour of the Heng Samrin regime aided by the communist Party of Vietnam's leaders.

In April 1984, Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines agreed with Vietnam that any solution of the Kampuchean crisis will involve "political and military elimination of the Khmer Rouge". This was stated by the Chairman of the Vietnamese National Assembly and an important party leader Mr. Nguyen Hvu Tho, as reported in the press. He stated that all countries and Vietnam

43. Nhan Dan, 21 July 1983.

44. Paul Quinn, Judge, "Indochina: Hollow Victory", FEER, 14 June 1984, p. 29.

favour a "dialogue" on the crisis, but the main obstacle to any peaceful settlement was China.⁴⁵

Thus Vietnam's and Kampuchea's party leaders have been resistance bases along the Kampuchea-Thai border and to meet the threat posed by China. Presently, the Heng Samrin government is still facing challenges with regard to economic rehabilitation and from the point of view of its security. To meet these challenges the Heng Samrin government has been obtaining financial and military assistance from Vietnam and the fraternal ties of the two countries have grown rapidly since 1979.

In both these countries the communist parties have been attempting to create something new, and to replace the old and decadent social order by inculcating new values of discipline, a standard code of conduct, etc. In Kampuchea the party has been eliminating progressively, the economic hardship caused by wars and famine during the Pol Pot regime. "Create the new socialist man", is the motto everywhere.⁴⁶ In Vietnam too, the party's intention is to create a New Man, under the impact of the changed education system and party programmes.

45. Times of India, 21 April 1984.

46. Devillers, n.3, p. 98.

Both the countries are marching on the road to development on the basis of interparty cooperation. One may agree with the views that the Vietnamese party, leaders have entrusted the running of Kampuchea's administration to the Heng Samrin cadre, with the expectation that it will win the hearts and minds of the people.⁴⁷ Past experience (1979-84) with regard to economic and political rehabilitation in Kampuchea, the security provided to various classes and groups in Kampuchea and the beginning of a new social order has proved that the expectations of the Vietnamese leaders have been justified.

47. Hindustan Times, 23 September 1983.

CHAPTER III

ECONOMIC CHOICES

The experience of the Indo-Chinese countries shows that the task of national liberation, led by the two communist parties, was not complete with the attainment of state powers. The winning of political power by the forces of revolution started a more complicated process of socialist socio-economic transformation. The low level of economic development of Vietnam characterised by small scale scattered production and a backward, un-differentiated infrastructure presupposed quite a few democratic tasks to be attained by the party. Similarly in Kampuchea the task of economic rehabilitation had to begin afresh after the overthrow of the Pol Pot regime in December 1978. The problems of poverty, famines and pre-dominance of small scale commodity production were strikingly manifest in Kampuchea when the Heng Samrin regime took over in January 1979.

The development of a socialist society and economy in both these countries was a prolonged process which could proceed only under favourable internal and external conditions. The nature of the international ties of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam and the People's Republic of Kampuchea on a mutual basis and on the basis of their ties with the countries of the Socialist bloc

made their economic recovery possible since 1979 the cooperation and mutual assistance of the two countries of Indo-China enabled them to find solutions to their most pressing socio-economic problems and to check the attempts of the rival nations towards obstructing their unity.¹

Since its very foundation the Socialist Republic of Vietnam followed a policy of entering into co-operation and mutual assistance agreements with the socialist countries. The general tone of its economic policy was reaffirmed at the Fourth Party Congress in 1976, which approved the general policy of building a socialist economy within the territories of a unified Vietnam.

During its second Five Year Plan (1976-80) the material foundations of Vietnam's economy were strengthened. The fixed assets of industry increased by 91% and the volume of industrial production increased by 17.3%. The yield of food crops reached 14.4 million tons almost three million tons more than in 1975.²

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1. Joint Communique issued at the end of the Vietnam Kampuchean - Laotian Ministerial Conference, Vietnam Information Bulletin, Vol. 19, No. 3, 23 January 1980.
 2. Nhan Dan, 21 December 1982.

In South Vietnam measures were taken to strengthen the state sector in industry and a number of industries and handicrafts enterprises were nationalised. By the end of 1980 there existed in South Vietnam 1,300 agricultural cooperatives, 165 state farms and over 9,000 teams of mutual work assistance.³ Already in 1980 the socialist sector accounted for 49.2% of the national income while in agriculture its share was 53.4%. However several discrepancies in the economy remained due to the fact that internal sources of capital accumulation were very limited food and consumer goods were in short supply, and the living standards of the working people remained low.⁴

At the V congress of the communist Party of Vietnam held in March 1982, the party leaders analysed the shortcomings in the implementation of the second Five Year Plan. It was felt that natural calamities and subjective factors like China's annulment of its technical and economic assistance to Vietnam, the existing wide economic disparities between North Vietnam and

3. M. Isayev, "Indochina: Development of National-Liberation Revolutions into Socialist Revolutions" Far Eastern Affairs, Vol. 30, No. 2, February 1984, p. 35.

4. Nayan Chanda, "Aftermath of Revolution", FEER, 13 October 1983, pp 66-8.

South Vietnam and 300 ambitious targets were responsible for the non-fulfillment of plan objectives.⁵

The Fifth Congress decided to take a number of remedial steps for providing material incentives to the working people and for economic initiative and self-reliance in the localities. In 1981 itself a new system of economic management had been introduced, it provided fixed quotas of production for each worker and a new system of support prices for agricultural produce. Outlining the strategy for the Third Five Year Plan Le Duan, General Secretary of the Communist Party of Vietnam Central Committee said, "The 1981-85 period will become one more step on the way of developing and remodeling the economic structure, of reforming it rapidly in a socialist manner".⁶

The Congress decided that in order to maintain the solidarity with the Indo-China bloc, stress has to be laid on "satisfying the pressing needs of the population". It decided that more attention has to be given

5. Ton That Thien, "Vietnam's New Economic Policy", Pacific Affairs, Vol. 56, No. 4, Winter 1983-84, p. 691.

6. n.2, 28 March 1982.

for completing the existing projects, rather than making heavy investments in new industrial projects.⁷

During 1982-83 the Vietnamese leaders laid stress on production incentives and on the product-contract system. As per the suggestions of Pham Van, a decentralised system of planning was adopted in both production and distribution.⁸ During the 1980s the party followed a strategy of increasing the production of food crops and increasing the production of export-oriented industries.

During the 1980s the production of export goods like coffee, tea and soy was encouraged in Vietnam. Forestry and fishery were also developed on a priority basis. The production of handicrafts and local industries was also encouraged. As population increased about one million people were added to the manpower resources per year.⁹ Thus six million people came to be employed in the proceeding five years.(1976-81).

7. Thien, n.5, p. 699.

8. Edmund McWilliams, "Vietnam in 1982: Onward into the Quagmine", Asian Survey, Vol. 23, no. 1, January 1983, p. 65.

9. M. Trigubenko, "The Communist Party of Vietnam's socio-economic policy", Far Eastern Affairs, Vol. 29, no. 1, January 1983, p. 69.

Thus during the Second and Third Five Year Plan period, the foundation of the Socialist system in Vietnam was laid. In general, while there was encouragement given to the increased production of scientific and technological resources, there was also the development of large-scale socialist production along with the encouragement of agriculture and handicrafts.¹⁰

The Vietnamese model of development, in fact, served as an example for the economic development of Kampuchea which also made use of the Vietnamese advisers and technical personnel for its development. Speaking in September 1982 Le Duan hoped that "scientific and technological progress, must become the main component of socio-economic plans in all branches and at all levels. It is necessary to make proper use of scientific cooperation with the Soviet Union and other fraternal countries, and of the assistance received from them in this field."¹¹

At the Sixth session of the National Assembly which met on 20-26 December, 1983, Mr. Vo Van Kiet, Chairman

10. Ibid., p. 70.

11. Le Duan's report at the Party Congress, Contemporary Southeast Asia, Vol. 4, No. 2, September, 1982, p. 254.

of the State Commission for Planning, presented a report on the economic progress of the last three years. The report showed that agricultural production increased rapidly since 1979 due to the introduction of more liberal economic policies.¹² This was, however, sufficient only to satisfy the "minimum requirements" of Vietnam's population. The reason was that the population increased rapidly at a rate of 2.6% in 1981-83. Industrial production was affected due to the shortage of energy, raw materials and parts", and the state-owned industries were running at half of their capacity.¹³ A remarkable increase was made in the production of small industrial goods and handicrafts. But the production of consumer goods" essential for the people's life" was still unsatisfactory.

During 1982-83 Vietnam's economy continued to be affected by problems like inflation, low per capita income and increase in foreign debt which in 1982 stood at \$ 3.5 billion.¹⁴ However, during the 1980, Vietnam's export industries grew to meet part of the requirements of Council for Mutual Economic Assistance's markets.

12. Keesing's Contemporary Archives, Vol. XXX, No. 2, 1984, p 32673.

13. Ibid.

14. Mc Williams, N.8, p. 65.

Vietnam also propounded during this period its New Economic Zones (NEZ), requiring excess population in the North and South to migrate to distant agricultural areas.¹⁵ By 1982-83 over 1.5 million Vietnamese were settled in the New Economic Zones.

Taking into consideration the overall economic situation in Kampuchea and the need to reorient their own economy, the Vietnamese party leaders formulated the plans and priorities for 1984. On 26 December 1983, the Vietnamese national Assembly passed the 1984 socio-economic plan. It set modest production targets for the current year on the basis of its evaluation of earlier targets which were described as "too ambitious".¹⁶

The main objectives of the 1984-85 plan included (i) to boost production through a "fuller utilisation" and more economical use of available resources; (ii) to increase state control of "goods, money, markets and prices" in order to curb speculation and corruption. For this purpose the freemarket for grain was to be gradually abolished; (iii) to continue the renovation

15. Ibid, p. 68.

16. Keessing's Contemporary Archives, n. 12, p. 32673.

of economic planning and the drive to eliminate "subsidized and bureaucratic administration"; (iv) to bring trade, industry and agriculture under increasing state control and complete collectization in the Nam Bo provinces; (v) to coordinate the economy and the needs of national defence.¹⁷

The continued war in Kampuchea especially on the Thai-Kampuchean border since 1979 led to the spending of a considerable part of Vietnam's national budget and manpower resources. But the Vietnamese leaders considered it their duty to assist in the economic revival of Kampuchea whose industries and infrastructure lay in a critical condition at the beginning of 1979. At that time most of Kampuchea's industrial enterprises, power stations and rice resources were out of order.¹⁸ In some areas of Kampuchea, particularly in the Southeast along the Mekong river and near the Vietnam-Kampuchean border, the bulk of the population had either been annihilated or expelled during the Pol Pot rule.¹⁹ From Phnom Penh and some other major cities also, the population was deported to the countryside.

17. Ibid., p. 32673.

18. See the editorial "Kampuchea - Five Years of Reconstruction", in the newspaper People's Democracy, Vol. VIII, No. 3, 15 January, 1984.

