

**DIPLOMATIC INITIATIVES FOR THE SETTLEMENT  
OF CONFLICT IN KAMAPUCHEA**

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PREFACE

The present dissertation strives to study and assess the diplomatic initiatives for the settlement of conflict in Kampuchea (Cambodia). The conflict in Cambodia has been a critical flash point in South East Asia. For almost two decades the problem has been rendered complex by the barbaric policies of Khmer Rouge, the Vietnamese military intervention and the diversity of responses to the emerging situation by regional and major powers.

At the same time the Kampuchean case provides a fascinating example of crisis management through a process of multi tired International negotiations. The ASEAN, The UN have played a constructive role in the settlement of the problem. The crystallisation of different proposals their linkages and the interplay between varying perceptions and reactions promises to provide valuable insights in to diplomatic craft.

The study is divided into three parts. The Introductory sections provides a historical overview and the context of various diplomatic efforts. The second chapter seeks to explore the perceptions and reactions of major parties to the Cambodian crisis. The next chapter attempts to trace the course of negotiations and analyses different diplomatic initiatives. Finally the conclusions provides not only the summary but some speculation regarding the future. It may be added that the effort in the essay has been to deal with the subject thematically and not chronologically.

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## INTRODUCTION

### Profile

The People's Republic of Cambodia is a Republic formerly called the Khmer Republic, and before that Cambodia or Kampuchea. Most of the land territory is divided between mountain ranges and low-lying alluvial plains. Set above the Gulf of Thailand, the country is covered on three sides by mountains, the fourth side in the East is bordered by the Mekong river. The Eastern side is bounded by the Annam Cordillera mountains. To the north and north west Cambodia shares with Thailand and the ranges of the Dangrek. To the south and south west lie the Cardamom and Elephant ranges. The maxim altitude is at Phnom Aural which is elevated to 1742 meters above sea level. The Mekong river forms an important feature. It extends 4300 kilometers from its source in Eastern Tibet to its outlet in the South China sea. The lake of Tonle Sap which lies to the North West of Phnom Penh acts as a natural reservoir of the river is located in South East Asia which lies in the South West part of the Indochinese peninsula. Along with Laos and Vietnam this region forms what was formerly known as Indochina.

The country is small comprising of a land area of about 71000 square kilometers. The capital city is Phnom Penh. In the west Cambodia is bounded by Thailand, in the North by Thailand and Laos, in the East by Vietnam and in the South by the Gulf of Thailand. In terms of its geography, Indochina

occupies a key position since it lies in the area between India and China. Apart from this it enjoys a historical significance since it was influenced both by the Chinese and the Indian culture. The term Indochina has a dual importance. Throughout history the region of Indochina has received numerous enriching influences from both directions but it has also been the object of difficult opposing pressures and contradictions.<sup>1</sup> Vietnam and Laos, which formed the Northern regions had been under the suzerainty of the Chinese for many centuries and were shaped as a part of the cultural sphere of China. Cambodia was culturally associated to Indian influences which was a factor of the religious traditions of Theravada Buddhism. Cambodia has a population estimated to be around 6828,000 (1981).<sup>2</sup>

Cambodia is an underpopulated state with an underdeveloped economy based on agrarian production.

The Khmer-people had a great kingdom from the ninth to the fifteenth century, and part of it survived until 1863, when the French took over the area. After Japanese occupation during World War II. Cambodia, as it was then called, became independent in 1953.

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1. Choi Hang Keong, " Indochina : The Continuing Tragedy", Asian Exchange Quarterly Bulletin for the Asian Regional Exchange for New Alternatives, (Hong Kong, June 1987), pp. 77-127.
  2. Latest approximate data available due to disturbed conditions in the country.

Cambodia enjoys moderate climates with heavy rain fall. Temperatures vary between 24<sup>o</sup>c and 35<sup>o</sup>c in the months of January and April respectively. The climate is divided in to a wet season and dry season. From mid May to early October there are heavy monsoons with high humidity, these are due to South West monsoons. Annual rainfall is heavy ranging between 500 centimeters on the sea ward slopes and about 140 centimeters in the central low lands. There is rich vegetation consisting of wooded lands or rainforests in the North and North West. A large animal life consisting of deer , buffalo, monkeys, tigers, elephants etc are found. Sugarcane, rubber, banana and bamboo are found in Cambodia. Rice too forms an important food crop both for consumption and export.

Its population is one of the smallest in the world and is made up of diverse peoples. The dominant group consists of the Khmer or the ethnic Cambodians who form eighty to ninety percent of the population, physically they resemble the mongoloid race. They are small built and dark - skinned with stockier build. They speak the Khmer language and follow Theravada Buddhism. They are basically an agrarian community comprised of farmers, fishermen and craftsmen. Of the non-Khmer population, the Chinese are most important. They live in isolation and generally preserved their own laws and traditions. They are basically a commercial people concentrated in the urban centres. The Vietnamese are also important. They settled in Cambodia in the 19th century. Today they



reside in the eastern provinces, the minority group of the Chams are significant, they are the remnants of the Champa Empire and are a people of Malayo - Polynesian stock, predominantly living in the rubber growing regions of the North West. They are usually Muslims or Hindus. Other smaller tribes are those of the Stieng, Monong, Bahnar, Pear, Somre and Saoch living in isolated areas.

The tradition, culture and education was a heritage of Indian influence. Education was non-secular and was the preserve of the Buddhist church. Under the French colonial rule education was diversified. After 1953 Sihanouk emphasised the need for developing the educational system. The literacy rate rose to about fifty five percent in the 1960's the cultural influences were basically Indian as seen in the remains of the Angkor empire. However, it is evident that indigenous themes have been utilised. This has given it a unique glory and creativity. The places and temples of Angkor are proof to this cultural grandeur of Cambodia. After the 15th century Buddhism became prominent and the Buddhist monastries and shrines speak of the rich culture. The French influences also came to Cambodia. Despite the Transition to socialism.

The economy of Cambodia has remained almost untouched through the development of history. It is predominantly an agrarian economy with rich production of rice and rubber.

Mineral resources were limited but oil reserves have been found off the coast. Under Sihanouk the small Industries developed. Textiles, food processing and wood products began to emerge. In the transition to socialism several changes took place.

CHAPTER - I

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Struggle for independence dominated the political activities in South and South East Asia in the first half of the present century. The western countries succeeded in colonizing countries of Asia and Africa in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth century. The economic interests were served by transforming the economics of these countries. Even the cultures of these countries was sought to be transformed. Thus in the earlier part of the Twentieth century the desire for independence became strong and spread to countries of Asia and Africa. With the end of the second world war a new phase of development began.

These newly independent nations sought to establish their separate identity and found it in the Non-Aligned Movement. Among the countries of the Third World, South East Asia is different in the sense that it was occupied by the Japanese during the Second World War. The defeat of Axis powers and surrender of Japan saw the return of the colonial powers to South East Asia.

Unlike the Americans and the British the French were more reluctant to give independence to Indo China. It finally got its independence only to enter an era of instability which affected not only the people of Cambodia but also the region and the world. The problems which have

developed in Cambodia disrupted the political process in the country and occurred at the cost of great suffering to the people. Its problems relate not only to the nation itself but the region as a whole and its significance in terms of global politics. The region has been adversely affected by superpower rivalry.

Cambodia had a rich heritage and tradition in the past. From the 9th century to the 15th century the Angkor - dynasty had ruled this land and their golden age had encompassed a vast territory which extended beyond the regions of present day Cambodia to areas of Laos Vietnam, Thailand and Even Burma.<sup>3</sup> Under the " Nam - Tien,"<sup>4</sup> programme by Vietnam in the 16th century which meant a march to the South, there was a slow and steady acquisition of territory. At the same time the encroachment of the Cambodian territory on the western boundary by Thailand also took place. By the time the French made Cambodia a protectorate in 1864, the region had already been reduced and divided by both Vietnam and Thailand.<sup>5</sup> In 1864 it became a part of the Indochinese Federation. The presence of vast quantities of rubber made the area commercially

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3. Hall DGE, A History of South East Asia, (London : Macmillan Education Ltd., 1985)
  4. ChoiHang Keong, " Indochina : The Continuing Tragedy", Asian Exchange Quarterly Bulletin for the Asian Regional Exchange for New Alternatives, (Hong Kong, June 1987), PP.92.
  5. George Mc Turran Kohin, (Ed.), Government and Politics of South East Asia, (New York, 1984), P. 602.

important and was exploited by the French after the first world war.

The Japanese sought to establish a co-prosperity sphere in South East Asia during the second world war and supported the liberation movement in this region and declared their independence. In Cambodia, prince Norodom Sihanouk was made the head of the state. At this time there was the development of a political group called the Khmer Issaraks which formed the base for the anti-French activities. The French realising that their time in Indo china would come to an end very soon, were prepared to give independence. On 9th November 1953, the power in Cambodia was handed over to Prince Norodom Sihanouk.<sup>6</sup> By 1959, the whole of Indochina had become independent. The Geneva accord made Cambodia independent and neutral.

To check Communist expansion in South East Asia and to bring the states of the region under an alliance with the United States, Britain and France, the South East Asia Treaty Organisation (SEATO) was established with twin objective to isolate the Soviet Union in South East Asia and to work against the Leftist revolutionary movements with in South East Asia and prevent Chinese and North Vietnamese ambitions over this region. USA, UK, France, Thailand, the Philippines, Pakistan, Australia and Newzealand signed the SEATO.

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6. Kishore Mahbabani, "Kampuchean problem: A South East Asian perception", Foreign Affairs, (vol. 62(2), winter 83/84), PP. 407-425.

The United States wanted the Indochinese states to join the SEATO but this did not materialize. Cambodia under Sihanouk established relations with the United States by January 1955. It was willing to receive aid both for development and arms. It also established relations with China and the Soviet Union by the end of 1955. From 1957 onwards the United States started helping the Rightist group, Khmerserei which opposed Sihanouk as they felt that Sihanouk was leaning towards the Soviet Union and China, this led to deterioration of relations between Cambodia and the United States in May 1965, it ended its diplomatic ties with the United States. This also led to the end of flow of American aid. Sihanouk made changes in the economic policy and included the Left leaders in the cabinet to help solve the economic problem of the Nation.

By 1969, Sihanouk's position had deteriorated the government reestablished relations with USA. Though the Rightists gained an upper hand in Cambodia, in external relations it upheld the policy of neutrality. The policy made it difficult for Cambodia to help America in its war against North Vietnam. Matters came to a head in March 1970 when the Lon Nol coup overthrew Sihanouk. Sihanouk was deposed on the 18th of March 1970. The kingdom of Cambodia became the Khmer Republic.<sup>7</sup>

#### Khmer Republic

With the coming to power of the Lon Nol regime the

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7. Milton Osborne, Politics and Power in Cambodia: The Sihanouk year, (Camberwell, 1973), P. 84-85.

Vietnam war extended to Cambodia. This was achieved by the close alliance which the Lon Nol government had with the United States, under the leadership of Lon Nol the country faced two major crises. From the military point of view the war intensified. Second the impact of the war could be seen on the ravages of the economy. The diversion of finances to meet the military needs of the nation resulted in deterioration of the economic condition. At that time, Prince Sihanouk, who was in exile in Peking, supported the Left forces who were resisting the Right government in Cambodia. The people of Cambodia started helping the resistance movement and all the supporters of Sihanouk joined hands and formed an alliance called the National United Front of Cambodia (FUNK). The Khmer Rouge gradually gained an upperhand in the control of the resistance groups and became supreme.