19. Wilfred Burchett, The China, Cambodia, Vietnam Triangle (London, 1981), p.93-5.

At the time when the Heng Samrin regime took over in Kampuchea its education and health care was in a bad shape. There were no good schools and colleges and Kampuchea lacked scientific and technical manpower. The land routes were not developed and currency was lacking. The population of Kampuchea which was 9 million in 1976 had decreased to 6 million by 1979.²⁰

As Heng Samrin pointed out in an interview to the Kampuchean news agency SPK, "The most monstrous crimes committed by them was the killing of more than three million people, i.e. the destruction of the mass productive force of the country. Those who remained alive are totally emaciated and suffer from serious diseases."²¹ Under these circumstances, the people of Kampuchea needed international assistance, particularly from Vietnam and other socialist countries to sothe their manifold problems. Most pressing of these were the elimination of famine, the change of commodity - money relations and the peasants' right to occupancy tenures.²²

20. People's Democracy, n. 18.

21. Mosyakov, "National Rebirth of Kampuchea", Far Eastern Affairs, Vol. 30, No. 2, February 1984, p.53.

22. Isayev, n.3, p. 39.

The People's Republic of Kampuchea which came to power on 7 January 1979, began the task of economic recovery. It introduced a new currency system and arranged an international exchange rate for the Kampuchean riel. The Fourth Congress of the People's Republic of Kampuchea held in 1981 aimed at expanding the area under cultivation to 2.3 - 2.5 million hectares and raising the number of cattle to 1.4 - 1.5 million head. It also started a programme for considerably increasing the output of the fishing industry in the near future. As a result of these measures the country was able to bring down the impact of poverty and eliminate hunger.²³

The PRK regime soon introduced "Groups of Peasant Solidarity". It enabled the peasants to work in collectives and to increase the farm output.²⁴ For launching several of these measures the PRK regime needed substantial financial assistance. She received valuable material and technical assistance from Vietnam for launching her projects.²⁵

23. People's Democracy, n. 18.

24. Editorial, Amrita Bazar Patrika, 18 February 1981.

25. The Times, 2 July 1980.

The Heng samrin regime initiated fresh programmes for development in 1979-80. Its main aim was creation of a planned economy, increase in productivity to meet the people's requirements and to build the foundations of socialism.²⁶ The party decided to leave to the peasants the whole amount of rice which they cultivated, but in some areas rice was supplied through state reserves which started accumulating through international aid.²⁷ These steps increased the peasants' confidence in the Governments' policies and provided the needy persons in the country with food and seeds.

By 1980 there were more than 50,000 groups of labour mutual assistance in Kampuchea. They represented both production and marketing organisation and their total membership had increased to 3.3 million in 1983.²⁸ The party leaders encouraged these groups to enforce the distribution of harvest according to the labour done. In those areas where the yield was less, levelling distribution took place.

26. Kampuchea in the Seventies; Report of a Finnish Enquiry Commission (Helsinki, 1982), p. 30.

27. The aid to Kampuchea was mainly from Vietnam and the Socialist countries. See the report in The Statesman, 1 September 1981.

28. People's Democracy, n. 18.

The PRK leaders introduced a system of collective ownership of land although cattle and agricultural implements were to be owned by individual peasants. In 1979 specialised agricultural services were set up in Kampuchea for distributing seeds and implements, distributing new varieties of rice and promoting improved irrigational techniques. According to a report published in a local daily, by 1980 "it was possible to solve many major problems in developing and restoring the national economy, enhancing the efficiency of agricultural production, raising the level of food supplies, and creating necessary reserves for 1981."²⁹

Within two years since 1979 there was a remarkable increase in agricultural production. The cultivated area more than doubled and reached 1.5 million hectares. The harvest doubled and reached 1.6 million tonnes in 1981.³⁰ The area under other crops including maize, balat, manisca etc. also expanded rapidly. This increase was made possible due to two reasons, (1) the presence of Vietnamese specialists and advisers and the introduction of mechanised agricultural implements with

29. Kampuchea, 26 February 1981.

30. Mosyakov, n. 21, p. 60.

their help, (2) the work of labour mutual assistance groups in obtaining agricultural implements, artificial fertilizers and seeds.³¹

By 1981 over 80% of the industrial enterprises had been restored in Kampuchea and were functioning smoothly. The Fourth Congress of the People's Revolutionary Party of Kampuchea (PRPK), which was held in May 1981, decided that while relying on international aid, it was necessary to build a socialist society and economy in Kampuchea.³² "It is imperative", the report of the Central Committee stressed, "to have an ample supply of food, increase the output of consumer goods, develop exports and trade with the socialist countries, which will contribute to the further normalisation and improvement of the living standards of the working people."³³ Since then steps were also taken to improve the quality of trained personnel and increase the number of technical specialists in all spheres of the country's economy.

In the next two years (1981-83) there was a remarkable growth of the state owned industries in Phnom Penh

31. People's Democracy, n. 18.

32. The Times, 27 May 1981.

33. Ibid.

and other towns. As production was organised on a large scale, industries were encouraged to use local raw materials and produce mass consumer goods.³⁴ Textile mills grew in Kampong Cham and Battambang provinces while small-scale industries and handicrafts which served the common needs of the people, multiplied in the peripheral regions. According to newspaper reports, by early 1981 a total of 25,000 people were employed in industry and craftsmanship.³⁵

Phnom Penh grew as a major industrial centre having seven large industries and three power stations in 1981. It had 32 enterprises producing consumer goods and ten were associated with foodstuffs.³⁶ Nine chemical factories also developed. Thus within two years the national industries had increased their output to about three million metres of fabrics, 13,000 tyres, 500,000 pairs of simple footwear products, about 1.5 bottles of milk and three million cigarettes.³⁷

For developing the economy while a uniform currency was introduced, more nationalised banks were also started,

34. Editorial, n. 24.
 35. n. 29, 26 February, 1981.
 36. Mosyakov, n. 21, p. 61.
 37. Ibid, p. 61.

and the process of commodity exchange was facilitated. Several other branches of the economy like fishing, rubber plantation products, wood cutting and paper making started functioning again. Reviewing the progress of the last two years, party newspaper Kampuchea noted, "Over a million children attend schools, and a campaign against illiteracy among adults has been launched. On the whole, the standard of living is rising uninterruptedly".³⁸

Apart from the stress on industrialisation as a whole during the last five years, the state took measures to encourage trade, commerce, postal services and transport. This is clear from a statement made by Mr. Heng Samrin in August 1982.³⁹ For farthing the economic development, the PRK leaders had to rely substantially on the friendly, humanitarian assistance provided by socialist countries especially Vietnam. But the party leaders expected, that in the next few years they would have made sufficient progress, to meet their country's requirements out of its own resources.⁴⁰

38. n. 29, 1 January 1981.

39. Heng Samrin, "Three Years of Rehabilitation and Construction", Problems of Peace and Socialism, Vol. 10, No. 8, August 1982, p 13.

40. Ibid, p. 13.

Between 1981 and 1983 along with the increase in agricultural production, the total area of cultivated land increased by almost 200,000 hectares. The acreage under other crops also expanded considerably, e.g. 40,000 hectares were under leguminous plants, 10,000 hectares under corn, and 10,000 hectares were under tobacco.⁴¹ During this period animal husbandry produce increased steadily. Rubber production also increased substantially and became an important export crop. By the middle of 1983 Kampuchea had reached a stage of almost self-sufficiency in foodgrains. This was reported at the Congress of the agricultural workers held in April 1983.⁴²

Apart from technical cooperation, Kampuchea has expanded greatly its educational facilities with the help of Vietnam. At present it has over 20,000 teachers, nearly 6,000 primary schools and more than 2 million students. Camps have been set up to eradicate illiteracy which is expected to be achieved by the end of 1984.⁴³ There has been set up more than 4000 medical establishments in the country which include central hospitals, provincial hospitals and district centres.

41. Mosyakov, n. 21, p. 61.

42. n. 29, 7 April 1983.

43. People's Democracy, n. 18.

However, some problems remain in Kampuchea. In order to increase the agricultural growth rate a solid material and technical base has to be created, a large chunk of the agricultural land needs to be brought under cultivation, and both agricultural and technical education needs to be popularised. It is here that Kampuchea needs the help of Vietnam and other countries the most. Already Vietnamese advisers are assisting in the task of Kampuchea's administration, the Vietnamese model of planning has also been instrumental in introducing new economic policy changes in Kampuchea at all levels.⁴⁴

Following the decisions of the Fourth Congress of the People's Revolutionary Party of Kampuchea, more encouragement was given to those enterprises which depended on local raw materials and could meet the basic needs of the people.⁴⁵ These steps included the development of the Phnom Penh mechanical works which supplied pumps and their spare parts to the peasant cooperatives. Thus taking the four year period (1979-83) industrial production increased 18 times, the plantation

44. The Tribune, 9 July 1983.

45. Samrin, n. 39, p. 13.

industry especially the rubber industry increased substantially in Kampuchea while the production of rice reached 17 million tonnes and rubber production covered 800,000 hectares in Vietnam. This is clear from the newspaper reports.⁴⁶

The industrial growth in Kampuchea has been affected by several constraints like inadequate energy supply, lack of advanced technology, shortage of trained specialists, and a slow rate of accumulation of capital. Infrastructure is yet to be fully developed, despite the fact that in 1982 a massive programme for the reconstruction of highways was adopted.⁴⁷ With the implementation of ~~this~~ programme 150 Kms of highways, including such important ones as Phnom Penh - Kampong Som highways were developed. But the generation of power remained low and means of transport like roads and railways also developed slowly.

The changes are, nevertheless, noteworthy in a country which was subjected to genocide and suffered from scarcity of capital and labour force and breakdown

46. The Hindu, 31 January 1984.

47. Mosyakov, n. 21, p. 62.

of the industrial base. Rehabilitation of the economy has restored the confidence of the people in the new regime.⁴⁸ The regime not only allowed the import of engineering goods from countries like Vietnam but also kept the markets busy. This is obvious from newspaper reports which state that the Heng Samrin regime not only facilitated the indigenous production of industrial goods but also ensured a steady supply of mass consumer goods.⁴⁹

During the last five years the People's Republic of Kampuchea has gone a long way in elevating the people's living standards and building the material-technical foundations of socialism. The regime owes this success to the sincere efforts of its hard working people led by the party and the prompt economic assistance provided by Vietnam, Laos and other socialist countries.⁵⁰

The PRPK leadership had proceeded with the assumption that Kampuchea's economy can progress only by organising new productive forces and developing agriculture, industry and infrastructure in accordance with the local needs. In all these sectors the new regime

48. n. 44, 9 July 1983.

49. n. 24, 18 February 1981, National Herald, 13 September 1983.

50. "Communique of the Conference of Foreign Ministers of Laos, Kampuchea and Vietnam", New Times, Vol. 42, No. 30, July 1984, p. 31.

tried to achieve the impossible. Apart from this, Kampuchea's export trade expanded with Vietnam and other countries specially in rice and rubber products. In 1981 itself the production of rubber had reached 5,800 tons, a major part of which was exported.⁵¹

The economic recovery of these two countries of Indo-China has been made possible by coordination of their actions at various levels. Joint conferences of the Indo-Chinese political parties are held from time to time to discuss their economic policies. Conferences of leading economists and heads of the state planning committees are also held.⁵² Officers of the national banks and the financial experts of the two countries also meet occasionally, at the time of party conference and during the drafting of the annual or Five-Year Plans.

Vietnamese specialists in various fields have been working in the People's Republic of Kampuchea. Apart from this, the conferences of the national committees of the two states are held on the Mekong river from time to time. The purpose is to discuss

51. Samrin, n. 39, p. 13.

52. Thien, n. 5, pp 701-6.

question regarding the use of hydro-electricity on the Mekong river and to discuss measures for effective utilization of the river basin.⁵³

In both these countries the foundation of a diversified economy has been laid with a well-developed state sector, collectization of agriculture, the control of "market forces", and with the development of infrastructure. There has been much progress on the lines of socialist industrialization, which has provided for better living standards and created a new socialist society.⁵⁴

But several urgent tasks are yet to be fulfilled. These include the fullest production of consumer goods with less reliance on imports, to provide more jobs to the unemployed youth especially in South Vietnam, to encourage the production of export-oriented industrial products in order to secure more foreign exchange, and the encouragement of savings and investment.⁵⁵ Nevertheless, the alliance of the two countries has helped

53. Isayev, n.3, p. 19.

54. n. 46, 31 January 1984.