The American policy against North Vietnam and its attempt at containment of Communism was resented by the people of Laos and Cambodia. This led to the popularity of forces opposing the United States in Indochina. Thus despite its inferiority in terms of the United States fighting strength, the Viekong, the Khmer Rouge and Pathet Lao managed to liberate and establish communist regimes in Saigon on 30th April, 1975, in PhnomPenh on 7th April, 1975 and in Vietiane on 2nd December 1975. This brought about an end to the second IndoChina war.

Democratic Kampuchea: 1975 - 1979

The end of second Indochina war effected the region in many ways, death of soldiers and civilians, about forty percent of the population were transferred or migrated to other places, and the economy of Kampuchea was almost completely destroyed. Indiscriminate bombing by the US had destroyed the rural lands. The aid from the United States also declined and the stoppage of rice and food stuffs brought about the threat of famine.

The Khmer Rouge came to power on April 17th, 1975 and Cambodia officially become democratic Kampuchea,<sup>8</sup> thus the effective power in Cambodia had passed from Sihanouk to the Khmer Rouge controlled by Pol Pot. Sihanouk was placed under house arrest. The leadership remained in the hands of the commanders of the army. Pol Pot was responsible for the party's military operations assisted by Nuon Chea who commanded the liberation army. Thus under the communist cloak the real power remained with the military leaders. The inhuman living conditions in Kampuchea during the period when Pol Pot was in power clearly indicate that it was an era of barbarism. In an attempt at national rehabilitation and progress, the regime carried out several atrocities which stand proof of its commitment to the inhumane. It carried out

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8. William Shaweross, "Burial of Cambodia", Development, (vol. 3 1984), P.16.



a near total evacuation of the cities, a process of collectivisation of lands and rigid control of the human factors both at the physical and the psychological levels. In the words of Senator Mc Govern, " The Khmer Rouge made the Nazis look very tame by comparison"<sup>9</sup>. During Democratic Kampuchea almost the entire population lived on the collective farms which were controlled by the polpot loyalists. The people were assembled into the cooperatives. The living conditions in the collectives were appalling. Life was disciplined with hard labour. There was segregation of men and women and often children were separated from their parents. All forms of education was suspended and the people were kept ignorant of the happening. The most tragic aspect of this period is the number of killings which took place. It has been suggested that about two million out of a population of seven million perished.

The slightest signs of disloyalty was punishable with death. The overcrowding and lack of food and medicines caused malnutrition and epidemics to spread. It is ironic that in the name of the communist ideology which aims at bringing about the greatest happiness of the greatest number, the worst of human sufferings were perpetuated on the people of Kampuchea. The people had grown tired and weary of the Khmer Rouge atrocities in the earlier years of 1975 to 1978. The agony

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9. Paul Schwartz, " Cambodia in crisis : Showcross the Quality of mercy", Texas International Law Journal, (vol - 21 (3) summer 1986), P.559.

and suffering of the human beings could not be forgotten and in such a situation there was the need for some immediate social change. Thus the internal situation provided the foundation for the Vietnamese occupation of Kampuchea in January 1979.<sup>10</sup> The social degeneration with in Kampuchea afforded the right opportunity for the changes which were to take place. Moreover, the external policy and the strain in relations with Vietnam formed a complex problem. Vietnam repeatedly asked for negotiations of border issues, withdrawal of troops and mutual exchange of territory. These were rejected by the Khmer Rouge. On the 2nd of December 1978 the anti - Pol Pot group with in Vietnam formed the Kampuchean National United Front for National Salvation (KNUFNS). On 25th December 1978, the KNUFNS assisted by Vietnamese troops entered Kampuchea. On 7th January 1979, the troops captured Phnom Penh. The occupation of Phnom Penh saw the exist of the Pol Pot group. Under the supervision of the Vietnamese troops. Heng Samrin was appointed as the Head of state. The KNUFNS and the People's Revolutionary Council took charge. The period that followed came to be known as the era of the Peoples Republic of Kampuchea.<sup>11</sup>

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10. See Justus M. Van Der Kroef, " Cambodian - Vietnamese war; Some Origins and Implications," Asia Quarterly, 1979.

11. Katheleen Gough, " Rebellion and Revolution in Kampuchea", New World Review, (Jan-Feb. 1985), P.13.

Vietnamese Intervention

KNUFNS declared that its goal was to overthrow the PolPot government and see to the establishment of a peoples democratic regime, with an objective to make Kampuchea a peaceful independent, neutral and non-aligned country advancing towards socialism. The front also made some general promises like it promised to put an end to the extreme conditions such as collective labour, collective meals and forced marriages. It guaranteed certain rights to the people such as freedom of religion, unification of families and the right to return to former homes. It also aimed at establishing friendly relations between Kampuchea and Vietnam. As early as in February 1979, a treaty of friendship and cooperation was signed between the two and they became allies.<sup>12</sup> On 25th December 1978, a Vietnamese force of about 120,000 men invaded Kampuchea.

It appears that the Vietnamese invasion of Kampuchea was the product of two significant factors. First, the internal situation of the country during the years 1975 to 1979 proved to be socially degenerating. Second the foreign policy of the Pol Pot group was directed against Vietnam, Vietnam had stressed on the need for establishing a special relationship with the other two nations of Indochina. The PolPot government felt that the intention of Vietnam was to have control over

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12. Kimmo Kiljunen, " Power politics and the Tragedy of Kampuchea during the Seventies," Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars, (vol. 17 (2); April - June 1985), P.52.

Cambodia. Vietnam, however, tried to justify its military invasion of Cambodia in terms of self defence. Vietnam felt that the presence of a hostile regime in Cambodia backed by Chinese support could be a total threat to its national security interests, which had been threatened in the past. Thus with regard to its own self interest and national security, Vietnam wanted its two smaller neighbours to act as a buffer between China and itself. Vietnamese also tried to justify their move on humanitarian ground. Cambodia under the Khmer Rouge proved to be an ideal situation for humanitarian intervention. It can be rightly said that the large scale killings of the Khmer Rouge made them lose their legitimacy in governing Cambodia. Vietnamese motives for invasion do not seem to be predominantly humanitarian. Vietnam had border clashes with Cambodia and the need to make territorial gains persisted. Moreover Pol Pot's hostility towards the Socialist Republic of Vietnam caused the latter to work towards the toppling of the Pol Pot government. Thus recognising the unpopularity of the Khmer Rouge, Vietnam intervened and set up the puppet regime of the KNUFNS which had taken shape under Vietnamese guidance.

The Vietnamese intervention was not limited the presence of military troops in Cambodia continued after the overthrow of Pol Pot and even a decade after the intervention several troops remained in Cambodia. Though Vietnam intervened to stop the Human Rights violations in large scale, in Cambodia

under their occupation according the Amnesty International sporadic cases of Human Rights violation have been noticed. Thus capitalizing on the popular discontent with the Khmer Rouge regime, the Vietnamese employed an invasion force of more than 120,000 which took rapid control of Cambodia. It utilized a handful of Kampuchians who acted as the frontmen and formed the Vietnam backed government of Heng Samrin. The Vietnamese army, rather than giving Cambodia a chance to choose their own leader's, as the United Nations was demanding installed a regime trained and chosen by the Hanoi Politburo.<sup>13</sup> It is obvious that Vietnam's intention in 1979, was the creation of a Cambodia whose socio-economic and politico - administrative structure resembled that of its own. Thus it tried to vest the authority in the hands of the veterans who were moulded in the Vietnamese ideology. The Vietnamese ambitions of setting up a neo-colonial role in Kampuchea could not materialise all together because the veterans were too few in number and had been so alienated from the country that they alone could not govern the chaotic situation in which Cambodia found it self.

Vietnamese presence in the administrative structure was therefore considered necessary atleast at the district and subdistrict level. Thus the Vietnamese had an important role to play in the early years of the occupation.

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13. Jai Bhagwan, "Strategic Factors : Present Government in Control", World Focus, (vol. 9(6) June. 1988), P. 17.

It is estimated that at the height of the Vietnamese occupation there were 200,000 to 220,000 troops within Kampuchea. Top levels of administration had a Vietnamese stronghold. During the initial phase of Vietnamese occupation, that is, 1979 to 1980, the administration was greatly dependent on the Vietnamese resources. When educated Khmers were found they were directly recruited. In certain positions inefficiency and incompetence was evident. However the job had to teach the worker and slowly the Vietnamese participation decreased and in 1982 it was only half the level of 1979.<sup>14</sup>

Cambodia under Heng Samrin

The year 1979 saw the end of an era in Cambodian history. The social experiment of the PolPot group ended and the future of Cambodia fell to the hands of the Vietnamese backed government of the Peoples Republic of Kampuchea. The transition which immediately occurred in Kampuchea resulted in a break with the old system and the creation of a new one which at first remained disorganised. The collective farm totally fell apart and the extreme repressive measures were abolished. One of the primary responses to the end of the Democratic Kampuchea Regime was the movement of the population. The break down of the collective farms in which almost the total population was concentrated led to the massive movement of people. It is estimated that half the population moved in the

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14. Choi Heng Keong, "Indochina : The continuing tragedy", Asian Exchange Quarterly Bulletin for the Asian Regional Exchange for New Alternatives, (Hong Kong, June 1987), pp. 77.

year 1979. Several people fearing the battles fled from the country to neighbouring Thailand.

One of the most significant aspect of Vietnames reconstruction in Kampuchea was the restoration of the nations economy. The basic aim of the new government in Cambodia was the restoration of the agricultural self sufficiency which Cambodia had enjoyed in the early 1970's. Not only had the nation been self sufficient it had also been a large exporter of rice. By 1982, the country's needs in terms of food had almost been met.

There was lack of means of production, scarcity of draft animals and machine tools for agricultural requirements were insufficient. The irrigation system was primitive and did not meet the actual agricultural requirements. Another Industry which had faced total collapse was the fishing Industry.

In 1984 both floods and droughts caused the government to issue an emergency request of 265,000 tonnes of rice. Thus once again international aid played an important role in solving the food shortage.

One of the important results of the Vietnamese occupation was the fundamental changes which occurred in the approach to agricultural production. The collective farms had been broken up. Though the Heng Samrin government aimed at the establishment of a socialised agricultural production, it adopted policies and measures which were more liberal and practical.

Despite the success of the new government with regard to the agricultural production and establishment of a revived system of rural economy, the other sectors of the economy remained under developed. There had been almost total halt of Industry under the Pol Pot regime. Under the new government efforts were made to improve the infrastructure like telecommunications, telex, roads etc. Cambodia also started receiving machinery, equipments and spare parts from socialist countries.

However despite the measures taken to improve the economic conditions within Cambodia much success could not be recorded. By the end of 1987, the United Nations put Cambodia per capita gross domestic production only at eighty dollars. Lacking investment capital and technology, Cambodia's economy remained stagnant and the country one of the world's poorest.<sup>15</sup> Thus despite the little progress made in terms of the economic development, the nation continued to receive aid from other countries. Due to political reasons the aid received from the western countries was only in the form of emergency relief. The United States policy was against the Vietnamese occupation. Hence it did not approve of aid for rehabilitation and development projects under a Vietnam occupied Cambodia. The People's Republic of Kampuchea was also isolated from the aid facilities of the UN and its various

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15. Nayan Chanda, a "Cambodia in 1987 : Sihanonk on Centre Stage", Asian Survey c 28 (1), Jan 1988, pp. 105-115.



agencies. This is because the PRK was not recognised by the UN. In the above circumstances the aid for rehabilitation and development has come from the Soviets, Vietnam and other socialist countries.