55. Son Sann, "The Causes of the suffering of the Kampuchean People: A possible solution", Contemporary Southeast Asia, Vol. 4, no. 4, March 1983, pp 567-9.

them in solving several of these problems. This kind of regular interaction has been of particular benefit to the Kampuchean people whose economy had been under total shambles under the Pol Pot regime.⁵⁶

In Vietnam objectives for 1984-85 include production of 19-20 million tons of coal, 5 - 5.6 billion KWH's of electricity and 2 million tons of cement.⁵⁷ More attention is being given to mobilise public savings for investment, to encourage the export of engineering goods and to the completion of existing industrial projects. The off-shore oil exploration process is expected to show results by 1987- The first thermal power station was commissioned in early November 1983 at Pha Lai.⁵⁸ By the year 1987 the hydro-electric power stations of Hua Bin and Tri An are expected to start functioning.

In Kampuchea while more than 60 factories were brought into operation in 1981-82, cultivable land was increased by one million hectares during the same period.

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56. Milton Osborne, Before Kampuchea: Preludes to Tragedy, (North Sydney, 1979), pp 9-10.
57. McWilliams, n.8, p. 65.
58. n. 46, 31 January 1984.

Restoration and development of the export-oriented enterprises has been largely achieved, following the decisions of the Fourth Congress of the People's Revolutionary Party of Kampuchea held in May 1981.⁵⁹ Trade with Vietnam and other socialist countries has increased the export earnings of Kampuchea, similarly Kampuchea has benefited from the economic aid it received from the Soviet Union, Vietnam and some international organizations like OXFAM, UNESCO etc.⁶⁰

At the Fifth anniversary of the formation of the People's Republic of Kampuchea (7 January 1984), the party leaders noted that the PRK had gone a long way in the struggle for survival, for providing better living standards and improving their domestic life and foreign relations.⁶¹ At present, Kampuchea has benefited greatly from a new and planned economy with more investment outlets, better markets and a fairly developed industrial base. In fact, by early 1981 itself, the gravest period of the national reconstruction of Kampuchea was completed as stated in the party journals.⁶²

59. n. 25, 27 May 1981.

60 Timothy Carney, "Kampuchea in 1982: Political and Military Escalation", Asian Survey, Vol. 23, No. 1, January 1983, pp 81-2.

61. n. 18, 15 January 1984.

62. n. 29, 1 January 1981.

The presence of Vietnamese army and administrative personnel in Kampuchea has been involving a sizeable part of Vietnam's expenses. In 1982 Vietnam devoted nearly 50% of its national budget and diverted scarce energy resources and medical relief to meet the pressing needs of the people of Kampuchea.⁶³ Consequently, Vietnam has been made to rely more on foreign aid which in 1982-83 stood as high as \$ 3.5 billion.⁶⁴ Inflation and adverse balance of payments has continued to characterise Vietnam's economy despite sizeable aid from the Soviet bloc.

To meet the strains of the war going on in Kampuchea against the Khmer Rouge insurgents, the Vietnamese leaders took a number of measures in 1982 and 1983. In December 1982 the party leaders decided to introduce amendments to the tax code with effect from March 1983.⁶⁵ Its main objective was to restrict private trade and to increase the state's role in retail trade. A series of measures were taken during 1983 to curb black market and corruption which had become fairly widespread especially in the Ho Chi Minh City.⁶⁶

63. n.8, p.68

64. Ibid, p. 65.

65. Keatings, n.12, p. 32673.

66. Ibid, p. 32674.

Other steps taken during 1982-83 included the introduction of a new commercial tax system, an attack on hoarding and profiteering, to enter into Bilateral trade agreements with the countries of COMECON and to participate in the international division of labour.⁶⁷ To carry forward its task of bilateral cooperation, Vietnam decided to increase the number of technicians and engineers working in Kampuchea. By the end of 1983, the rail service from Phnom Penh to Battambang province in Kampuchea had started operating with the assistance of Vietnamese engineers. In December 1983 a television centre had started operating in Kampuchea with Vietnamese collaboration, and over 60 large industrial enterprises had started working in the Republic by that time.⁶⁸

For both these countries, having been subjected to more than three decades of war and foreign intervention, it took some time for their economies to reach the take off stage. But once it started, their economies achieved a steady rate of progress, be it high agricultural yield, increase in the area of cultivable land, efficient use of natural resources, or the installation

67. Trigubenko, n.9, p.70.

68. n. 18, 15 January 1984.

of new industries. Their objective of economic development was subjected to the constraints of security - and the consequent military expenditure borne out by Vietnam in Kampuchea. The threat posed on their borders by the Chinese army and the Khmer Rouge incursions has also put the economies of these two countries under pressure. Nevertheless, the alliance of these two countries has enabled them to meet these challenges with confidence and optimism.

CHAPTER IV

SECURITY PERCEPTION

In Vietnam, ~~and~~ Kampuchea and ~~the~~ Southeast Asia as a whole, internal challenges connected with the weakness of political institutions have affected the security perceptions of these countries. Security perception of the Indo-Chinese countries in particular, embrace both military and political issues and are reflected in the internal and external policies of these countries. The scenario of national security becomes much more complex with the projection of the policies of the world powers into this region.

In these two countries of Indo-China the experience of several years of colonial rule and the wars against the French and the American lasting upto 1975 had resulted in a crippled economy, poverty, educational backwardness and a weak social structure. The unstable nature of their political institutions and the insurgencies in the region tended to pose a serious threat to their national security. This trend more obvious since 1979 when the displaced Pol Pot group started organising incursions on the Thai-Kampuchean border and the Chinese troops were involved in border skirmishes with Vietnam.

The key to the security perception of Vietnam and Kampuchea lies in the fact that as newly independent countries they undertook policies to resolve the problems of development and national integration. However, the presence of the Association of Southeast Asian nations (ASEAN) having an alternative model of development and the attempt by China to increase its own influence, tended to affect the power politics of the region. This fact became more obvious since 1979 when the ASEAN countries and China started raising the bogey of Vietnamese invasion and have been helping the displaced Pol Pot regime for rebellion against the Heng Samrin regime.¹

Among the Indo-China states Vietnam was the first country to propose a security plan for Southeast Asia. In 1967, at the Colombo Conference of Non-Aligned States, the Vietnamese delegation proposed a 'Zone of peace, genuine independence, and neutrality' to replace the 'Zone of Peace, Freedom and Neutrality' proposal of the ASEAN states (ZOPFAN proposal discussed at the Kuala Lumpur Declaration of 1971).² During the same

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1. Jonathan Luxmoore, "The Kampuchean Deadlock", Contemporary Review, January 1984, Vol. 244, No. 1416, p. 18.
 2. E.D. Solidum and N.M. Morales, "A comparative study of regional security plans for Southeast Asia", Asia Pacific Community, Fall 1982, No. 18, p. 30.

year Vietnam enunciated a four point policy with the ASEAN countries for cooperation friendship.

- (i) Respect for each other's independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity, non aggression, non-interference in each other's internal affairs, equality, mutual benefit and peaceful co-existence;
- (ii) Refusal to any foreign country for using one's territory as a base for direct or indirect aggression and intervention against countries in the region;
- (iii) Friendly and good neighbourly relations, economic cooperation and cultural exchanges on the basis of equality and mutual benefit, settlement of disputes through negotiation;
- (iv) Development and cooperation for the sake of independence, peace, and genuine neutrality.³

To implement this four policy Vietnam offered, alongwith Laos and Kampuchea, to sign a bilateral, non-aggression treaty with each of the ASEAN states and Burma and sought their friendship and cooperation.⁴

3. Ibid, p. 31.

3. Ibid, p. 31.

By making these initiatives Vietnam intended to develop relations of friendliness, mutual assistance and cooperation among the countries of Southeast Asia. However, the ASEAN states interpreted the Vietnamese proposals as vague in substance and meaning whose acceptance would lead to an increase in Soviet influence in the region. They described these proposals as non-acceptable, as an attempt to disunify the ASEAN states and to involve them with a possible confrontation with China in Southeast Asia.⁵

Events in Kampuchea between 1978-79 leading to the overthrow of the Pol Pot regime and the installation of the Vietnamese backed Heng Samrin regime in January 1979 were viewed with concern by the ASEAN countries. They started supporting the overthrown Khmer Rouge with economic aid and military amunitions for bringing about the withdrawal of Vietnamese troops from Kampuchea.⁶ Consequently, Vietnam had to reinforce its troops on the Western Kampuchean border in order to attack a major base of guerillas loyal to the ousted Khmer Rouge at Phnom Malai near the Thai border.⁷ More military incursions followed on the Thai-Kampuchean border.

5. Martin Stuart Fox, "Resolving the Kampuchean Problem", Contemporary Southeast Asia, Vol. 4, No. 2, September, 1982, p. 217.

6. Editorial, The Times, 7 June 1980.

7. Ceylon Daily News, 6 August 1980.

Several appeals were made by the Khmer Rouge Premier Khieu Samphan and Deputy Premier Ieng Sary to the Western countries, to help them oust the Vietnamese troops from Kampuchea. These leaders even succeeded in getting a resolution passed in the United Nations General Assembly in June 1980, with the support of the ASEAN countries, calling for the withdrawal of all foreign troops from Kampuchea.⁸ But the Vietnamese leaders maintained that among other countries Thailand had given aid and refuge to the Khmer Rouge guerrillas. Their troops had to clash with the Khmer soldiers in the Malai Hills and in the northern Kampuchean province of Oddar Mean Chey, as was widely reported.⁹ It was estimated that about 30,000 to 40,000 Khmer Rouge guerrillas were still active, many of them in the Cardamome mountain range near the Thai border.¹⁰ The Vietnamese leaders therefore maintain that any withdrawal of the Vietnamese troops at this stage would enable the Khmer Rouge to return.

The Vietnamese and the PRK leaders perceive the involvement of China and the United States in the

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8. Indian Express, 27 June 1980. This resolution was first passed in 1979 in the UN General Assembly and repeated in 1980, 81, 82 and 83.
9. The Statesman, 27 June 1980.
10. n.6, 2 July 1980.

Indo-China region as a more serious threat to their security. It is apparent that China is arming and financing the Pol Pot guerrillas in their current fight against the Heng Samrin regime. The United States has also reinforced its supplies to the Khmer Rouge through various relief agencies and by openly supporting Thailand against the PRK regime.¹¹ Its purpose is to isolate and discredit the economies of Vietnam and Kampuchea, to break their tradition of struggle and sacrifice, and thereby to seek retribution for its lost war in Indo-China.

An important aspect of the current situation is the attitude of China. Hanoi views China as the core problem which other security issues are involved.¹² The geopolitical complexities posed by the Sino-Vietnamese antagonism became more apparent after the Chinese invasion of Vietnam in February 1979 "to teach Vietnam a lesson". But its strategy for a long term destabilisation of Vietnam and weaken its alliance with Kampuchea did not bear fruit. Despite the incursions of the

11. Editorial, Times of India, 9 August 1980.

12. David W.P. Elliott, "Vietnam in Asia: Strategy and diplomacy in a new context", International Journal, Spring 1983, Vol. 38, No. 2, p. 288.

Khmer Rouge troops supported by China, Thailand and Singapore the Heng Samrin regime has further consolidated itself.¹³ Protected by Vietnamese garrisons, and supported by international aid from socialist country, the regime finds itself more secure even though its survival depends on Vietnam.

Vietnam having played the role of suzerain of Kampuchea and been identified with Kampuchea in the liberation struggle, seeks to resolve the Kampuchean issue on a local basis and particularly to keep it out of the purview of the United Nations. It seeks to minimise the influence of China in the region and to persuade the ASEAN countries of the need for accepting the status quo in Kampuchea.¹⁴ In its essence Hanoi has adopted a moralistic approach towards the Kampuchean issue by highlighting the crimes committed by the "barbarious Pol Pot regime" and maintaining that any attempt to revive the Pol Pot regime was 'unrealistic' and an 'insult' to both the United Nations and the Kampuchean people.¹⁵

13. Editorial, The Hindu, 21 January 1981.

14. Pao-Min Chang. "Beijing versus Hanoi: The diplomacy over Kampuchea", Asian Survey, Vol. 23, No. 5, May 1983, pp 606-7.