Other than bringing about changes in the country's economy the Peoples Republic of Kampuchea also witnessed reconstruction in the social and educational policies, the development of the educational system had to be started from scratch. Now the rate of literacy stands at 48 per cent.

Several institutes had been established with the view of specializing in an individual field. The Soviet Union had financed the starting of an institute of technology and an institute of agriculture in Phnom Penh. Several Cambodian students have received scholarship to Universities in Socialist countries.

In spite of the threat to the governments existence and its dependence up on Vietnamese support, its policies have been relatively lax and adaptable to the circumstances. Though the constitutional goal is progress towards socialism, the economic and social policies are not in the nature of a Socialist pattern. The country which had suffered from Pol Pot's Socialist experiment was vary of the out comes of any measure of state control. There was not much evidence of the governments involvement in brutality or massacre. However no harsh policies were clearly visible though some Khmer Rouge members had been victimised. Therefore the legitimacy of the Heng

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Samrin government is mainly based on the repulsiveness of the former Khmer Rouge government than on the policies which it had offered.

Refugee Problem & the Opposition Movement.

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While the Vietnamese occupation of Kampuchea saw partial success in terms of the end of Pol Pots rule and a restoration of the economic and social life, it had certain repercussions. Two major problems have emerged as a result of the Vietnamese occupation of Kampuchea. The first is with regard to the plight of the people. This had resulted in the growing number of refugees from Cambodia who have sought shelter in other neighbouring countries. The second problem arose from the establishment of the People's Republic of Kampuchea under Heng Samrin. Since 1979 recognition of Cambodia in the international scenario has been a question of the validity of the credentials of the Pol Pot government which are challenged by the Vietnam backed Heng Samrin government. This struggle has led to the emergence of a very strong opposition movement against the PRK. The credibility of the opposing parties has been questioned both within the nation and its representative right within the forum of the United Nations.

The years following the Vietnamese occupation saw the rapid movement of people. The breakdown of the social system and the right of the movement given to the Cambodian people culminated in an exodus of refugees in the neighbouring



state of Thailand. In March and April 1979, the first of the Kampuchean refugees started crossing in to Thailand. By June that year almost 17,000 refugees were numbered with the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR). It was estimated that another 40,000 were present in the border regions of Thailand and Kampuchea. The 1979 influx had been quite extensive and thus the Thai's refused to support these groups.

In October 1979, the Thai government changed its policy and it opened up its borders. International aid organizations began activities to help the refugees of the Khmer Rouge. Some of the important centres were Khao I Dang, Kamput, Mairut and Sakaeo which remained under the control of the UNHCR of these the largest was Khao I Dang which at its greatest number housed about 130,000 refugees. In January 1980, Thailand closed its borders and the refugees were placed along the of border in various camps. Since the Vietnamese occupation of Cambodia these border camps had become the site for conflict among the various political and military groups which & fought for control over these regions.

The aim of Thailand in encouraging the settlement of the refugees along the border is to create a pseudo buffer zone in between Vietnam occupied Cambodia and itself. By 1986, the fate of the 240,000 refugees who lived in the camps along the Thai border and the remaining 25,000 in the Khao - I - Dang centre remained uncertain.

There are three main opposition groups the Khmer Rouge, the KPNLF and Prince Sihanouk's Moulinaka movement. All three opposition movements remained weak and existed only on the supplies provided through international support. The Khmer Rouge received support from China, the KPNLF received supplies from both Thailand and USA while Prince Sihanouk's Moulinaka movement received support from certain non-aligned nations and military aid from China. In the summer of 1982, under pressure from ASEAN, USA, and China, the three movements together formed the coalition government.<sup>16</sup> This came to be called the Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea (CGDK). Sihanouk became the president, Son Sann the Prime Minister and Kieu Samphan the Vice-President for Foreign Affairs of CGDK.<sup>17</sup> Despite the attempt at solidarity the three groups were not very compatible and only the presence of the Phnom Penh government and International pressure had brought them together.

The formation of the coalition Governments of Democratic Kampuchea has not, in any way, helped in arriving at a solution to the crisis in Kampuchea. What has become evident is the underlying interests of various global powers which have further pushed away the possibility of a settlement.

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16. Henrich Bechtoldt, "Cambodia and Afghanistan before the United Nations", Aussen Politik, (vol. 36(3) 1985), p.305.

17. Craig Etcheson, "Civilwar and Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea", Third World Quarterly, (vol.9(1), January. 1987), P. 199.

The Vietnamese intervention gave the crisis a unique dimension which resulted in the development of a new kind of hostility. It brought to light the underlying forces of the Cold War in South East Asia and divided the region in to hostile camps.

Despite the Vietnam 's efforts to justify its invasion on the basis of humanitarian motives, its claims cannot be accepted. Its desire to assert its superiority in terms of strength in Indochina was the main purpose. Vietnam's desire to form an alliance comprising of Vietnam Laos and Cambodia, in the future was another factor which influenced Vietnam to intervene in Cambodia. The initial responses to the Vietnamese invasion were that of relief. It was their presence which ended the hated rule of Pol Pot and in an attempt to create goodwill the initial policies of Vietnamese backed Heng Samrin were concilliatory a great deal of liberalism was introduced which broke down the rigid system set up by the former regime. Though the Heng Samrin government carried out certain measures which led to the reconstruction of life in Cambodia, they were not wholly successful. This was compounded by the fact that the Heng Samrin group suffered from the stigma of being a foreign backed government.

The role played by foreign powers has been very significant in continuing this conflict and has furthered the crisis in Cambodia. The various resistance groups receiving assistance

from the foreign powers has helped to compound the situation and to maintain the stalemate and to the deepening of the crisis and suspension of the solution. The crisis in Cambodia has brought to light the conflicting interests of not only the powers at the regional level in South East Asia, but also of the global powers.

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CHAPTER-II

CAMBODIAN CRISIS REACTIONS AND PERCEPTIONS

ASEAN

Since Vietnam invaded and occupied Cambodia in 1978, one of the major participants in the quest for a suitable solution has been the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN). ASEAN has attempted to combine political, economic, military and diplomatic efforts to pressurize Vietnam to withdraw from its occupation of Cambodia. From its beginning ASEAN intended to perform certain security functions related to the presence of extra regional powers in South East Asia.

The relations between ASEAN and Indochina were more strained because of the conflict between Soviet backed Vietnam and China backed Cambodia. This made the relationship more tense and ASEAN tried to keep from supporting either side.

In its diplomatic efforts to find a solution to the Cambodian crisis, ASEAN's major weapon was to make proper use of the United Nations in order to elicit international support for its cause. The members of ASEAN have reacted with varying degrees of alarm to the Vietnamese intrusion.

According to Chung Si Ahn<sup>1</sup>, its policy towards

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1. Ahn, Chung Si, "ASEAN-Vietnam - P.R.C., Triangle and its Implications to Peace and Stability in Asia," The Korean Journal of International Studies, vol 2(1), Winter 1987/88.



the crisis reveals three factors:

First, the threat perceptions of ASEAN states differ with regard to their geographical proximity to Indo-China and the ethnic factor of each country.

Second, the relationship with China is influenced by their perception of Vietnam.

Third, those countries of the ASEAN which perceive a greater threat have taken a more hostile stance towards Vietnam. An example is that of Thailand which had emerged as a front-line state in the conflict.

In the UN General Assembly, the ASEAN set the standards of subsequent negotiation. It emphasised the need for the withdrawal of Vietnamese troops and rallied for an international conference which would formulate a comprehensive political settlement inclusive of UN supervised elections.<sup>2</sup> ASEAN's first move of giving UN representation to the ousted regime of Democratic Kampuchea found favour with China, Japan and the West. The United States actively supported the ASEAN formula calling for Vietnamese withdrawal from Cambodia to be followed by a general election. The June 1981, the 14th ASEAN ministerial meeting took place in Manila. It

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2. The Statesman, February 10, 1980

called for a political settlement which would be initiated by a UN Peace Keeping Force. In July 1981, the UN sponsored an international conference on Cambodia in New York in which 93 Nations participated. The ASEAN countries participated as part of the conflicting parties. The coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea's formation in July 1982 is seen by Willian Bach as an ASEAN move to bring all the resistance factions together under a collective Umbrella.<sup>3</sup>

Thus, in its efforts to mobilize UN action the ASEAN has been fairly successful. From 1979, ASEAN has maintained an international group of states opposed to the occupation of Cambodia by Vietnam. Every year the number of supporters of the ASEAN view has increased in the General Assembly. Vietnam's diplomacy policy towards ASEAN has attempted to aggravate the internal division within the organization over the Cambodian issue in the expectation that the long term fear of China would eventually undermine ASEAN unity.<sup>4</sup>

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3. The Indonesian Times, August 4, 1990

4. The Financial Express, September 18, 1990

Thailand, among the ASEAN countries has been most affected by the Cambodian conflict. Due to its geographical location, Thailand has to bear the major brunt of the Cambodian issue.<sup>5</sup> Its problems were basically a factor of the refugee movements. Thailand, for its part has continued to challenge Vietnam militarily by providing active sanctuary and support to the resistance forces. As correctly pointed out by Sukhumbhand Paribatra, Thailand has in practice used ASEAN as a way of organizing and combining political, diplomatic, military and economic efforts to counter-balance Vietnam's military strength. In an organization where there is diversity of security interests, Thailand has attempted to impose its own security priorities on its partners and has generally succeeded.<sup>6</sup>

The earlier ASEAN perception of the Cambodian imbroglio, of Vietnam gaining a regional power status dominating the entire South-east Asia by virtue of its spectacular military victory over the till then considered invincible United States, gradually gave way to more realistic assessment of the actual situation on the ground.<sup>7</sup>

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5. Jha, Ganganath, Foreign Policy of Thailand, (New Delhi Radiant Publishers, 1979).
  6. The Hindu, July 20, 1990
  7. Das, Parimal Kumar, "Indochina, ASEAN, and Thailand: The Changing Perspectives since 1975," Problems of Non-Alignment, vol. 2(3), September - November, 1984.

The ASEAN persuaded itself, as a result of direct contacts of its member countries with Vietnam and Cambodia, to take a second look at the regional aspect of the situation. It was convinced that the economy as also the political standing of the ASEAN countries could never be consolidated with a local conflict jeopardising all its efforts to stake a claim to a share in the global developmental resources in a period of declining world prosperity. This and the growing suspicion of a re-emergent Chinese ambition of assertive sole leadership in the Asia-Pacific region, made the ASEAN members review their own attitudes to the Cambodian imbroglio.<sup>8</sup>

Whatever their internal assessment of the Cambodian situation, the ASEAN countries had perhaps never come across a situation where they would be stuck with a person who would change his mind at the drop of a hat. Only recently they had also seen how Prince Norodom Sihanouk had agreed to meet Prime Minister Hun Sen in Tokyo and then delayed the meeting without offering any valid reason. And, then, after the meeting when certain mutually agreed decisions had been taken and recorded, he chose to go back on them. The ASEAN leaders had probably to postpone their

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8. Ahn, Chung-Si, "ASEAN - Vietnam - P.R.C. Triangle and its Implications to Peace and Stability in Asia," The Korean Journal of International Studies, vol 2(1), Winter 1987-1988.