15. Ibid., p.607.

Hanoi views the situation in Indo-China as remaining tense due to the "mounting collusion between the reactionaries in the Chinese ruling circles and the US imperialists" which is "a serious threat to the national independence, peace and stability in Indo-China and the rest of Southeast Asia".¹⁶ However, China considers Vietnam's military presence in Kampuchea as a direct challenge to its own status and credibility as a major power in the region and therefore seeks to divide the Indo-Chinese states by openly supporting the ousted Pol Pot regime. Hanoi considers such attempts as part of "the expansionist and hegemonist strategy" pursued by Beijing for "turning Kampuchea into a spring-board for attacking Vietnam" and eventually the whole of Indo-China.¹⁷

Apart from China the United States has also increased its naval and air presence in Southeast Asia, inserted more weapons into the region and assisted the ASEAN countries with arms supplies. The visit to Thailand by the Chinese Chief of the general staff in early 1983 and the Southeast Asian tour of the United

16. n.6, Editorial, 9 August 1980.

17. n. 14, p. 608.

States Secretary of Defence Weinberger in November 1982 prompted Hanoi's reaction as this being "a dangerous scheme of collusion among Washington, Beijing, Bangkok to oppose Vietnam, Laos and Kampuchea and to undermine peace and stability in Southeast Asia."¹⁸

The Vietnamese leaders have justified their military presence in Kampuchea for the purpose of maintaining peace on the Thai-Kampuchean border and for safeguarding the stability of the Heng Samrin regime. They know that China and the ASEAN countries are encouraging the Kampuchean refugees to return home and foment trouble. Still, Vietnam has made frequent offers for the troops withdrawal from Kampuchea. One of the earliest proposals was made by Mr Thach at a press conference at the United Nations as reported on 6 October 1980.¹⁹

- (1) The presence of the Vietnamese troops in Kampuchea is aimed at countering the Chinese threat against Kampuchea and Vietnam and they are there at the request of the People's Revolutionary Council of Kampuchea. When the threat no longer exists, Vietnamese troops will be withdrawn.

18. Elliott, n.12, p. 301.

19. The Hindu, 6 October 1980.

- (ii) The tension along the Kampuchea-Thai border is a threat to peace in this region. The creation of a demilitarised zone on both sides of the Kampuchea-Thai border is the best way to ensure peace and security on the border.
- (iii) Based on the situation of peace, security and stability along the Kampuchean-Thai border, the government of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam and the People's Revolutionary Council of Kampuchea will discuss and decide on Vietnam's withdrawal of a number of its troops from Kampuchea.

Vietnam's approach to this question was described as flexible, that it was ready to discuss this issue with Thailand and the ASEAN states.

One can proceed with the assumption that normal life could not have been restored in Kampuchea without Vietnam's intervention. Any international agency could have organised relief for the war ravaged Kampuchean people but its benefits would not have been so enduring. In fact, much of the relief organised by the international agencies has been diverted to the Khmer Rouge

camps.²⁰ Moreover, Hanoi cannot be expected to accept the ASEAN's demand for a troops pull-out at this stage when the ousted Khmer Rouge along with two other factions viz. the Khmer People's National Liberation Front (KPNEF) and the Monlike movement led by Prince Norodom Sihanouk are still active.

Vietnam's position on the "irreversibility of the Kampuchean situation was explained by its Foreign Minister Mr. Nguyen Co Thach saying that "Polpot cannot come back, and the revival of Kampuchea cannot be reversed".²¹ He included all non communist Khmer forces as well as those currently active against the Heng Samrin regime among those who would not be saying, particularly in the latter half of 1984 that Hanoi's troops will remain in Kampuchea only for "five to ten years", a statement which is linked with Hanoi's earlier claims of a partial troops pull out occurring every year".²² Thach has elaborated his statement by saying that if Pol Pot forces are eliminated, and the Chinese stop aiding the Kampuchean resistance movement, Vietnamese forces would withdraw totally.

20. Times of India, 25 September 1981.

21. Indian Express, 28 February 1981.

22. David Jenkins, "The long road back", FEER, 29 November 1984, p. 30.

In an interview, Kampuchean Foreign Minister hinted that "there is a possibility of the Vietnamese remaining five to ten years but there is also a possibility of them leaving earlier".²³ His views coincided with that of Mr Thach when he stated that the condition for early withdrawal was the destruction of Pol Pot and the removal of the resistance movements' bases on the Thai-Kampuchean soil. He even added that Prince Norodom Sihanouk was always welcome to Kampuchea and would be given a warm welcome if he abandoned his linkage with Pol Pot.²⁴

In the latter half of 1981 the leaders of the three exiled Kampuchean factions signed a joint statement pledging these three groups to form a coalition against the Vietnamese backed Heng Samrin government in Kampuchea. The document was signed by the former Prime Minister Khieu Samphen of the Pol Pot group, former Chief of State Prince Norodom Sihanouk and a former Prime Minister Son Sann who headed the Khmer People's National Liberation front (KPNLF) on 4 September 1981.²⁵

23. Ibid., p. 31.

24. Ibid., p. 31.

25. New York Times, 5 September 1981.

After a meeting with the Khmer Rouge leader Khieu Samphan, Prince Sihanouk expressed his willingness to form a coalition of the three factions.²⁶

While an escalation guerrillas and the Vietnamese troops on the northern Kampuchean-Thai border, a notable event at this time was the formation of the coalition government of Democratic Kampuchea (CGDK) comprising the above mentioned three factions. The three groups agreed that Prince Sihanouk will be the President of the Kampuchean alternative government, Son Sann of the KPNLF will be the Prime Minister, and representatives of the Khmer Rouge will also join the government.²⁷

Formation of a coalition of Khmer resistance forces threatened to endanger the process of enlisting Khmer support for the Heng Samrin regime. Clearly, the coalition government, with the support of China and the ASEAN countries, provided a political alternative to the Khmer people. The Indo-Chinese foreign minister, in their semi-annual conference in July 1982, proposed to unilaterally withdraw a part of the Vietnamese troops from Kampuchea.²⁸ The three ministers proposed a 'safety-

26. n. 19, 22 February 1982.

27. Hindustan Times, 24 June 1982.

28. Edmund Mc Williams, "Vietnam in 1982: Onward into the Quagmire", Asian Survey, Vol. 23, No. 1, January 1983, p. 70.

zone' along the Thai-Kampuchean border that would allow only limited Thai and Kampuchean troops along the border. The ministers also proposed an International Conference on Southeast Asia to discuss the Kampuchean issue.²⁹

These proposals of the Indo-Chinese foreign ministers reflected major policy decisions and not mere concessions to meet the challenge posed by the formation of the coalition government. Soon it became obvious that cracks were developing within the coalition government which lacked any ideological affinity and proper organizational set-up among its factions.³⁰ Thus the purpose of these proposals was rather to promote peace and stability in Southeast Asia, but they did not evoke any response from the ASEAN countries.

Early in July 1982 Vietnam began a partial pull out of its troops from Kampuchea. The withdrawal involved nearly 20,000 to 30,000 troops with a total of six units.³¹ The Vietnamese leaders announced the partial pull-out as a gesture of their good will towards their neighbours but warned the ASEAN leaders and China that

29. Editorial, n.20, 2 August, 1982.

30. n. 27, 16 April 1983.

31. n.13, 19 July 1982.

they will be forced to take effective measures should the withdrawal result in increased hostility towards the Kampuchean people.³²

During his goodwill visit to Singapore, Kuala Lumpur and Bangkok in July 1982 and to Jakarta later in the year, Vietnam's Foreign Minister Mr Thach found little interest among the ASEAN countries to the Vietnamese peace proposals.³³ Thach even suggested that Vietnam was ready to negotiate with the two non-communist groups in the CGDK provided they dissociated themselves from Pol Pot, and stated that the presence in Kampuchea of Vietnam's troops was "not irreversible".³⁴

Still the ASEAN's contention has been that Vietnam's role in Kampuchea has been the 'root cause' of instability in Southeast Asia, which is far from the truth. The ASEAN countries view Hanoi as playing a pre-determined game of domination in Kampuchea, supported by its ideology and by its expansionist designs.³⁵ However, the situational context of Vietnam's role in Kampuchea has to be understood, which is in turn affected by its national

32. The Patriot, 21 July 1982.

33. n.11, 2 August 1982.

34. Ibid

35. Fox, n.5., pp 216-7.

interest. Vietnam desires to live in a supportive milieu of Indo-Chinese states but it perceives a threat to this objective due to the hostile coalition of forces led by China.

The PRK leaders also agree that there has been an escalation of conflict in the region not merely due to fighting on the Thai-Kampuchean border, but also due to the flow of cash and amunitions to the members of the Democratic Kampuchea coalition from the United States and China.³⁶ In January 1984, Mr Hun Sen, the Foreign Minister of the PRK rejected the ASEAN countries' proposal for the introduction of a peace keeping force in Kampuchea as part of an overall solution of the Kampuchean problem.³⁷ Mr Hun Sen stated that "on the Vietnamese forces are withdrawn, Kampuchean forces will be in a position to safeguard national security. So we will not accept any peace keeping force because it is not appropriate to the overall situation in Kampuchea".³⁸

36. Paul Quinn-Judge, "Cambodia: Covert Cash flow" FEER, 28 June 1984, pp 16-7.

37. John Sprangens, "Solution Cambodian Style", FEER, 5 January 1984, p. 14.

38. Ibid.

The Indo-Chinese leaders' summit held in Vientiane in February 1983 stressed the need to strengthen their national security on the basis of a favourable milieu in Indo-China. "The new situation and tasks", noted the joint communique, "require from the three peoples of Indo-China closer solidarity and cooperation in all fields".³⁹ The leaders of Vietnam and Kampuchea indicated their willingness to have a dialogue with the ASEAN countries. Mr Nguyen Co Thach even stated that the recognition of the Heng Samrin Government in Kampuchea "is neither a necessity nor a need" for a regional dialogue between the two groups.⁴⁰ Meeting again in Phnom Penh in July 1983, the foreign minister of the three Indo-Chinese countries renewed their offer to have a dialogue on the basis of the 7th Non-Aligned Summit resolution on Southeast Asia for promoting peace in the region.⁴¹ Kampuchea offered to examine Thailand's proposals for gradually easing tensions on the border and creating mutual trust and confidence.

Despite these repeated offers, the ASEAN countries continued to support the coalition government and

39. Elliott n.12, p. 298.

40. n.13, 30 March 1983.

41. n. 32, 22 July 1983.

fighting continued incessantly on the Thai-Kampuchean border. All the three factions of the coalition government were reported to have visited China in November 1982 when they asked China to extend its military support to these factions.⁴² But ruptures within the coalition government soon became apparent in December 1982 when Prince Sihanouk complained that the ASEAN countries and China had since "done nothing to help him".⁴³

Heavy fighting was reported between the Vietnamese-PRK troops and the CGDK troops from December 1982 to April 1983 on the Thai border. The fighting took place around the CGDK forces' military bases Phnom Chat and nong Chan or near north of Highway Five.⁴⁴ The CGDK military guerrillas made frequent raids into Kampuchea from the Thai territory and withdrew into Thailand when strongly attacked by the Vietnamese-PRK troops.

The situation deteriorated further in the latter part of 1983 with the latest part of 1983 with the latest induction of arms from Beijing, Thailand and Singapore into the CGDK's military bases. Prince Sihanouk

42. n.32, 22 July 1983.

43. n.6, 15 December 1982.