"cocktail party", celebrations of achieving a success, to some other day.<sup>9</sup>

The installation of the Heng Samrin government in December 1978 with the help of Vietnam's armed forces has several other dimensions. History has already recorded that the Pol Pot outfit had mounted several armed attacks on Vietnam since the very day of the latter's victory over the US forces in South Vietnam. The methods adopted by the Pol Pot regime to perpetuate its control over the Cambodian people - resorting to wholesale massacre of over a million of them - is not unknown.<sup>10</sup> What is, however, not emphasised is that a large number of Cambodian leaders who had earlier fought alongside the Khmer Rouge forces against the US puppets in Cambodia, broke away when they found that Pol Pot and his gang of killers of innocent people had aims and objectives other than the well-being of the people. Pol Pot is a name in Cambodia that is universally hated.<sup>11</sup> In fact, China lost a substantial part of the Cambodian people's

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9. Van Dev Kroef, Justus, M, Cambodia, The Vagaries of "Cocktail Diplomacy", Contemporary Southeast Asia, vol. 9(4) March, 1988.

10. Kiernam, Ben, "Genocide in Cambodia, 1975-79. Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars, 22(2), April - June 90, 35-40.

11. Ethcheson, Craig, "Civil War and The Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea", Third World Quarterly, vol. 9(1), January, 1987.

goodwill because of its partonage of Pol Pot and his gang. The growing hatred of the people of Cambodia alerted the people of the neighbouring Thailand. The Pol Pot gang found itself equally hated in the country whose government had provided it sanctuary to fight against Heng Samrin government. In fact, this image of the Pol Pot faction in the CGDK spread to all the ASEAN countries as more and more evidence of the brutality of the Pol Pot regime was revealed to the world media. Even Chinese leadership was forced to secure the replacement of Pol Pot with Khieu Samphan as the leader of Khmer Rouge. Pol Pot could survive for a long time mainly because of the advantages accruing to him from the acute Sino-Soviet rivalry to establish the supremacy of their respective ideologies.

The Chinese, viewed the entire development as a Soviet ploy, using Vietnam to undermine China's position in the Asia-Pacific region. Its links with Thailand grew stronger and the country's border with Cambodia was used as a cache of Chinese arms for the use of the guerillas of Khmer Rouge. China held on to this posture even after the US-USSR detente. But Beijing continued to harp on the old tune till a new breeze of Sino-Soviet rapprochement

blew in the wake of the initiative taken by President Mikhail Gorbachev.<sup>12</sup>

ASEAN members were accused, at one time or the other, of duplicity, of double-talk and of indulging in demaning activities in respect of the civil war in Cambodia. The Heng Samrin government got a foothold in Cambodia at a time when Sino-US cordiality was at its peak. Those who had determined that the ASEAN was nothing but a product of the US global geostrategic aims and interests, did assert that its member-countries had to act according to the dictates of Sino-US politico-strategic requirements from time to time.

Having built up their exportoriented economics in keeping with the advice from World Bank, International Monetary Fund, the Asian Development Bank and, above all, the Western aid-givers - the ASEAN members just could not ignore the vast market opened by China's modernisation programme under Deng Xiaoping. The Sino-ASEAN trade has been growing gradually but steadily.<sup>13</sup>

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12. Mc Gregor, Charles, "China, Vietnam, and the Cambodian Conflict", Beijing's end game strategy Asian Survey, 30(3), March 90, 266-283.

13. Pao-Min, Chang, "Sino Vietnamese Conflict and its Implications for ASEAN, "Pacific Affairs, vol, 60(4), Winter 1987/1988.

At the same time all the ASEAN countries without exception have discovered a new gainful pursuit in promoting regional economic ties, irrespective of political affiliations. Initially, Indonesia and Malaysia broke through a self-imposed trade barrier and established direct contacts with Vietnam. Others have followed because Hanoi did not stand on formalities and itself went over to the ASEAN capitals to seek useful economic cooperation. ASEAN did find Vietnam, as also Cambodia, worthwhile areas of economic cooperation once peaceful conditions were established with an acceptable regime installed in Phnom Penh.<sup>14</sup>

Another reason for the "change of heart" in the ASEAN was, of course, the sudden aggressive posture of China which claimed as its right "to teach Vietnam a lesson" every time Hanoi helped Phom Penh to deliver telling military blows against the Khmer Rouge which was said to be fighting a proxy war for China. The ASEAN was certainly fearful of Vietnam emerging as a dominant military power in South-east Asia, with the United States unable to recover from the shock of its defeat, with its

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14. Paribatra, M.R., Sukhubhand, "Challenge of Co existence : ASEAN's Relations with Vietnam in the 1990's," Contemporary South East Asia, vol 9(2), September, 1987.



military and political representatives escaping in helicopters from housetops in Saigon. But the "teaching of lessons" was another shock for the ASEAN members who abhorred the idea of being caught between the devil and the deep sea.

In the process, Thailand, the most closely involved ASEAN member in the Cambodian civil war - on the side of China-backed Khmer Rouge - has found that it is more profitable to fall in line with its colleagues and strike once again a posture of neutrality. Yet, it is clear that even now the Khmer Rouge offensives against the Phnom Penh forces are being mounted from the territory of Thailand, with depots of Chinese arms and equipment located there for the use of its guerillas whenever necessary. At the same time, the rulers of Thailand are also aware that any delay in taking its position as an ASEAN neutral would rebound. Its self-appointed status of a "frontline state" making itself automatically exposed to a threat of aggression, therefore, entitles it to assistance from all sides without the fear of retribution for its part in abetting the marauding sorties of the Khmer Rouge.

ASEAN has also been responsible for bringing about certain diplomatic initiatives to bring about some kind of

a negotiation on the Cambodian issue. One such attempt was made in 1985 when it put forth the idea of diplomatic ties between the warring factions in the conflict, this was given the title of "proximity talks". These talks were to take place between the People's Republic of Kampuchea and the coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea. The ASEAN was to act as a mediator in the talks.

It held the first Jakarta Informal Meeting (JIM-I) in July 1988, and followed it with another similar meeting (JIM-II) in February 1989. A year later, (JIM-III) in February 1990 opened up the prospects for a successful UN intervention to end the twelve-year old seemingly unending civil war.

To this must also be added the ASEAN successes in arranging direct talks between Prince Norodom Sihanouk and Prime Minister Hun Sen in Paris, first in December 1987 and then in January 1988. A month-long International Conference on Cambodia, participated by the Cambodian factions and all the twelve countries which lent their support in its preparations, was primarily organised at the initiative of the ASEAN in July-August 1989.

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15. Paribatra, M.R., Sukhumbhand, "Can ASEAN break the Stalemate ? " World Policy Journal, vol. 3(1), Winter 1985-86.

16. Hari Swarup, "Resolving Cambodia's crisis. From Jakarta to Paris to ...." World Affairs June 2, 1991, P. 77-78.

UNITED NATIONS

In its thirty-fourth session, the UN General Assembly took up the Cambodian issue on November, 14 1979, and adopted the ASEAN sponsored Resolution (No. 34/22) with a considerable majority. In accordance with the resolution, the General Assembly called for the immediate withdrawal of all foreign forces from Kampuchea and appealed to the antagonists that they should settle their disputes by peaceful means as per the UN Charter.

Though Resolution No. 34/22 was merely a kind of lip service to Cambodian, it was considered a significant step towards convening an International Conference on Kampuchea, as one of the means for implementing the resolution itself. It was also agreed in the resolution that the item "The situation in Kampuchea" would be included in the provisional agenda of the General Assembly's next session.<sup>17</sup>

Since the UN resolution went against the interests of Phnom Penh government, naturally, it ignored it. The Heng Samrin government described the UN's resolution as an act "against the right of Kampuchean people in self

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17. Amer Ramses, "United Nations and Kampuchea : The issue of Representation and its implications" Bulletion of Concerned Asian Scholars Vol 22 (3), July-Sept-1990 P.52-60

determination". Further, it demanded the allotment of UN seat to it and a Nuremburg-type trial of the Khmer Rouge leaders who were responsible for killing more than one million people in Cambodia during 1975-78.

At this juncture, India, one of the founding members of the nonaligned movement (NAM) came out with a proposal saying that keeping in view the unclear situation in Cambodia, the UN should declare Cambodia's seat vacant. Though it was a positive proposal to resolve the Cambodian seat issue, the US and its allies, including the ASEAN states, not only rejected India's proposal but also categorically stated that the denial of UN seat to Phnom Penh government was the only way to punish the aggressors and their proxy.

With the initiative of the UN Secretary-General, an International Conference for Emergency Humanitarian Relief to the People of Cambodia was held on November 5, 1979. Several countries contributed to this just cause. Since the UN's aid and assistance, went only to the Cambodian refugees who fled to Thai-Cambodian border in the wake of continuous fighting between the Democratic Kampuchean and Vietnamese forces. The People inside Cambodia, who needed immediate aid and relief, were

denied the same. It was this partisan approach of the UN that created a blot on its own history.

In October 1980, UN General Assembly at its thirty-fifth session adopted a similar resolution with a focus on humanitarian assistance and relief to Cambodian people. This resolution also added a new momentum to the idea of convening of an International Conference on Kampuchea. Pursuant to its Resolution No. 35/6 of 1980 and Articles I and II of the UN Charter, the much publicised "International Conference on Kampuchea" was convened to meet from July 13 to 17, 1981 in the New York.

With a view to reaching a comprehensive political settlement to the Cambodian crisis, the declaration of conference called for negotiations on, the following aspects:

1. An agreement on ceasefire by all warring factions from Cambodia under the supervision of a UN Peace Keeping Force Observer Group.
2. Appropriate arrangements for holding fair and free elections under UN supervision.

Phnom Penh government along with Vietnam and other socialist countries had boycotted this international

conference and, consequently, its declaration lost its value. They did this because they knew that any participation by the Khmer Rouge for a solution to the conflict was recognising the latter as the legitimate government of "Democratic Kampuchea" itself. This aspect was clearly mentioned in the Indochinese Foreign Minister's Phnom Penh statement of June 14, 1981, which said:

"Any United Nations resolution on South-east Asia is illegal if it violates the sovereignty of the countries in the region and if the United Nations still recognises the representation of the so-called 'Democratic Kampuchea' of the genocidal Pol Pot clique already overthrown by the Kampuchean people .... So long as Pol Pot and his clique are maintained at the United Nations, the latter cannot contribute in the name of the UN Charter to peace and stability in South-east Asia".

Meanwhile, the Phnom Penh government's massive campaign against the horrors of the Khmer Rouge had sounded a death knell to the credential of "Democratic Kampuchea" at the UN. By 1981, several nations which earlier supported its credentials, were threatening to vote against seating it. It was this danger that prompted

the creation of a "Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea" (CGDK) in June 1982. It was a coalition of three strange bed-fellows - the anti-Communist Khmer People's National Liberation Front (KPNLF), Prince Sihanouk's Political Front, and Maoist Khmer Rouge. They had united in the name of Khmer nationalism to fight against foreign aggressor.

This strategy seemed to succeed when a large number of UN members, including those who earlier opposed the Khmer Rouge's outfit, voted in favour of the newly formed CGDK. This increased the Khmer Rouge's manoeuvrability. Now the Khmer Rouge not only fought back the Phnom Penh regime's massive campaign against Pol Pot's genocidal policies in the past, but also strengthened its base inside and outside Kampuchea.

Until recently, the UN and also the Western nations had been highly partisan in supporting a regime which was well known for its universally condemned policies and practices. Their constant and massive support to this group in the UN bodies is evident from the following tables:

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18. UN, Katharya, "Cambodia in 1989: still talking but no settlement" Asian Survey; vol 30 (1) Jan. 90 P.96-104

Table -1

VOTING RECORDS AT THE UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY ON THE  
QUESTION OF DEMOCRATIC KAMPUCHEA'S CREDENTIALS

	1979	1980	1981	1982
For	71	74	79	90
Against	35	35	36	29
Abstention	34	32	30	26
Non-Participants	11	12	10	12

Note: Since 1983, Vietnam and other countries of the "Socialist bloc" led by the Soviet Union have not called for any further votes in the UN General Assembly on this question.



Table -2

VOTING RECORD OF ASEAN RESOLUTIONS ON THE  
QUESTION OF COMPLETE WITHDRAWAL OF FOREIGN  
TROOPS FROM KAMPUCHEA

	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985
For	91	97	100	105	105	110	114
Against	21	23	25	23	23	22	21
Abstention	29	22	19	20	11	18	16
Non- Participation	9	11	12	9	19	8	8

Source: 1. "Documents on the Kampuchean Problem, 1979. 1985," Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Bangkok, Thailand.

2. Peter Schies, "Kampuchea in 1985," Southeast Asian Affairs, 1986, ISEAS, Singapore.

Passing these partisan resolution became an annual ritual at the UN and it continued until recently.

These actions of the UN further distanced the Phnom Penh government from the peace process, as the resolutions endorsed by a large majority of its members put the withdrawal of foreign troops as not only a precondition but also as an integral part of a comprehensive political solution to the Cambodian problem.

From 1987 onwards, new winds of change seemed to be blowing over Cambodia. After a longdrawn battle for eight years, all Cambodian factions, except the Khmer Rouge, appeared to be wanting an early solution to the problem. The Hun Sen-Sihanouk parleys in Paris, in 1987 and 1988, marked a new beginning, though nothing substantial came out from them.<sup>19</sup> Thailand, which had been providing sanctuaries to the CGDK forces, was fed up with the Khmer refugees and sought to convert the battlefields into market zones. It was a clear indication of change in the Thai attitude towards the Cambodian issue.

The political and economic changes in Vietnam

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19. Porter, Gareth, "Cambodia : Sihanouk's Initiatives" Foreign Affairs, vol, 66(4), Spring 1988.

and Cambodia, under the influence of Gorbachev's glasnost and perestroika, also augured well for a political solution inasmuch as it constituted the replacement of hardliners by liberals on this issue. Though there is a perceptible change in the Chinese attitude towards the peace process in Cambodia, they still seem to believe that the Khmer Rouge is their best bet in subserving their geostrategic objectives in Indochina.

As the world opinion grew against the Khmer Rouge the Western governments had to bow to the public will. It is evident from the recent General Assembly resolution on Cambodia, sponsored by the Western nations, wherein the UN gave a call for "the non-return to the universally condemned policies and practices of a recent past". Though, it was an indirect reference to the Khmer Rouge, it also showed that there was a significant shift in the West's attitude towards the Khmer Rouge.

Since the JIM-I and JIM-II, and Paris 1989 conference had failed to break the impasse, a new proposal came from the US Senator Stephen J. Solarz, in October 1989.

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20. Haas, Michael, "The Paris Conference on Cambodia"; Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars vol. 23, (2) April-June 1991.

He proposed a UN supervised interim administration to prepare for and supervise free and fair elections in Cambodia instead of either the quadripartite or the tripartite interim government.<sup>21</sup>

In a bid to break the stalemate on interim political arrangement, the Australian Foreign Minister Gareth Evans, who worked seriously on Solarz's proposal, announced a new peace plan on November 23, 1989, to find a comprehensive political settlement to the Cambodian issue. In his proposal, the Foreign Minister Evans put forward the followings:<sup>22</sup>

- Implementation of ceasefire between the warring factions under the supervision of a UN peace-keeping force;
- A UN-interim administration to prepare ground for free and fair elections under international supervision;
- Declaration of Cambodia's UN seat as vacant.
- A massive international programme of relief, rehabilitation and reconstruction in Cambodia.

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21. Solarz, Stephen J. "Cambodia and the International Community: Foreign Affairs vol 69(2) April 90, P 99-115.

22. Evans, Gareth. "Australian Role in the Cambodian Peace Process" Link vol 34(5) September 15, 1991 P. 25-28.

In the beginning, the Western nations, ASEAN, and non-Communist resistance group of CGDK had welcomed the Australian peace plan. Though China, Khmer Rouge, Phnom Penh government and Vietnam did not reject the peace plan in to, they called for further negotiations on the viability of the plan.

In order to give a new momentum to the Australian peace plan, the representatives of the five permanent members of the Security Council - Britain, France, China, Soviet Union and the United States - met in Paris on January 15 and 16, 1990 to consider the Evans plan for an enhanced UN role in Cambodia.<sup>23</sup> They agreed on a 16 - point formula to solve the Cambodian tangle. The main elements of the formula were:

1. No acceptable solution can be achieved by force of arms.
2. An enduring peace can be achieved only through a comprehensive political settlement, including verified withdrawal of foreign forces, a ceasefire, and the cessation of outside military assistance.

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23. Beckacrt, Jacques, "Who wants Peace ?" Bangkok Post August 25, 1989. P.6.

3. The goal should be self-determination for the Cambodian people through free, fair and democratic elections.
4. All accept an enhanced UN role in the resolution of the Cambodian problem.
5. There is an urgent need to speed up diplomatic efforts to achieve a settlement.
6. The complete withdrawal of foreign forces must be verified by the UN.
7. The five would welcome an early resumption of a constructive dialogue among the Cambodian factions which is essential to facilitating the transition process, which should not be dominated by any one of them.
8. An effective UN presence will be required during the transition period in order to assure internal security.
9. A special representative of the Security Council is needed in Cambodia to supervise UN activities during a transition period culminating in the inauguration of a democratically elected government.
10. The scale of the UN operation should be consistent with the successful implementation of a Cambodian

settlement and its planning and execution should take account of the heavy financial burden that may be placed on member-states.

11. Free and fair elections must be conducted under direct UN administration.
12. The elections must be conducted in a neutral political environment in which no party would be advantaged.
13. The five permanent members commit themselves to honouring the results of free and fair elections.
14. All Cambodians should enjoy the same rights, freedoms and opportunities to participate in the election process.
15. A supreme national council might be the repository of Cambodian sovereignty during the transition process .
16. Questions involving Cambodian sovereignty should be resolved with the agreement of the Cambodian parties.

It is beyond doubt that the agreement reached by the five in Paris was a significant progress towards a comprehensive political settlement. However, the exact

extent of the UN role was still being worked out.

In this operation, the most difficult tasks are:<sup>24</sup>

- Monitoring the ceasefire;
- Verifying the withdrawal of foreign forces from Cambodia;
- Organising fair and free elections;
- Establishment of a "UN Transitional Authority in Cambodia" (UNTAC),
- Forming of a Supreme National Council (SNC).

In addition, the biggest problem was who would bear the cost of executing this plan. Some people may argue that the UN had already proved its ability to undertake similar missions in Namibia and Nicaragua. Here, the UN's role would be more extensive, complex and would be more extensive, complex and would be carried out in much more difficult terrain, climate, circumstances without well-equipped infrastructure.<sup>25</sup>

In response to the "Perm Five" initiative, UN Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar formed a task

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24. "Peace Keeping Force" For Eastern Economic Review, August 24, 1989 P. 8.

25. Thomas, Trisha. Andrew Wellington Cordier essay, "Into the Unknown : Can the United Nations Bring Peace to Cambodia ?" Journal of International Affairs . vol. 44 (2); Winter 1991. P. 495-516.



force in February 1990 on Cambodia to prepare contingency plans and consider their financial implications.

Meanwhile, the "Perm Five" met six times in various places so far to draw a blueprint for the solution of the Cambodian tangle. At the end of their sixth meeting in New York in August 1990, the "Perm Five" spelled out a detailed "Comprehensive Peace Plan" in five documents to solve the problem. The plan outlines the following elements of a comprehensive settlement:<sup>26</sup>

- Formation of SNC comprising all the warring Cambodian factions;
- Establishment of the UNTAC.
- Verification of ceasefire and providing military arrangements for the transitional period;
- Organising free elections and protection of human rights; and
- The neutrality of a future Cambodia.

As the big powers have mounted their pressure in this case, the Cambodian factions have been compelled to accept the UN's peace plan. However, keeping in view the Khmer Rouge's past record, Vietnam expressed its doubts over the UN peace plan.

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26. Peang - Meth, Abdulgaffar, "Understanding the Khmer: Sociological - Cultural Observations" Asian Survey vol. 31(5) p. 453.

27. Beckaert, Jacques, Favours Imposed Solution, Bangkok Post August 29, 1989.

## CHINA AND THE CAMBODIAN PEACE PROCESS

Since Vietnam's invasion and occupation of Cambodia in December 1978, China has consistently pursued three interrelated objectives for Indochina. First, it sought a significant reduction of the Soviet presence in the region, thereby reversing the trend of Soviet encirclement in the 1970s. Second, it sought Vietnamese withdrawal from Cambodia and thus diminished Vietnamese power on China's southern periphery, reduced opportunity for an outside power to use Vietnam to undermine Chinese interests, and the re-emergence of Cambodia's post-World War Two tendency to develop friendly relations with China to offset Vietnamese power. Third, China insisted on the dissolution of the Vietnamese-influenced Heng Samrin/Hun Sen government. This final objective serves China's interest in an independent Cambodia contributing to a divided Indochina, but it primarily reflected Chinese outrage at Vietnam's defiance of Chinese warnings during the 1977-78 period and Hanoi's subsequent creation of a "puppet" Cambodian leadership. China was intent on discrediting the invasion and validating its own regional authority by seeking the replacement of the Phnom Penh leadership with a new government.<sup>28</sup>

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28. Gordon, Bernard, K., "Third Indo China Conflict", Foreign Affairs, (vol. 65 (1), Fall 1986 pp. 66-85.

Beijing has pursued its objectives through the development of a multifaceted and multilateral policy, combining diplomatic, economic, and military policy instruments, and focusing its efforts on each member of the coalition resisting PRC interests in Indochina - Soviet Union, Vietnam, and the Phnom Penh government. Beijing reached its first two goals more than two years ago and incurred little cost to its other foreign policy interests. Beijing established the groundwork for achieving its final objective.