44. Keasing's Contemporary Archives, Vol. XXX, No. 2, 1984, p 32668.

stated on 26 January 1984 that his guerrillas were operating as far as the Vietnamese border and carrying on insurging in all 18 provinces of Kampuchea.⁴⁵ This was in retaliation to the Vietnamese attacks on the headquarters of the KPNLF leaders on 4 April 1983 and their attempts to seal off the border with Thailand.⁴⁶

The Vietnamese leaders in May 1983 announced another partial pull-out of troops from Kampuchea as fresh steps towards restoring normalcy in the region. The withdrawal involved one infantry division and six attached regiments and brigades.⁴⁷ The Indo-Chinese Foreign Ministers after their meeting on 12 April 1983 proposed to create a security zone on the Thai-Kampuchean border from where troops and guerrillas of both sides would be withdrawn.⁴⁸ The ASEAN foreign ministers' response was to ask Vietnam to agree to a 30 Km withdrawal of troops on the Thai-Kampuchean border but no fresh initiatives were taken.

Tensions continued on the Thai-Kampuchean borders with the Vietnamese assault on Amphil, the main KPNLF base

45. Asian Recorder, Vol. XXX, No. 13, 25 March 1984, p. 17672.

46. n.21, 26 April 1983

47. n. 19, 3 May 1983..

48. National Herald, 5 May 1983.

on 15 April 1984. The Vietnamese claimed to have inflicted hundreds of casualties on the KPNLF forces. The attack also resulted in the evacuation of about 72,000 Kampuchean refugees to Thailand to escape artillery fire.⁴⁹ Earlier, in retaliation to the Vietnamese shelling of the Chinese border provinces of Guangxi and Yunnan, the Chinese launched a major attack on Vietnam's borders on April 6.⁵⁰ They attacked two hills in Vietnam's Lang Son province, 100 miles north of the Vietnamese capital. The attack created further security problems in the Indo-China region as the Vietnamese had to remove the inhabitants of Quang Ninh (a province near Lang son) away from the border and tighten vigilance on the Sino-Vietnamese border.

During 1982-83 the task of maintaining internal security in the region had become more complicated with two plots to overthrow the government in Vietnam being reported, alleged to be supported by China and other foreign powers.⁵¹ At a press conference organised officially on 12 July 1982, it was announced that Mr. Vo

49. John McBeth, "Indo-China: A rude awakening", FEER 26 April 1984, p. 22; Also See John McBeth, "Vietnam: Buffers on the borders", FEER, 17 May 1984, p. 52.

50. Paul Quinn-Judge, "Peking's tit for tat", FEER, 19 April 1984, p. 14.

51. n. 44, pp 32674-8.

Dai Ton, a former Vietnamese official had admitted that he had infiltrated into Central Vietnam to organise resistance groups and that his mission was supported by China, the United States and Thailand.⁵²

The Vietnamese transit routes to Kampuchea through Southern Laos were reported to be disturbed since June 1983 by a new United Front of Laotian guerrillas. These guerrillas, numbering about 4,000 were armed by the Kampuchean resistance groups.⁵³ Moreover, with the resumption of Sino-Soviet negotiations in 1983 and the inclusion of Kampuchea as an issue in their talks, Hanoi was faced with more difficulties.⁵⁴ Even a short term Sino-Soviet rapprochement will likely effect Hanoi's position in Kampuchea and would enable China to deploy its troops against Vietnam.

Frequent clashes on the Sino-Vietnam border and the Thai-Kampuchean border brought into focus the problem of the resettlement of refugees. In 1983 more than 500,000 Vietnamese and Kampuchean refugees were

52. Ibid.

53. n.l, p. 18.

54. n. 27, 1 August 1983.

estimated to be confined in temporary camps in Thailand or in the borderline areas.⁵⁵ In fact, the influx of Indo-Chinese refugees had started in 1978 itself when border disputes between Vietnam and Kampuchea occurred. In 1979 an estimated one million Indo-Chinese reached Thailand, most of them were resettled in the ASEAN countries and some in the United States. In August 1983 there were another 400,000 Kampuchean refugees scattered in temporary camps along the Thai-Kampuchean border.⁵⁶ The United Nations and the world community were asked to provide aid and resettlement areas for them.

The perpetual flow of the Indo-Chinese refugees despite the launching of the Orderly Departure Programme (ODP) by Vietnam in early 1982 raised considerable apprehensions among the donor and recipient states.⁵⁷ The Indo-Chinese leaders perceived the gravity of the problem, as it hardened the United States' and the ASEAN's attitude towards Vietnam and Kampuchea and distorted the opinion of the world community with regard to Vietnam's policy towards the refugee problem.⁵⁸

55. n. 27, 1 August 1983.

56. Ibid., p 1 August 1983.

57. Astri Suhrke, "IndoChinese refugees: The law and politics of the first asylum", The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Sciences Vol. 467, No. 5, May 1983, p 103.

58. Ibid., p. 113.

Consequently, it became more difficult to deal with the refugee problem through cooperative efforts and the repatriation process could not be pursued vigorously. The restrictions imposed by the United States government in April 1982 and again in 1983 made the ASEAN countries provide asylum to them, though much grudgingly.⁵⁹

In 1983 the outflow of the Indo-Chinese refugees considerably declined due to the security measures taken, by the Indo-Chinese governments against illegal deportations and the launching of the ODP by Vietnam in 1982.⁶⁰ The office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) reported on 21 December 1983 that the number of "boat people" fleeing from Vietnam by sea had declined to 30,000 as against 202,000 in 1979.⁶¹ However, in January 1984 the alleged deaths of a number of Vietnamese refugees in Thailand caused serious concern among the Vietnamese authorities and increased their hostilities on the border regions.⁶²

Amidst these far-reaching developments, security arrangements have been tightened in Phnom Penh and in its vicinity. Apart from the stationing of Vietnam-PRK

59. n. 57, pp 114-5.

60. Keasing's N.44, p 32676.

61. Ibid.

62. Recorder, N.45, No. 10, 4-10 March, 1984, p.17636.

troops on important points on their border, the Kampuchean security police now guard hotels and government officers.⁶³ The Vietnamese troops are now stationed at the most sensitive locations, including the residences of important party leaders and government officials.⁶⁴ Some Vietnamese troops are guarding the peripheral areas of Phnom Penh, but on the western borders the Vietnam-PRK troops are jointly conducting the surveillance work.⁶⁵

In June, 1984 the Vietnamese troops claimed to have captured Hill 547 on the Thai border which was described as the headquarters of the Khmer Rouge general staff.⁶⁶ Vietnam also claimed that its troops had "put out of action" 5,500 Chinese on the Sino-Vietnam border. One Chinese regiment and 9 battalions were seriously damaged and 38 artillery positions destroyed.⁶⁷ Clearly, the Vietnamese leaders perceived the increased Chinese military presence along their northern borders as a threat to their security and to that of Kampuchea. The Chinese, however, hoped that the timing of their attacks - they preceded the visit to China of the United States President

63. Paul Quinn-Judge, "Cambodia: Vietnam takemaim", FEER, 8 March 1984, pp 36-7.

64. McWilliams, n.28, p. 70.

65. Ibid., p. 70.

66. Paul Quinn-Judge, "IndoChina: Hollow Victory", FEER 14 June 1984, p. 29.

67. Nhan Dan, 5 June 1984.

Ronald Reagan and continued when high level Sino-US and Sino-Thai exchanges were going on, will compel Vietnam to decrease its attacks on the bases of the Democratic Kampuchea coalition.⁶⁸

At present, the Vietnamese troops are engaged in the routine task of defending the frontier mostly in the north and northwest of Kampuchea. They are attempting to block the entry of the 40-50,000 anti-government rebels, 30,000 of which are still under the direct control of Pol Pot.⁶⁹ Thus militarily the Phnom Penh regime cannot survive these attacks on its own even though it is fully capable of running the administration by itself. This makes the Hanoi leaders continue to insist in private that the situation in Kampuchea is "irreversible". However, they have reduced their public references to irreversibility since January 1981 largely as a conciliatory gesture to the ASEAN nations.⁷⁰

Thus Hanoi continues to regard the Kampuchean problem as a regional issue which can be solved at a

68. Paul Quinn-Judge, "Indo-China: Borderline cases" FEER, 21 June 1984, p. 26.

69. n.22, p. 27.

70. Ibid., p. 30.

regional conference in which general security issues can be discussed along with the discussions relating to its military presence in Kampuchea.⁷¹ Hanoi has based its arguments in the belief that the time factor is on its side and sooner or later the world community will be driven to give full recognition to its military presence in Kampuchea. The presence of the Vietnamese troops has, in fact, made the task of the PRK government easier to show that it can provide for the security of the people and win their loyalty.⁷²

The visits to China of Thailand's supreme commander general Artsit Kamlangek in May 1984 and the visits to the United States of Chinese Defence Minister Zhang Aifaing in June 1984 have convinced Hanoi that China is their main enemy. Nhan Dan commented on 7 June 1984 that Zang's visit was "new and dangerous step in the Chinese-US military collusion" whose main purpose was to seek Washington's help for "furtherance of its expansionist and hegemonistic ambitions".⁷³ A combination of factors are thus acting on Hanoi to abandon its

71. n.l., p. 19.

72. n.22, p. 27.

73. n. 67, 7 June 1984.

present role in Kampuchea. However, the Vietnamese leaders have been successfully resisting the threats to security arising from the side of the coalition government on the domestic front and the threats from the side of China-Thai land-ASEAN linkage on the external level.

Thus although Vietnam is seen as the major factor behind instability in Southeast Asia, in reality these factors are external and lie beyond the control of Hanoi. The attempts of the external powers - the United States and China, to establish patron client relationship with the non-communist countries in the region and their covert and overt attempts to destabilise the existing regimes in Indo-China, have only escalated the present crisis.⁷⁴

The present stalemate over Kampuchea has continued in 1984 with claims and counter-claims being made by the warring fronts - PRK defence Minister Bou Thong claimed on 16 August 1984 that between January and June this year more than 10,000 Khmer rebels have been killed wounded or captured.⁷⁵ But the PRK government is aware of the

74. Chang, n. 14, p. 608.

75. Paul Quinn Judge, "A war on two fronts", FEER, 27 September 1984, p. 56.

fact that they are facing a political as well as a military struggle, and they have admitted that their opponents have scored some successes on their own and can operate inside the country.⁷⁶

The Fifth anniversary of the PRK on 7 January 1984 was another occasion for the Heng Samrin government to remind their people that the task of national reconstruction had begun in Kampuchea with the support of Vietnam and other socialist countries.⁷⁷ However, the role of the external powers and the guerilla activities of the coalition government still hampered Heng Samrin's reconstruction efforts. But he felt that "complication" was inevitable in "the struggle by our people against the enemy's war of systematic destruction, and our national reconstruction", and he expressed confidence that his government will prevail.⁷⁸ The present stage of socio-economic reconstruction going on in Kampuchea with the willing assistance of Vietnam, certainly gives rise to such optimism. In fact, peace and tranquility in Kampuchea and other parts of Indo-China can well be restored, provided the external powers abandon their efforts at destabilising the existing regimes in Indo-China and mounting assaults on their borders.

76. Ibid, p.56.

77. Asian Recorder, n.62, p.17636.

78. Ibid,

CHAPTER V

FOREIGN POLICY APPROACHES

The Indo-Chinese countries have attempted to re-adjust the power balance in South-East Asia in accordance with the changed situation following the liberation of South Vietnam in 1975 and the unification of Vietnam in 1976. Ideological affinity and the geopolitical realities of South-East Asia have shaped the foreign policies of Vietnam and Kampuchea. These two countries find themselves as small states having limited options, being surrounded by a group of hostile powers. They proceed from the assumption, that their regimes must be defended at all costs and subordinate all other objectives to this end. Further, the superpower presence in the region, the role of China in South-East Asia, and the present relationship between ASEAN and the countries of Indo-China have influenced the foreign policy approaches of Vietnam and Kampuchea.

Vietnam has sought to establish a "special relationship" with Kampuchea and perceives a grave Chinese threat to the region following the Chinese invasion of Vietnam in February 1979. These are the two cornerstones of its foreign policy. It has also desired to live in a supportive milieu of friendly states in South-East

Asia and to maintain the stability of the Heng Samrin regime in Kampuchea. To that extent, Kampuchea's foreign policy behaviour is also based on the desire to maintain friendliness with its neighbours and to maintain stability in the region by meeting the challenge of the guerrilla insurgents operating on its borders. Its ideological affinity with Vietnam and the Soviet Union provides it sufficient strength to meet such challenge.