#### China's Objectives in Indochina

China's one overriding objective has been to minimize Soviet influence on its southern periphery. Throughout the early 1970s, Beijing's foreign policy was predicated on resisting Soviet "hegemonism," in particular its expansion into Asia on terms that contributed to the "encirclement" of China. The extension of Soviet influence into Indochina was perceived as the culmination of Moscow's encirclement strategy. Beijing had feared this development in the 1960s and sought to prevent it after 1975, but the combination of Soviet economic and military aid to Vietnam, Vietnamese economic and strategic interests, and most

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29. Ross, Robert, S. The Indochina Tangle: China's Vietnam Policy, 1975-1979 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988).

important, Khmer Rouge bellicosity were sufficient to thwart Beijing efforts. The Soviet Union backrolled and defended Hanoi's occupation of Cambodia in exchange for a continuing dominant political and military presence in the region. Having failed in its efforts, Beijing now sought to reduce the Soviet presence. As the most important of the "three obstacles" to normalization of Sino-Soviet relations, Soviet disengagement from the Vietnamese occupation became the foundation of a policy seeking secure southern borders free from the control of a rival power. Thus, Beijing consistently demanded that Moscow reduce its economic and military support for Vietnam's Cambodia policy. Beijing since the 1960s has seen an independent Cambodia as crucial to its interests in a divided Indo-china. In the aftermath of the communist victories in Cambodia and Vietnam in 1975, Beijing viewed the Pol Pot government as its ally against Vietnamese control.<sup>30</sup> Although it tried to moderate Khmer Rouge policy and minimize Vietnamese Cambodian friction, ultimately it backed Phnom Penh against Hanoi rather than accept Vietnamese domination of Indochina, and it warned Vietnam against overthrowing the Pol Pot leadership.

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30. W.E. Willmot, "The Chinese in Kampuchea", Journal of South East Asian Studies, (ISEAS, Singapore, March 1981), P.21.

Despite Chinese warnings, Vietnamese troops with Soviet support invaded Cambodia in December 1978, overthrew the Pol Pot regime, installed the "puppet" Heng Samrin government, and remained in Cambodia for over ten years to protect the new Phnom Penh leadership against remnant Khmer Rouge forces.

Having failed in 1978-79 to prevent Vietnam from invading Cambodia and installing a client regime, Beijing was intent on denying Hanoi any benefit whatsoever from the invasion. Thus, it would not agree to any outcome of the Cambodian civil war that allowed the Heng Samrin regime to continue to run Cambodia as its legal government.

Beijing's four years of experience in dealing with Khmer Rouge control over Cambodia convinced the Chinese leadership that a Khmer Rouge victory would not serve Chinese interests. Indeed, during the 1975-78 period, Khmer Rouge foreign policy undermined China's interest in minimizing Soviet influence in the region by aggravating the Vietnamese-Cambodian conflict and creating conditions ripe for Soviet "opportunism". Although China tried to influence Cambodian foreign policy during this period, it was unable to prevail upon the Pol Pot government to adopt a policy of "peaceful coexistence" toward Hanoi. Given the

disasters of the Pol Pot leadership of Cambodia, China was not inclined to support its return to power.<sup>31</sup>

Thus, Beijing's 1988 announcement that it did not seek restoration of Khmer Rouge authority and that it supported a coalition government composed of all four factions was an easy concession to make toward promoting a political settlement.

Similar to its preferences in the early and mid-1970s, China's objective for Cambodia has been the creation of a new legal government under the leadership of Prince Norodom Sihanouk, the symbol of Cambodian independence; it has been willing to reconcile itself to Heng Samrin and his administrative apparatus in all but name because this would be an acceptable face-saving arrangement that would secure China's political objective of the dissolution of the Vietnamese-installed government. Moreover, for all of Sihanouk's unpredictability, he has consistently adopted and advocated a balanced foreign policy aimed at maximizing Cambodian independence, and since the Vietnamese invasion in 1978, Beijing has continued to champion Sihanouk's leadership credentials.<sup>32</sup>

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31. Kissinger, Henry, Years of Upheaval (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1982).

32. Ross, Robert, S. The Indochina Tangle, Chapters 2 and 3.

China's third objective did not involve its vital interests; rather, it was motivated by a combination of principle and revenge and Chinese leaders were no more willing to compromise on this issue than they were on their more strategically important objectives. On the contrary, they clearly indicated that they were willing to see continued civil war in Cambodia if they could not negotiate a political settlement entailing the formal dissolution of the Heng Samrin government.

#### China's Indochina Policy

China had achieved its first two objectives by mid-1989, but its success did not come through developing compromise solution aimed at reaching a political settlement. Rather, Beijing's policy imposed such high costs on its adversaries that they were compelled to abandon their original objectives in Indochina and conciliate Chinese interests. This was the thrust of Chinese policy toward both the Soviet Union and Vietnam. Since Mikhail Gorbachev's July 1986 Vladivostok speech, China had made Soviet support for the Vietnamese occupation of Cambodia the primary obstacle to Sino-Soviet political "normalization."

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33. R.R. Subramanian, "China as a Threat to South East Asian Security", in Parimal Kumar Das (ed) The Troubled Region: Issues of Peace and Development in South East Asia, (New Delhi 1987).

With the emergence of Gorbachev, the development of a new foreign policy elite in the Soviet Union, and the growing severity of Soviet domestic and international problems, Moscow finally realized that ameliorating the Sino-Soviet conflict and disengaging China from the Western security system was a far more important objective than having good relations with Vietnam and significant influence in Indochina. Hence, beginning in 1988 the Soviet Union made a number of important concessions on Indochina designed to elicit PRC reciprocity.

Chinese pressure on the Soviet Union and Soviet domestic dilemmas also compelled Moscow to adjust its bilateral Vietnam policy. In 1988 Moscow began to reduce its economic assistance to Vietnam, and in 1989 the East European countries, after abandoning communism and establishing their independence from Moscow, began to reduce significantly or phase out their own aid programs to both Vietnam and Cambodia. Whereas in the past the Soviet Union had funded Vietnam's war in Cambodia and Hanoi's costly military deployment along the Sino-Vietnamese border, the change in Soviet policy now compelled Vietnam to make some difficult decisions.

In March 1988, when China and Vietnam engaged in a naval clash over control of some of the Nansha (Spratly)



Islands, not only did Moscow not refer to the 1978 Soviet-<sup>34</sup> Vietnamese treaty but it maintained near total silence, thus signaling to both Hanoi and Beijing that the Soviet Union would not offset Chinese power in Indochina.

The reduction of Soviet economic and military presence in Indochina also contributed to China's other objective - Vietnamese troop withdrawal from Cambodia. Without Soviet economic support, Vietnam's occupation and the necessity of maintaining a wartime economy became increasingly intolerable. Moreover, without Soviet military support, the risk to Vietnam of continuing its occupation of Cambodia and alienating China grew considerably as Beijing showed less restraint in challenging Vietnamese policy and in evaluating the costs and benefits of a second "lesson."

Chinese diplomacy also contributed to Vietnamese economic and diplomatic isolation. By providing a credible guarantee of Thai security and political support for the anti-Vietnamese coalition in Southeast Asia, Beijing enabled Bangkok to resist Vietnamese power and, with Singapore, to lead the effort by the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) to deny Phnom Penh the legitimacy of United Nations representation and to deny Vietnam the benefits of economic relations with the advanced industrial

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34. Article in Pravda in Foreign Broadcast Information Service, Soviet Union (FBIS, DR/SOV) March 18, 1988 PP. 21-22.

countries and international financial institutions. Thus, as Hanoi waged a costly war in Cambodia, it was unable to take advantage of the opportunities for development offered by the international economic system. Under such circumstances, the Vietnamese economy severely deteriorated while the economies of its neighbors, including the PRC and Thailand, experienced significant development.

Chinese manipulation of these various policy instruments ultimately compelled Vietnam to withdraw all but a skeleton force from Cambodia. Thus, by September 1989 Beijing had achieved its second strategic objective in Indochina, and it soon secured the political benefits.

#### China and the Negotiations Toward a Political Settlement

Once Vietnam withdrew from Cambodia, international attention focused on the importance of a negotiated settlement in bringing peace to Cambodia and on preventing the return to power of the Khmer Rouge. Thus, while China has used unilateral efforts to achieve its objectives, other states, including regional actors and the great powers, sought a political settlement to the Cambodian civil war.

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35. Chung-Si-Ahn, 'ASEAN-Vietnam-PRC, Triangle and its Implications to Peace and Stability in Asia', Korean Journal of International Studies. (vol. 19 (1), Winter 1987/88).

China developed a consistent policy in reaction to the early diplomatic initiatives. On the one hand, it was clearly displeased with the cracks in CGDK unity and opposed all negotiations with Hanoi until it had achieved its basic objectives. On the other hand, it never actively intervened to stop these initiatives. Thus, when Sihanouk began his negotiations with Hun Sen in December 1987, China was clearly perturbed but it did not use its considerable influence to prevent the meetings. Moreover, when it appeared that China or the Khmer Rouge might be the only obstacle to opening negotiations, Beijing made seemingly important concessions. Rather than stand in the way and bear the onus of ongoing war, it pressured the Khmer Rouge to participate in JIM and to hold discussions with Hanoi and Phnom Penh. Similarly, when international opposition to the Khmer Rouge reached significant proportions and it appeared that agreement on their role in a postwar government was the only obstacle to a settlement, Beijing announced that it did not seek a resolution of the civil war that would return the Khmer Rouge to power; it said it supported a political settlement that would create a coalition government composed of all the Cambodian factions that would replace the illegitimate and discredited Heng Samrin

leadership and administer the proposed election. It further stated that China would accept the election results regardless of the outcome.

Although at the time it seemed that these were significant Chinese compromises contributing to the development of a negotiated solution, they were primarily procedural concessions allowing Beijing to retain its original objectives. Indeed, as the JIM negotiations developed, the Khmer Rouge adopted a contentious stand guaranteed to obstruct constructive dialogue, and they continued to insist that no settlement was possible so long as Vietnamese troops remained in Cambodia and the Heng Samrin regime retained control of the government, reflecting ongoing Chinese objectives in the negotiations with Hanoi. China adopted a similar policy toward the negotiations held by the five permanent members of the U.N. Security Council whose representatives met in January 1990 to discuss for the first time the war in Cambodia. Since that meeting, the Permanent Five focused their efforts on the creation of a political framework that would permit the U.N. to conduct elections in Cambodia. Although China consistently expressed full support for such an agreement throughout the negotiations it failed to make significant compromises.

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36. Ross, Robert, S. "China and the Cambodian Peace Process: The Value of Coercive Diplomacy" Asian Survey (vol. 21 (12) Dec. 1991).

Throughout these negotiations China never pressured the Khmer Rouge to make substantive compromises. Beijing may have shifted its Vietnam policy in response to the Vietnamese troop withdrawal, but it did not waver in its opposition to the Heng Samrin regime and its support for the Khmer Rouge. Chinese support for the Khmer Rouge was Beijing's sole remaining source of significant leverage in Indochina.

China's policy of support for the Khmer Rouge did not undermine other Chinese interests. Its military support was an incidental part of the Chinese budget, and China's relations with the United States, the Soviet Union, and its Asian neighbors were not affected by its Indochina policy. Indeed, in 1990 China established diplomatic relations with Indonesia, Singapore, and Saudi Arabia and reestablished normal economic relations with the West European countries and Japan, which had been suspended after the Beijing massacre. In December Foreign Minister Qian Qichen visited Washington for the first time since the Beijing massacre and met with President Bush and Secretary of State James Baker. Thus, despite ongoing Chinese support for the Khmer Rouge, Beijing made considerable progress toward repairing the damage to its relations with Western nations caused by the 1989 massacre.

As in the past, Chinese policy seemed to pay off. Although Beijing no longer exercised a great deal of leverage over the Soviet Union, the desire of the U.S. and the USSR to resolve the remaining Cold War conflicts benefited Chinese interests. Thus, despite Washington's decision to withdraw its support for CGDK representation of Cambodia at the U.N. and open negotiations with Hanoi over the war in Cambodia, the August 1990 agreement of the Permanent Five created a framework for a political settlement <sup>that</sup> that contained a number of provisions favourable to China and the CGDK insurgents.<sup>37</sup>

Once China had U.S. and Soviet support of its objectives in the framework for a political settlement, it seemed that Vietnam was in no position to argue. Indeed, based on initial Vietnamese acceptance of the Permanent Five framework, Beijing finally consented to Vietnam's long-standing desire for improved Sino-Vietnamese relations, agreeing to de facto normalization.

As the war dragged on during the first half of 1991 and Vietnam refused to accede to Chinese demands, Beijing

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37. Statement of the Five Permanent Members of the Security Council of the United Nations on Cambodia; Annex "Framework for a Comprehensive Political Settlement of the Cambodian Conflict" August 28, 1990.

suggested that it would abandon its agreement to refrain from arming the Khmer Rouge while the negotiations continued and that it might recommence arms transfer to the Cambodian resistance.<sup>38</sup>

The prospect of renewed Chinese military support for the Khmer Rouge, unending war in Cambodia, and continued international political and economic isolation finally compelled Hanoi and Phnom Penh to accommodate Chinese demands. In June 1991 the Cambodian protagonists met first in Thailand and then Beijing and issued joint communiques that initiated an immediate and indefinite ceasefire and resolved the most significant conflictual issues,<sup>39</sup> providing the basis for an end to the war. These agreements reflected numerous Vietnamese and Phnom Penh compromises. They make no mention of genocide and accord the Khmer Rouge an unqualified opportunity to participate in the prospective coalition government. Indeed, Khmer Rouge leaders would continue to represent Cambodia at the U.N. as members of the SNC delegation. The CGDK and Phnom Penh also agreed that Prince Sihanouk would be the president of the SNC, and Phnom Penh dropped its demand that Hun Sen be the

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38. Statement By the Chinese Foreign Ministry Spokesman in Xinhua, March 7, 1991 in FBIS, DR/China, P.1

39. Thai Joint Communique, June 26, 1991, in FBIS, DR/East Asia PP. 2-3.

vice-president. The two sides also agreed to U.N. supervision of the ceasefire and a freeze on military assistance to the Cambodian parties.

On the sovereignty issue, the two sides reached a mutually advantageous compromise that met most PRC demands. Phnom Penh agreed that the SNC, with Sihanouk as its head, would represent Cambodia in international affairs, including at the U.N., and that it would receive the accreditation of the diplomatic missions in Phnom Penh. Moreover, the SNC would be empowered to draft a new constitution for Cambodia and adopt the new national flag and anthem proposed by Sihanouk. These June 1991 concessions allowed Beijing and the CGDK to claim the sovereignty would be transferred to the SNC from the Phnom Penh government, thus completing the total defeat of the Vietnamese occupation.

Most significantly, the agreement did not take place under U.N. auspices but under China's imprimatur, reflecting the primary role of Chinese policy in bringing about the agreement and also the recognition on the part of all the Cambodian actors that Chinese demands need to be accommodated before there can be peace in Cambodia. Thus, when Sihanouk secured sufficient compromises from Phnom Penh during preliminary meetings in Jakarta, China compelled the Khmer Rouge to fall into line during the meetings in Thailand. Then, after all the Cambodian factions reached



initial agreement in Thailand in June, Beijing welcomed all members of the Supreme National Council, including Hun Sen, to Beijing to convene an "informal" meeting - the first time that China permitted a member of the Phnom Penh leadership to travel to China. The joint communique issued at the conclusion of this meeting reflected important additional agreements concerning the makeup of the SNC and its role in Cambodian politics and on the role of the United Nations in postwar Cambodia. Subsequently, Chinese Premier Li Peng met with Hun Sen, thus offering Chinese recognition of his important role in Cambodia's future leadership. Indeed, Beijing accorded Hun Sen greater prominence than Khieu Samphan, the Khmer Rouge representative.<sup>40</sup>

### Conclusion

Beijing's role in the Cambodian conflict underscores the Chinese leadership's determination to achieve China's security and political objectives in Indochina, regardless of the cost to the civilian population in the Indochinese countries. China was willing to see the war continue indefinitely rather than acquiesce to a compromise agreement that would have allowed continued dominant Vietnamese

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40. Xinhua, July 17, 1991, FBIS, DR/CHI. PP. 12-13.

influence in Phnom Penh or have legitimated Vietnam's 1978 invasion of Cambodia and its installation of the Heng Samrin/Hun Sen government.

As peace comes to Indochina, Chinese leaders have made it clear that they are satisfied with a "Balkanized" Indochina free from the control of an outside power. They expect Cambodia to have friendly relations with Vietnam, especially because in the past the alternative has merely exacerbated local tension and provided an opportunity for outside intervention. They are also prepared to accept a new Cambodian leadership that does not include the Khmer Rouge.

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U.S. AND SOVIET UNION

In the aftermath of the revolutionary victories of 1975 in Indochina, the United States found itself without a policy not only for the three countries affected, but also for the entire South East Asian region as well.<sup>41</sup> However, a new policy did develop and it was the 'China Card' which emerged as the pillar of the diplomatic strategy in the few years following 1975. Though Indochina lies far away from the American continent, it's policy of pursuing global interests made it play an influential role towards the issue. It's first reaction was to support the "human rights" angle of the crisis, - one significant aspect was that the American media did not support the idea of American involvement in the region in the wake of the Vietnamese occupation. As far as the United States was concerned, the Vietnamese control of Cambodia posed a serious security threat to the South East Asian region, this, in turn was central to the vital economic and strategic interests of the United States. More over, Washington had a deep commitment to the ASEAN states which itself was an off shoot from SEATO. Thus any United States policy was designed

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41. David W.P. Elliot, "Recent U.S. Policy Towards Indochina" in Khien Theeravit and Macalister Brown (Ed.) Indochina and the problems of security and stability in South East Asia, (Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok June 1982), PP. 169-179

to bolster the non-communist ASEAN states to oppose the Soviet backed Vietnamese drive for dominance. Washington therefore favoured keeping the heat on Vietnam and kindling anti-Vietnam and anti-Soviet sentiments in ASEAN and else where.<sup>42</sup> Thus, the US policy condemned the Vietnamese aggression, called for withdrawal of troops and refused to recognise the Heng Samrin regime. Its principle attitude was to develop on the so-called China factor.

With the emergence of the Reagan administration in the aftermath of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan the U.S. policy towards the Soviet Union became more confrontationalist.

The U.S. policy under Reagan was based on the assumption that it was absolutely necessary to counter the aggressive ambitions of Vietnam and the growing military presence and influence of the soviets in South East Asia.<sup>43</sup> John. H. Holdaride, the Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs, stated the objectives of

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42. Chintamani Mahapatra, American role in the origin and Growth of ASEAN, (New Delhi; September 1989) P.98.

43. B.K. Shrivastava and Christopher S. Raj, "U.S. Policy Towards South East Asia", Strategic Analysis, Vol. 11(1),

the Reagan administration. First, it supported the progress and stability of the ASEAN. Second, it sought to restrain the Vietnamese aggression by co-operating with ASEAN and third, it wanted to curb the growth of the Soviet military presence in the region of South East Asia. In keeping with its objectives, the United States started providing military assistance of a bilateral nature. Simultaneously, the United States strengthened it's relations with Beijing. It supplied China with sophisticated military technology and also shared it's intelligence data. This close relationship with China put fear into some ASEAN countries, but the United States reassured ASEAN of it's commitment. Thus in geostrategic terms, the region of South East Asia become significant.

It is sufficient to say that the U.S. objectives have been fairly successful in the Cambodian issue. It is in the context of the implementation of such principles and the achievement of such objectives that ASEAN, despite it's ambivalence, would like to see the role of the U.S. in the region over the long run. <sup>44</sup> It's assistance and aid

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44. Diiwandono J.Saedjati, "ASEAN regionalism and the role of the U.S.A, "The Indonesian Quarterly, (vol. 12(1), January 1984), PP. 62-72.

to ASEAN will, in effect, help the ASEAN countries to help themselves. In promoting the national and regional resilience of ASEAN, the U.S. is, in fact, securing its own interests in the region. However, with the coming of the detente and the change in policy of the Soviet Union, there has been much change in international relations. Since 1987, a definite thaw has occurred in the cold war relations and this has had its impact on the Cambodian situation. Washington changed its prior stance and derecognised the Khmer Rouge in July 1990. Moreover, it has initiated its desire to be involved in a direct dialogue with the Vietnamese to prevent the return of the Khmer Rouge to power. In view of its initial policy towards the issue the American policy has come as a fresh breath of air and it may lead to an agreement among the warring factions in Cambodia and prevent the domination of Cambodia either by Vietnam or China. Also, in a major shift in strategy the U.S. has given up its long standing position calling for a Sihanouk-led coalition government in Cambodia. Washington has proposed a, U.N. supervised interim administration and an International Peace Keeping Force as the most feasible way to reach a negotiated settlement in Cambodia, before the country elects a representative government.

## SOVIET UNION

In addition to the post-Vietnam war changes in the region, the Soviet presence meant that a new superpower triangular relationship had emerged in South East Asia. Unlike the other great powers the USSR had very little historical contact with South East Asia. It was only by the mid-fifties, that the Soviet Union under Khrushchev initiated a policy of establishing relations with South and South-East Asia.

In 1967, the formation of ASEAN was met with hostility. Between 1967 and 1971, the Soviet Union continued to pursue a policy of outright hostility. This was because ASEAN was seen as a cold war instrument especially because of its anti communist sentiments. ASEAN also showed a leaning towards the U.S. and Moscow feared that it would become a viable military pact which would replace the ineffective SEATO. Thus, despite the bilateral ties which it had with the individual members, the Soviet Union continued to view ASEAN as a puppet of the United States.<sup>45</sup>

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45. Devandra Kaushik, " Soviet Policy towards South East Asia: An overview", in Parimal Kumar Das (Ed.) The Troubled Region: Issues of Peace and Development in South East Asia, (New Delhi, 1987), P. 167.

In 1971, the ASEAN's initiative for the declaration of ZOPFAN led to a mellowing of the Soviet attitude. Till 1975 it followed a policy of moderate hostility. From mid- 1978 to mid -1979, the Soviet Union Policy towards ASEAN took a volte - face. It no longer considered it to be an imperialist backed organization which was to supplement and complement SEATO. This sudden change could be attributed to the growing conflicts between Cambodia and Vietnam and China and Vietnam. This policy of the Soviet Union could have aimed at winning ASEAN's support against Peking and for a restrained opposition to the Vietnamese occupation of Kampuchea. The Soviet impact on the Cambodian crisis could be seen in its policy at the U.N. First, it opposed and vetoed any moves which were made in the Security Council on the grounds that the Vietnamese forces were needed to protect Cambodia against possible imperialistic and hegemonistic interference in the internal affairs. It appears that the USSR's measures were directed against China. Despite the efforts of China and ASEAN to discredit Vietnam the Soviet Union has continued to support the Vietnamese stance. In July 1981 the International Conference on Cambodia was boycotted by the Soviet Union. It called the ICK as a political farce that was staged by Peking and



Washington. With regard to the question of UN recognition, both the Soviet Union and Vietnam have tirelessly reaffirmed that the People's Revolutionary Council is the only legal and legitimate government of Cambodia and have Jointly condemned ASEAN'S manoeuvring at the UN as gross interference in Kampuchea domestic affairs.<sup>46</sup> Finally, the attempts to establish the coalition government have not been accepted by the Soviet Union. It has condemned the ASEAN'S efforts to set up a viable opposition to the PRK. The so-called plan of a "Third Force", namely, a coalition to replace both Heng Samrin and Pol Pot, was viewed as ASEAN'S meddling in the internal affairs of the PRK.<sup>47</sup>

From 1985 onwards the Cambodian crisis changed with regard to it's Soviet dimension. The coming to power of Gorbachev changed the Soviet attitude towards the situation : The concept of 'perestroika' and 'glasnost' within the Soviet Policy. Due to the reduction of it's overseas military commitments, the Soviet Policy, influenced a

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46. Bilveer Singh "ASEAN, Soviet Union and the Campuchean Imbroglia", Asian Affairs, (Bangladesh, vol. 5, July September 1983), PP. 266.