Vietnam and Kampuchea have together sought the cooperation of the ASEAN countries in political and economic spheres. The Heng Samrin regime, installed in Kampuchea in January 1979, pledged to restore peace and prosperity in the region. Also at the first Conference of the Foreign Ministers of Vietnam, Kampuchea and Laos in January 1980, the three states proposed to begin negotiations with the ASEAN countries for converting South-East into a peaceful neutral, independent and prosperous region.¹

1. M.Yelin, "The Indo-Chinese Countries' Struggle to create a zone peace in Southeast Asia", Far Eastern Affairs, no. 2, February 1983, p 148.

Vietnam's action in installing Heng Samrin into power in Kampuchea evoked strong criticism from the ASEAN countries and China. But Vietnam adopted an essentially moralistic approach towards the whole issue and insisted on its special relationship with Kampuchea.² The Vietnamese leaders exposed the crimes committed by Pol Pot during its rule (April 1975 to December 1978). They maintained that about 3 million Kampuchéans out of a population of 7 million died during this period, and Kampuchea's economy suffered from widespread poverty and famines.³ They further maintained that it were china's expansionist and hegemonist designs that were intended to divide the three Indo-Chinese states and create instability in the region.⁴

Similar views were also expressed by the leaders of the PRK regime . In an article published in a party journal Heng Samrin noted that the greatest threat to peace in the region is posed by the alliance between the Peking expansionists and the forces of reaction headed by the United States. Hence, he believed,

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2. Werner Draguhn, "The Indo-China Conflict and the Positions of the Countries Involved", Contemporary South East Asia, V. 5, No. 1, p 102.
 3. Ceylon Daily News, 5 January 1980.
 4. Pao-Min Chang, "Beijing versus Hanoi: The Diplomacy over Kampuchea", Asian Survey, V. 23, no. 5, May 1983, p 607.

that it is "our duty to be most vigilant, strengthen the bonds of solidarity and step up actions to prevent armed conflicts".⁵ He expressed optimism that the forces of peace and goodwill will prevail.

The Unity of the Indo-Chinese states is seen by their leaders as essential for safeguarding their freedom and integrity. Hanoi's view has been that the Indo-Chinese states had been the victims of foreign aggression in the past and Vietnam repeatedly "stood shoulder to shoulder" with its two neighbouring peoples in their common struggle, hence it was Vietnam's "sacred national duty and international obligation to come to the aid of the Kampuchean people again, this time in order to defeat Chinese expansionism and hegemonism".⁶

In May 1980, the Foreign Minister of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, Mr Nguyen Co Thach, paid official visits to Malaysia and Indonesia for holding discussions and explaining to them the peaceful intentions of the Indo-Chinese states.⁷ However, there was a deterioration

5. Heng Samrin, "Three Years of Rehabilitation & Construction" Problems of Peace & Socialism, V. 10, No. 8, August 1982, p. 16.
6. Chang, n.4, p. 608.
7. Yelin, n.1, p. 143.

in the situation along the Thailand-Kampuchean border with Thailand providing shelter to the Khmer Rouge rebels, which made Thach's peace initiatives unsuccessful.

At the Second Conference of the Foreign Ministers of Vietnam, Laos, and Kampuchea held in Vientiane in July 1980, some definite peace proposals were made. The SRV and the PRK leaders proposed to sign bilateral or multilateral treaties between Vietnam, Kampuchea, Laos and Thailand regarding non-aggression and non-interference in each others' affairs, and non-use of their territory as a base against another country or countries.⁸

At the Vientiane Conference, the PRK leaders made a proposal to turn the Kampuchean-Thai border into a zone of peace and friendship. It envisaged that Kampuchea and Thailand undertake to create a demilitarised zone along their common border, and that negotiations in this regard can be directly held between the governments of the two countries.⁹ However, the Thai Foreign Minister hastily rejected these peace initiatives and no immediate solution was possible.

8. Ibid., p. 149.

9. Ibid.

In the United Nations General Assembly Sessions (34th and 35th sessions in 1979 and 1980), The representatives of Vietnam and Laos have constantly held the view that South-East Asia should be turned into a zone of peace stability and cooperation. They have stated that the main threat to South East Aisa is posed by China and that the Heng Samrin regime should be fully represented at any negotiations concerning Kampuchea.¹⁰ The Vietnamese leaders have held the view that the presence of Vietnamese troops in Kampuchea was in accordance with the Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Cooperation signed between the PRK and the SRV on 18 February 1979.¹¹ According to the terms of this treaty, the two countries resolved to assist each other for strengthening their national defence.

The Vietnamese and the Kampuchean leaders believe that the Kampuchean problem was the result of China's ambition to dominate Indo-China, and being essentially a problem between China and the Indo-China countries, it should not hinder their relations with the South-East Asian countries.¹² To vindicate this stand, the

10. The Statesman, 17 October 1980.

11. Draguhn, n.2, p. 101.

12. Hindustan Times, 21 May 1981.

Foreign Minister of Vietnam, Mr Thach, during his conversation with the Foreign Minister of Thailand in New York (October 1980), offered to withdraw some troops from Kampuchea once a demilitarized zone is created on the Thai-Kampuchean border.¹³ He ~~was~~ urged Thailand to refrain from assisting the Khmer Rouge and other rebel groups operating on the border.

At the Third Conference of the Foreign Minister of Vietnam, Laos and Kampuchea held in January 1981 at Ho Chi Minh City, the three countries reiterated their desire to sign bilateral and multilateral non-aggression agreements with the South-East Asian countries.¹⁴ They also expressed their readiness to sign bilateral treaties on peaceful co-existence with the People's Republic of China. Further, in May 1981, they held regional discussions with Indonesia, Malasia and the Philippines on the Kampuchean issue. They also sent a protest note to the United Nations secretary general in May 1981 protesting over the United Nations' recognition of the regime of so-called Democratic Kampuchea while ignoring the right of the Kampuchean people to self determination.¹⁵

13. The Hindu, 6 October 1980.

14. Chang, N.4. p. 611-2.

15. The Times, 27 May 1981.

In a bid to eliminate the external Powers interference in South-East Asia, the Indo-Chinese countries have frequently proposed to hold a regional conference with the ASEAN countries to discuss their common problems. This proposal was first made at the Indo-Chinese Foreign Minister's Conference in January 1981. It was repeated in several public statements made in the first half of 1981 when the Indo-Chinese states stated that the South-East Asian problems should be settled by the South East countries themselves, without any external interference.¹⁶

In august 1981, the PRK leaders made another conciliatory gesture to the ASEAN countries by proposing to include in the suggested conference the issue of troops withdrawal and that of disarming all rebel groups operating on Kampuchean borders.¹⁷ While meeting in June 1981, the Foreign Ministers of the three Indo-Chinese countries offered to have a regional conference to discuss the common issues with their neighbours to be followed by an international conference on a broader level to record the previous agreements reached in the regional conferences.¹⁸

16. Times of India, 19 July 1981

17. The Statesman, 1 September 1981

18. The Patriot, 8 July 1981

The ASEAN countries attached considerable significance during this period to the holding of an International Conference on Kampuchea (ICK), held at New York in mid-July 1981. At the Conference ten countries made demands for the withdrawal of Vietnamese troops from Kampuchea and solicited Vietnam's cooperation for finding a "just solution" that would provide for an "independent, non-aligned and neutral Kampuchea".¹⁹ The Conference was attended, among other countries, by the leaders of two Kampuchean factions, Prince Norodom Sihanouk and the ex-Premier Mr Son Sann. It deferred a decision to invite the Heng Samrin Government to attend the Conference and therefore draw strong criticism from the PRK leaders.

At the United Nations, Mr Ha Van Lau Vietnamese ambassador vehemently denounced the ICK as "illegal and invalid" and called it an "international conspiracy" against Kampuchea.²⁰ Commenting on the ICK, the Vietnamese daily Nhan Dan noted that "no force can make Vietnam give up its commitment to support the fraternal Kampuchean people."²¹ In fact, the

19. n.17, 16 July 1981.

20. n. 16, 17 July 1981.

21. Nhan Dan, 13 July 1981.

combination of pressures and incentives designed to induce Hanoi to abandon its present role in Kampuchea has had little effect, since Hanoi has consistently maintained its position of defending the Heng Samrin regime.

The PRK leaders share Vietnam's desire to strengthen mutual cooperation and maintain peace in the region. This desire is reinforced by the historic links that bound the two countries in their struggle against the French and the Americans and in their present struggle, against the coalition government of Democratic Kampuchea (CGDK) forces. Expressing these sentiments Mr Heng Samrin hoped that Vietnam-Kampuchean cooperation "can serve as an example of relations of a new type between states. The Kampuchean people are determined to cherish their solidarity and friendship with Vietnam as the apple of their eye".²² Facing a combination of hostile powers who threaten the very survival of Heng Samrin who threaten the very survival of Heng regime, the PRK leaders have continuously sought assistance from Vietnam and the Soviet Union.

22. Samrin, h.5, p.15.

The Vietnamese leaders are keen to maintain the unity of the Indo-China bloc while agreeing to a partial withdrawal of their troops from Kampuchea in January 1981, and again in June 1982, Hanoi had insisted that China and the ASEAN countries stop giving assistance to the factions of the Coalition Government.²³ Hanoi perceives any relaxation in its control over Phnom Penh as leading to a corresponding Chinese influence increasing in the region. Therefore, Hanoi has insisted on having discussions with the ASEAN countries in a regional conference and that the Heng Samrin regime be fully represented at such conferences.

Even while agreeing for a broadbased international conference in mid-1982, the Hanoi leaders were anxious not to allow any increase in the foreign power's influence in the region. They proposed, that the conference should be convened specifically on the principle that "regional problems should be discussed and resolved by the countries in the region without infringing upon their sovereignty or interfering in the internal affairs of each country".²⁴

23. Nayan Chanda, "The irreversible is still discussible", FEER, 6 February 1981, p. 8.

24. Chang, n.4, p. 615.

On 16-17 February 1982, the Fifth Conference of the Foreign Ministers of the Indo-China countries was held at Vientiane. Its leaders expressed satisfaction at the steady consolidation of all-round cooperation between the three countries of Indo-China and the Socialist countries. They felt that more effective steps were required for safeguarding peace and preventing further warfare by coordinating their foreign policies and development efforts with the socialist countries and the non-aligned nations.²⁵

The leaders at the conference sought the cooperation of the ASEAN countries for normalising the situation and ensuring the security and stability of South-East Asia.²⁶ In particular, the Indo-Chinese leaders spoke of the need to improve relations with Thailand and to enter into direct negotiations with Thailand for this purpose.

However, the situation in South-East Asia remains uncertain, with the prolonged stalemate over Kampuchea and clashes going on the Sino-Vietnamese

25. Yelin n.l, p. 154.

26. Ibid.

and the Thai-Kampuchean border, With the formation of the Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea in June 1982, the crisis has only deepened further. Although its formation was described as a mere 'cosmetic device' in Hanoi and Phnom Penh radio broadcasts, but they had to tighten the security measures on their borders to check the incursions of the CGDK's troops.²⁷

By the end of July 1982, the PRK had organised nationwide meetings levying several allegations against the Coalition Government with strong criticism directed against two factions' leaders - Prince Sihanouk and Son Sann. However, the credentials of Democratic Kampuchea were accepted at the 37th and 38th sessions of the United Nation's General Assembly held in 1982 and 1983 respectively. Faced with such a situation, the Vietnamese Foreign Minister, Mr Thach, visited three ASEAN capitals in July 1982 and renewed his offer to normalise their relations.²⁸ He also stated that the presence of Vietnamese troops in Kampuchea was "not irreversible meaning thereby that the troops' withdrawal

27. Timothy Carney, "Kampuchea in 1982: Political and military escalation", Asian Survey, V, 23, No. 1, January 1983, p. 78.

28. n. 16, 2 August 1982.

process which had started would be completed once Kampuchea is freed from all external interferences. However most of his suggestions drew a cold response from the ASEAN countries.

At the Sixth Conference of the Indo-Chinese States Foreign Ministers held at Ho Chi Minh City on 6-7 July 1982, some fresh initiatives were made. The countries of Indo-China proposed to convene an international conference with the participation of Vietnam, Laos, Kampuchea, the ASEAN countries, China the United States, Burma, Great Britain, France and India, to discuss the situation in South-East Asia.²⁹ The three states agreed to meet the representatives of the ASEAN countries to decide the date, venue, agenda and composition of the Conference.

During 1982 and 1983 the Vietnamese and Kampuchean leaders were confronted with difficult foreign policy options as fighting escalated on the Sino-Vietnamese border and the Thai-Kampuchean border. Heavy fighting between Vietnam and China was reported

29. Indian Express, 8 July 1982.

in April 1983 when the Chinese launched a major shelling campaign in retaliation to Vietnam's military attacks.³⁰ It was a serious confrontation between the two countries, made complicated by Chinese denials that their regular forces participated in the attack.

Meanwhile, the Vietnamese troops in Kampuchea, working together with the forces of the PRK, continued their military operations against the guerrillas in the west of the country while the Vietnamese-Kampuchean troops launched their major offensives in the dry seasons of 1982 and 1983, the CGDK guerrillas were reported to be attacking during the wet season.³¹ More tensions were generated between the two warring sides following the news that the leaders of the three factions in the Coalition Government visited China in November 1982 and asked for the extension of China's military support to all the three factions.³²

In February 1983, the Prime Ministers of Vietnam Kampuchea and Laos announced in Vientiane that, all Vietnamese volunteers "would be removed from Kampuchea"

30. n. 17, 24 April 1983.

31. n. 29, 26 April 1983.

32. Keesing's Archives, Vol. XXIX, No. 1, 1983, p. 31887.

once the threat from the side of rebels aided by Peking and other countries is removed and after "the ending of the use of Thai territory against the PRK".³³ They stated that while there will be an annual withdrawal of volunteers, "with due consideration for the security of Kampuchea", but if the external powers tried to take advantage of the withdrawal the PRK government would hold consultations with Vietnam". Following this decision, Vietnam withdrew one Infantry Division and six regiments and Brigades from Kampuchea in May 1983.³⁴

The Vietnamese and the PRK leaders view the increasing collusion between China and the United States as the root cause of political instability in South-East Asia while China has been encouraging insurging on the Thai-Kampuchean borders and launching military assaults on Vietnam, the United States has inducted more weapons into the region through its ASEAN allies like Thailand.³⁵ It has also provided cash assistance to the non-communist factions in the Coalition government.³⁶

33. Ibid, Vol. XXX, No. 2, 1984, p. 32670

34. n. 13, 3 May 1983.

35. Paul Quinn-Judge, "Cambodia :Covert Cash Flow" FEER, 28 June 1984, pp 16-17.

36. Ibid.

The Indo-China states also felt concerned over the visits to Thailand by the Chinese Chief of the General staff and the Chairman of the United States' joint Chiefs of staff in early 1983.³⁷ Hanoi sought to retrieve the situation by demanding a pledge of non aggression and non-interference from the ASEAN states in relation to Indo-China.³⁸ It insisted that mutual contacts be renewed between the two groups of states in which the Heng Samrin government should also participate on an equitable basis.

During the seventh Non-Aligned Summit conference held in New Delhi (7-12 March 1983), the Foreign Minister of Vietnam held unofficial talks with the Malaysian Foreign Minister, Tan Sri Haji Mohammed Ghazali bin Shafie. Mr Thach accepted the Malaysian Foreign Minister's suggestion of organising a conference of Vietnam, Laos and the ASEAN countries without either of the Kampuchean governments being represented.³⁹ But the ASEAN Foreign Ministers, meeting in Bangkok on 23 March 1983, did not endorse this possibility and insisted on a settlement on the basis of the United Nations resolutions on Kampuchea.⁴⁰

37. David W.P. Elliott, "Vietnam in Asia: Strategy and Diplomacy in a new Context", International Journal, Spring 1983, V. 38, no. 2, p. 301

38. Ibid., p. 302.

39. Keasing's, n.33, p. 32671 40. n.13, 30 March 1983

A certain amount of rigidity and suspicions on both sides have precluded the possibility of any meaningful cooperation between the Indo-Chinese states and the ASEAN countries. While the ASEAN countries have shown much indifference to the idea for a regional conference, the Indo-Chinese states have been making fresh initiatives, e.g. making the Seventh Non-Aligned Summit resolution on South-East Asia the basis of any significant discussions.⁴¹ Also, the Foreign Ministers of the three Indo-China countries, at their Seventh Conference at Phnom Penh on 19-20 July 1983 proposed to the ASEAN countries to agree for a dialogue without preconditions to the restore normalcy in the region.⁴² The Foreign Ministers stressed the need for taking mutual steps to diffuse the tense situation on the Thai-Kampuchean border.

However, the ASEAN countries have interpreted the Non-Aligned Summit Resolution on South-East Asia as meaning only the withdrawal of Vietnamese troops from Kampuchea.⁴³ This, in itself, is not a correct interpretation, because the resolution called for the

41. n. 29, 1 July 1983.

42. n. 18, 22 July 1983.

43. n. 29, 1 July 1983.

withdrawal of the external powers' military presence from South East Asia, which has been a perpetual source of conflict.

The Vietnamese foreign minister, Nguyen Co Thach visited Bangkok on 8-9 June 1983, and held discussions with Thailand's Foreign Minister Sidhi Savetisila. Both countries underscored the necessity of an independent, neutral and non-aligned Kampuchea.⁴⁴ Mr Thach called for further negotiations on questions of peace and security in South-East Asia rather than negotiation on the future of Kampuchea alone.

The Foreign Ministers of Vietnam and Kampuchea concluded an agreement on 20 January 1983, regarding the definition of the Vietnam-Kampuchean border. The border was defined on the basis of the 1:100,000 scale map published by the geographic service of Indo-China in use before 1954.⁴⁵ Previously, an agreement was signed between the two countries on 7 July 1982, which defined their territorial waters and stated that their maritime frontiers would be delimited through future negotiations.⁴⁶

44. n.33, p. 32671.

45. Ibid, p 32672.

46. Ibid.

Apart from strengthening bilateral economic cooperation, the two Indo-Chinese countries have also called for the establishment of a new and equitable international economic order. They have sought to identify themselves with all developing countries fighting for peace, freedom and social progress.⁴⁷ They have also called for the cooperation of all working people and communist partymen in their struggle for peace and international cooperation.

During the last five years, the Vietnamese and Kampuchean party leaders have kept their options open and adopted new ways for dealing with the external threats which can suit their foreign policy, behaviour. During the late 1982 and early 1983, the Vietnamese leaders felt concerned over the prospect of a rapprochement between Moscow and Beijing. When in October 1982 Truong Chinh led a Vietnamese party delegation to Moscow, President Brezhnev avoided attacks on China and advised Vietnam to seek normalization of Sino-Vietnam relations. To this Truong Chinh responded with a bitter harangue on Beijing, pledging to continue

Samrin

47. n.56, p. 16 .

Vietnamese resistance to "Chinese expansionism and hegemonism".⁴⁸

China's extension of military aid to the Khmer Rouge faction in the Coalition Government, has further injured the relations of the Indo-Chinese countries with China. Singapore was also reported to have armed 1,000 guerillas led by Prince Norodom Sihanouk.⁴⁹ China's recent attack on Lang Son province in Vietnam's northern border on 6 April 1984 has also deteriorated the present situation.⁵⁰

The joint Vietnamese PRK operations have continued on the Thai-Kampuchean border with claims and counterclaims about the casualties and capture of bases being made by both sides. In an atmosphere marked with hostility and suspicion, the Indo-Chinese states find it difficult to proceed with any peace initiatives. Their latest move has been to woo Singapore, Indonesia and Malaysia for entering into a meaningful dialogue on the Kampuchean issue. These countries agreed with Mr Nguyen Huu Tho, the Chairman

48. Edmund McWilliams, "Vietnam in 1982: Onward into the Quagmire", *Asian Survey*, V, 23, No. 1, January 1983, p 69.

49. Asian Recorder, V. XXX, No. 13, 25-31, March 1984,

50. Paul Quinn, Judge, "IndoChina: Borderline Cases", FEER 21 June 1984, p. 26.

of the Vietnamese National Assembly, that any solution to the Kampuchean crisis will involve "political and military elimination of the Khmer Rouge".⁵¹ Clearly, the Vietnamese and the PRK leaders realize that any thaw in their relations with China might not be forthcoming, but it is possible to tap the lesser of their opponents among the ASEAN countries since Beijing will not be able to prevent their talks if the ASEAN countries agree to that.

The visits to China by the United States' President Ronald Reagan in June 1984, of the Thai supreme commander General Arthit Kamlarg-ek and the US Ambassador to the United Nations Jeanne Kirkpatrick in May 1984, have drawn sharp comments from Vietnamese and PRK leaders.⁵² The leaders also felt that Zhang Aiping's visit to the United States (which started on 11 June 1984) is a dangerous step in Sino-US military collaboration and will increase China's aggressive designs in South-East Asia. However, the Indo-Chinese leaders felt happy that China's current military pressure on their borders has prompted the Soviet

51. n. 16, 21 April 1984.

52. n. 50, p. 26.

Union to cancel the visit to Peking of their Deputy Prime Minister.⁵³

At present, both Vietnam and Kampuchea, who are in the process of national reconstruction, face fundamental foreign policy challenges. Whatever be the nature of the external threat to the two countries Vietnam's claim to establish a "special relationship" with Kampuchea remains at the Centre of its ideological and strategic thinking.⁵⁴ As is borne out by facts, this intimate relationship between the two countries has considerably furthered their socio-economic and political development.

The Vietnamese and the PRK leaders have welcomed the ASEAN initiative made in September 1983 calling upon Vietnam to get committed to a partial withdrawal of troops before holding discussions on Kampuchea.⁵⁵ But doubts remain about the ASEAN's intentions, since they continue to support the coalition government and Khmers rebels continue to operate from the Thai border. The role of China adds to the complexity of

53. Ibid .

54. Elliott, n. 37, p. 291.

55. n. 12, 23 September 1983.

the situation as it is still keen on teaching Vietnam some lessons. However, China has been a 'bad teacher' as experience shows. China's present strategy of activating the Pol Pot rebels by colluding with Thailand has also alienated some of the ASEAN countries, particularly Indonesia, which dislikes being associated with the Khmer Rouge.⁵⁶

The present military situation in Kampuchea does not provide better future prospects for the Coalition Government. The ASEAN countries are providing economic and military aid to the Son Sann and Sihanouk factions only. They do not favour a return of the Khmer Rouge to power but China is like to support the Khmer Rouge in order to hold their own in Kampuchea.⁵⁷

On procedural matters regarding the Kampuchean issue, the Vietnamese now, appear to be more flexible. They now believe in holding discussions with the ASEAN on the basis of the ASEAN proposals of September

56. n. 12, 18 April 1984.

57. Parimal Kumar Das, "Indo-China, ASEAN and Thailand: The Changing Perspectives since 1975", Problems of Non Alignment, Vol. 2, no. 3, September-October, 1984, p. 270.

1983 and the Indo-Chinese Foreign Ministers' proposal of 29 January 1984.⁵⁸ The Indo-Chinese Foreign Ministers had in their latest proposal agreed to a partial withdrawal of Vietnamese troops from Kampuchea provided the tension is diffused over China aiding the Khmer Rouge.

At present, the political situation in Kampuchea remains uncertain with each country trying for political solutions according to its own advantage. The Vietnamese Foreign Minister, Mr Thach, in a recent interview in November 1983, discussed five alternative solutions of the Kampuchean problem: (1) The present stalemate continues and there is no solution; (2) There was the possibility of a big war between China and Vietnam; (3) An overall settlement was concluded between ASEAN, Indo-China and China; (4) A settlement was arrived between Indo-China and ASEAN, without the participation of China; (5) Indo-China and China reached a settlement but ASEAN remained hostile.⁵⁹ The Foreign Minister warned the ASEAN countries that China was not interested in

58. Nayan Chanda, "Thach lacks appeal", FEER, 27 September 1984, p. 40.

59. Das, n. 57, p. 270.

finding a solution of the Kampuchean problem, but th
 he expressed the hope that due to internal reasons
 and having been involved in a war with Vietnam, China
 would not attempt another war with Vietnam.

Of late, two important elements have been
 manifested in the foreign policy of Vietnam which is
 also true of Kampuchea-determination and confidence.
 On being asked what was the most important lesson
 of Dien Bien Phu, General Hoang Van Thai, the present
 deputy Defence Minister of Vietnam replied, "Determina-
 tion. We won because we were determined. Now we are
 determined to build socialism".⁶⁰ This remark sums
 up the foreign policy behaviour of the Indo-Chinese
 countries for the future. It means that the Indo-
 Chinese leaders seek determination as essential for
 success and they have enough self-confidence in their
 approach to regional problems.

In 1983, there has been a great change in the
 attitude of the Vietnamese and Kampuchean leaders
 regarding the possible return of Prince Sihanouk and

60 Paul Quinn-Judge, "Now to win the peace", FEER
 24 May 1984, p. 30.

Son Sann to the Kampuchean politics. Hanoi leaders have been persuading Phnom Penh to show a greater flexibility to Prince Sihanouk.⁶¹ Such attempts may be due to their desire to weaken the coalition government and its links with the foreign powers but it may be also due to a recognition on their part that Sihanouk still has some followers in his country.⁶² However, the Kampuchean leaders have not found this idea fully acceptable. While referring to the withdrawal of Vietnamese troops, the Foreign Minister of the Democratic Republic of Kampuchea (DRK) said, "we are not going to compromise on our sovereignty. It is a matter between us and the Vietnamese."⁶³ Thus, although the ASEAN countries, too, favour a reconciliation between the Heng Samrin Government and the Son Sann - Sihanouk combine, the prospects of such a reconciliation do not seem to be very bright at present.

The ASEAN countries have recently taken a changed stand on the Kampuchean issue. In a statement issued by the Foreign Minister of ASEAN on Kampuchea ~~on~~ 21

61. David Jenkins. "The long road back", FEER, 29 November 1984, p. 31.

62. Ibid.

63. n. 57, p. 273.

September 1983, the Foreign Ministers did not refer to Vietnam or condemn its action. The statement called for "the total withdrawal of foreign forces" and asked Vietnam "to join them in intensifying efforts to achieve a just solution for Kampuchea".⁶⁴ The statement also expressed the ASEAN leaders' willingness to consult all the concerned parties regarding taking possible initial steps for an effective solution of the Kampuchean problem.

The resumption of Sino-Soviet negotiations and China's open backing of the Khmer rebels continue to pose problems for the Indo-Chinese leaders. Peking continues to insist that Vietnam's stand in Indo-China must undergo change before any effective dialogue can be initiated.⁶⁵ Over this issue the Vietnamese leaders have made their intentions clear on several occasions that they would favour discussions on Kampuchea on a more broad-based basis. As Mr Nguyen Huu Tho, Chairman of Vietnam National Assembly stated in Paris on 19 April 1984, "We are ready for talks and the trend

64. Ibid. p. 279.

65. Jonathan Luxmoore, "The Kampuchean Deadlock" Contemporary Review. V. 244, no. 1416, January 1984 p. 18.

is towards talks".⁶⁶ Thus the Vietnamese leaders have made a shift from their earlier insistence on having a regional conference on Kampuchea. But their basic promise remains that the removal of all external powers' military threat to Kampuchea is the only guarantee for ensuring peace and stability in Indo-China.

66. "Indo-China - A Brave Stand at Amphil", as reported in Asiaweek, 4 May 1984, p. 15.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

The present stalemate over Kampuchea does not offer the prospect of a thaw in the relations of the Indo-Chinese countries with the ASEAN states. The role of the external powers like China and the United States, makes the situation more complicated. But a solution can be found by holding a conference attended by the representatives of the Indo-China countries, the ASEAN states and countries like France, the United States, the Soviet Union, India and China. Such a conference may discuss the modalities for the withdrawal of external military forces from Kampuchea and the future political set-up for the country. However, no solution is possible without breaking the nexus between China, the Khmer Rouge and Thailand. If the problem persists, there will be a greater dependence of the Khmer Rouge on China and China's greater involvement in Thailand.

Kampuchea has been so much affected by the events of the last nine years that it cannot undergo rapid socio-economic transformation unless given international assistance. Some assistance has been provided by the United Nation's agencies like the

UNICEF, UNESCO etc., but it is insufficient to meet the country's requirements. The bulk of assistance has come from Vietnam and the Soviet Union. Thus if the PRK leaders nowadays claim relatively better living standards, development of foreign trade, higher literacy rate among the people, and the growth of more industrial enterprises, then it is in no small measure due to the economic and technical collaboration between Vietnam and Kampuchea.

Suggestions like the introduction of a peace-keeping force in Kampuchea after the complete withdrawal of Vietnamese troops have been rejected by the PRK leaders. The PRK leaders believe that after the withdrawal of Vietnamese forces, the PRK troops will be in a position to safeguard national security. But as things stand at present, there is little prospect of any changing political situation, unless some fresh initiative is taken from the side of ASEAN countries and China, or by the Indo-Chinese countries. It is the Beijing-Bangkok-Washington axis which concerns the Indo-Chinese countries the most, and they have made it clear that external powers will not have any say in arriving at a future political settlement for Kampuchea.

The ASEAN countries have as much to gain from the cessation of hostilities in Indo-China as Vietnam itself. They have been made to provide asylum to the Indo-Chinese refugees, even though temporarily. They have been indulging in wasteful expenditure in arming the CGDKs guerrillas, their trade links have also been disrupted as a result of the frequent clashes on the Thai-Kampuchean border. Not surprisingly, therefore, Malaysia and Indonesia have been the foremost in demanding that steps be taken towards the resolution of the conflict. But no serious attempt can be made towards resolving the Kampuchean problem without taking into account the implications of a continued sino-Vietnamese hostility. These issues are interrelated. If the Chinese can be prevented from extending their support to the Khmer Rouge in Kampuchea via Thailand, then the Vietnamese will be left with a free hand to settle their score with China on their northern border.

The Vietnamese are keen to maintain their friendly ties with Laos and Kampuchea which is essential for their country's strategic defence. They are concerned about the fact that due to Vietnam's long

northern border with China and geographical proximity to Kampuchea on the South West, China may make attempts to divide the country. As a matter of fact, the pattern of economic development in north Vietnam and South Vietnam has been uneven due to their different political set-up till 1975. It is for these reasons that the Vietnamese need a stable political regime in Kampuchea and they can ill-afford an expanding Chinese influence in Kampuchea, either directly or through proxy.

Moreover, the Vietnamese want to retain the ideological affinity with the Heng Samrin regime as together they will be in a better position to safeguard the unity of the Indo-China bloc against any external threat. They do not want that the popular base of the Heng Samrin Government be weakened lest the Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea gets strengthened, thereby weakening the Communist movement in Kampuchea. Hanoi leaders realise that the presence of a hostile power in Kampuchea can endanger the security of Vietnam and make Hanoi vulnerable to attacks on its northern and south-western borders. It is for these reasons that the Vietnamese

want to defend the PRK regime at all costs and have ruled out the possibility of a complete troops' pull out unless Beijing and its ASEAN allies stop aiding the Coalition government.

Hanoi's diplomacy has been successful in so far as it has succeeded in convincing Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines that no solution to the Kampuchean crisis can be forthcoming unless the threat posed by the Khmer Rouge is eliminated. This was a statement made by Mr Nguyen Huu Tho, President of Vietnam's National Assembly, in Paris on 19 April 1984.¹ It has also been stated, that the coalition government has developed intra-factional tensions due to the lack of funds being provided to the non-communist factions and Chinese assistance being primarily directed towards the Khmer Rouge.² It was also reported in the press, that in the first half of July 1984, the Khmer Rouge forces launched some attacks on the National Sihanoukist Army (ANS) men in the province of Siem Reap and forced them to provide

1. Asiaweek, 4 May 1984.
2. Parimal Kumar Das, "Thai Foreign Policy", Hindustan Times, 28 September 1984.

the Khmer Rouge the captured Vietnamese prisoners and arms. These incidents made Sihanouk renew his offer to resign as the President of the Coalition Government. These incidents increased the tensions among the three factions of the CGDK and created serious doubts in Bangkok and the ASEAN circles about the efficient functioning of the coalition.

At a meeting held on 9 June 1983 between the Foreign Ministers of Vietnam and Thailand, the two countries agreed to reduce tensions on their borders, and to create a climate of mutual trust. However, with Thailand providing shelter to the Khmer guerrillas, and events, like Thailand's supreme commander general Arthit Kamland-ek's visit to Beijing in May 1984, have enraged the Vietnamese leaders.

The success achieved by the ASEAN countries in getting the credentials of Democratic Kampuchea (DK) government accepted at the United Nations in 1982 and its (DK) representation in several international forums, have raised doubts in Indo-China about the ASEAN's peaceful intentions. Such tactics have only helped Vietnam to consolidate its position in Indo-China.

All these years the PRK regime has won a high level of popular acceptance because of the changes it introduced in a decadent political system, the significant social and cultural freedom it permitted, and the improvement cultural freedom it permitted, and the improvement it brought about in the economic life of the country. The Heng Samrin government, in fact, made most of the palpable contrast between the Pol Pot oeruid abd tthe post 1979 period. They made life normal in Kampuchea and made the Kampuchean freer than ever before. In Phnom Penh military presence is less pronounced now than it was two and a half years ago. The Vietnamese troops appear to have been accepted by the Khmer people as necessary for safeguarding them against Pol Pot's return. The Vietnamese advisers are also there to help them build up their industries and infrastructure. In these six years the Khmer society and economy have progressed in a big way, no doubt, with the assistance and cooperation of Vietnam.

In Kampuchea the task of national reconstruction is not yet over. Challenges remain at all levels with war going on at the Thai-Kampuchean borders and insurgencies continuing within the country to overthrow the present government. The efforts of the United Nations by passing resolutions calling for the withdrawal of foreign troops from Kampuchea (since 1979) has had little effect as Vietnam has refused to withdraw its troops so long as the Chinese threat remains. The seventh non-Aligned Summit Resolution (March 1983) calling for the withdrawal of all Military troops from South-East Asia, too, had little impact as it was subjected to varying interpretation by the contending nations. Thus, the prospects of an immediate political settlement of the Kampuchean issue appear bleak unless some major concession is made by both or one of the two warring fronts.

The consequences of war hunger, poverty, disease, military operations and flight towards Thailand of many Khmer refugees had left Kampuchea crippled and debilitated in 1979. It, therefore, could not have survived without Vietnam's help and supervision.

The Vietnamese, in turn, have realised the long-term benefits of their alliance with Kampuchea, surrounded by hostile countries like Thailand and their main enemy China on their borders, the Vietnamese feel that the stability of the PRK regime will ensure peace and prosperity in the Indo-China region and provide them enough strength to meet any external aggression. Thus the fact remains that these two countries need the support of each other, both from the political and support of each other, both from the political and strategic point of view and for their existence as independent and developing nations. It is hoped, therefore, that with the determination and strong will of their people, the two nations can overcome their present problems and move ahead towards progress.

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