47. Op. cit., n. 18, P. 268.

change in Vietnam's stance. It was also instrumental in influencing Vietnam to start a withdrawal of troops from Cambodian soil. This, together with the diplomatic initiatives of the ASEAN had witnessed some nominal change in the Cambodian crisis. The actual changes which were to come were in the years after 1987. The emergence of a new East-West Policy and the genesis of detente had its influences on the Cambodian crisis. The Soviet Policy and their rapprochement with the United States from 1987 onwards rushed the peace efforts closer in the Cambodian crisis. The policy of the Kremlin has been successful in two ways. Not only has it directly influenced the Vietnamese withdrawal from the region, but it has also indirectly influenced the United States to reconsider its initial stance. It has been successful in altering the U.S. stand on the Khmer Rouge. The detente has ensured that the genocidal clique of the Khmer Rouge will not return to power which could lead to some settlement among the Cambodian factions.

The conflicting interests of the powers involved - suspended the compromise on the Cambodian issue, their interests and influences in continuing the conflict gave it the form of a vicious circle which the Cambodians

did not have the ability to break out of and which the other Parties did not have the will, or the need, to break. This ensured that the initial policies of the United Nations and the Non-Aligned Movement could not be implemented. It appears that the United Nations and NAM efforts could not succeed because the Cambodian crisis was mainly an issue of the cold war. With regard to this, one can note that the entanglement of China, the United States, the Soviet Union and ASEAN made the problem more intricate. The ASEAN was used as an instrument of western diplomacy. At present however, there appears to be a solution in sight. This can be attributed to the lessening of interest of the superpowers in the internal affairs of Cambodia and the emergence of detente. Not only did the Soviet Policy influence the withdrawal of the Vietnamese forces but it also influenced the United State's derecognition of the Khmer Rouge which in turn led to the end of U.S. support to the cause of China and ASEAN. The issue has become a Cambodian cause and it will now be easier for the international community to take concerted action to solve the Cambodian problem once and for all.

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CHAPTER-III

EARLIER EFFORTS TOWARDS PEACE

To understand the real significance of the accord and the difficulties in store, a grasp of the background becomes necessary. Prince Sihanouk has been the lynchpin of Cambodian politics since the French crowned him King in 1941. Twelve years later he led Cambodia to independence.

In 1955, realizing he could exert more power as a politician than a King, he abdicated, swept national elections, and ruled for the next 15 years with a unique brand of personal populism that tried to unite Buddhism, socialism and democracy. He managed to keep Cambodia out of the Indochina bloodbath until the U.S. President Richard Nixon, began bombing Cambodia in 1969. Prince Sihanouk was ousted in a U.S. backed coup in 1970.<sup>1</sup>

The problem of Cambodia started mainly when in 1975 the Marxist Khmer Rouge took control of the country by overthrowing President Lon Nol.<sup>2</sup> The Khmer Rouge installed Prince Norodom Sihanouk as the head of state, but the alliance was a shortlived one. In the election held in March 1976, a new

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1. J.S. Girling, "Cambodia and the Sihanouk Myths", South East Asian Affairs, (ISEAS Singapore, 1971) PP. 1-17.
  2. Serge Thion, "Chronology of Khmer Communism 1940- 1982," in David Chondler and Ben Kiernan (Ed) Revolution and its Aftermath in Kampuchea: Eight Essays, (South East Asia Studies, Yale University, 1982), PP. 291-319.

cabinet under Mr. Pol pot came to power. The Pol Pot regime ruled the country by unleashing a reign of terror and destruction.

During the Pol Pot regime, Cambodia's relations with its neighbours deteriorated, especially with Vietnam. These strained relations forced the Russian-backed Vietnamese forces to invade Cambodia. Although Cambodia was backed by China, it failed to contain the "Cambodian Liberation Front for National Renewal" who managed to overthrow the Pol Pot regime on January 8, 1979. A new government backed by Vietnam under Mr. Heng Samrin assumed power. But the Khmer Rouge, encouraged by their success of retaining their seat in the UN, waged a guerrilla warfare against the Heng Samrin government. However, against all odds, the Heng Samrin government managed to consolidate its position and succeeded in countering the Khmer Rouge, who were by now confined to a small area in the west of the country.

Under such circumstances, the forces opposed to the Vietnam backed regime formed a coalition government in exile in Kuala Lumpur. Partners in the coalition were Khieu Samphan, the Khmer Rouge Prime Minister, Prince Norodom Sihanouk and Sonn San, head of the Khmer People's National Liberation Front. The coalition tried to secure international support. Vietnam in order to counter the move made by the coalition announced that it would withdraw all its troops from

Cambodia by 1990.<sup>3</sup> The UN, on its part sent a special representative to take stock of the prevailing situation. The Cambodian government made it clear that under no circumstances would it allow a government supported by the Khmer Rouge to be installed.

China, the main supporter of the Coalition Government of Kampuchea (CGDK), put forward their plan insisting on total withdrawal of Vietnamese troops; end of the guerrilla war; an interim government to assume power headed by Prince Sihanouk; and an impartial election under international supervision. On its part it promised to act as a guarantor of the accord.

Serious efforts at peace had been initiated by Indonesia, Thailand and France and in mid 1988 an informal meeting was held at Bagor, Indonesia.<sup>4</sup> At this point it was firmly asserted that the Khmer Rouge would not be allowed to return to power. The Cambodian Premier Hun Sen presented a seven-point peace plan in which Prince Norodom Sihanouk would head a national reconciliation council. But he emphasised that it would not step aside before elections. Prince Norodom Sihanouk on his part suggested equal sharing of power among the four factions by calling for a quadripartite government with four co-ministers and an army with four generals.

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3. B.D. Arora, " Vietnam : A Great Desire for Peace", World Focus, (vol. 9(6), June 1988), p.13.

4. For details see, Carlyle A Thayer, "Obtaining and securing Place within Kampuchea : The Next Phase", in Asia Pacific Region : Conflicting Security Concepts (International Institute for Asia - Pacific Studies, New Delhi April 1989), pp. 103-125

The fourth meeting of the rival leaders Hun Sen and Prince Norodom Sihanouk was held in Jakarta in early May, 1989. Here Hun Sen agreed to some of Prince Sihanouk's demands. He accepted the new flag of red and blue colour ( of Sihanouk) discarding the old one, a red flag; a new national anthem; a few constitutional amendments; and Buddhism as the state religion. It was also decided to abolish capital punishment. The official name of the state was changed from the People's Republic of Kampuchea to the Republic of Cambodia.<sup>5</sup> These agreements were accepted by Hun Sen to bring an end to the conflict.

At the end of the summit a compromise formula was represented, which got the approval of Prince Norodom Sihanouk. The main provisions of the formula being (i) the Prince accepted the offer to return to the homeland as the Head of the State, with the present Government in Phnom Penh remaining intact; (ii) the Prince agreed to preside over a Supreme Council, including the Prime Minister and two Vice-Presidents, charged with the task of conducting election within three months after the Vietnamese pullout; and Mr. Hun Sen to continue as Prime Minister and the two Vice-Presidents to be inducted in the set-up to be Mr. Sonn San and Mr. Khieu Samphan.

At the peace conference held in Paris in August 1989 the compromise formula did not find favour with the warring

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5. Bangkok Post May 12 (1989),

factions. The main obstacle was over power sharing among the four Cambodian groups in a provisional Government before the general election were held. The groups could not agree also on the role of the UN in the interim period. The two main points separating the Cambodian factions were (i) the making of an international force to supervise the withdrawal of Vietnamese troops from Cambodia and ways of preventing any one faction, particularly the murderous Khmer Rouge rebel bands, from seizing control after the withdrawal; and (ii) who will hold the state power during the transition period ?<sup>6</sup>

With the withdrawal of Vietnamese troops from Cambodia, the guerrilla attacks on the Hun Sen government increased. This promoted the European Parliament to recognise the Hun Sen government and stop aid to guerrilla forces. Australia put forward a plan by which Hun Sen was required to step down to clear the way for a free and fair poll under UN auspices.<sup>7</sup>

In the meantime, the five permanent Security Council members resumed talks on January 16, 1990 and endorsed a 16-point plan to enhance the United Nations' role in Cambodia, in solving the problem. The 16-point statement said the UN would supervise a ceasefire, maintain security, help administer

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6. Bangkok Post August 29 (1989).

7. Sydney Morning Herald Nov. 25, (1989).



the country and create conditions for holding of a free general election. The UN would also carry out a verification of the withdrawal of foreign troops from Cambodia. However, the statement added that questions regarding Cambodian sovereignty should be resolved with the agreement of Cambodian parties.<sup>8</sup>

The Cambodian Premier soon dropped his opposition to a UN administered election in Cambodia. Mr. Hun Sen further agreed to meet the resistance leader Prince Norodom Sihanouk in Tokyo in early June. In June 1990 Thailand brought together Phnom Penh Prime Minister Hun Sen with resistance leaders Prince Norodom Sihanouk, Prime Minister Sonn San and Khmer Rouge leader Khieu Samphan in Tokyo. But despite intensive lobbying by Thai officials prior to the Tokyo talks, the Khmer Rouge's Khieu Samphan walked out, leaving Hun Sen and Sihanouk to sign the document. The agreement called for a ceasefire to be followed by the formation of a 12-member Supreme National Council, with six seats for Phnom representatives and the other six to be divided among the three resistance groups.

The major outside countries now showed growing flexibility. China showed a willingness to meet Vietnamese representatives along with Indonesia and Laos. Then in mid 1990 came the US volte face : from supporting the CGDK, it withdrew its recog-

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8. Indonesian Times January 18, (1990).

nitition and showed willingness to negotiate with Vietnam.<sup>9</sup> Then came the fresh UN initiative, the Security Council Peace Plan in August 1990. The plan called for setting up the SNC and for the verification, monitoring and supervision of the ceasefire by the United Nations' Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC). Further, the states participating in the Paris conference were required to enter into a multi-lateral agreement to recognise and respect the independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity and inviolability, neutrality and national unity of Cambodia. Other U.N. members could also declare their adherence to the agreement. It envisaged the SNC ceding powers to UNTAC, which includes foreign affairs, defence, finance, public security and information, as also authority over organisations and officers who could directly influence the outcome of elections. SNC would represent Cambodia 'extemally' and occupy the seat of Cambodia in the U.N. and its specialised agencies and international organisations.<sup>10</sup>

Prince Sihanouk was found suitable to head the SNC by all the factions concerned. But the tardy peace process progressed studdenly in the course of a few months to a fruitful culmination in October 1991.<sup>11</sup>

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9. Statesman February 10, (1990)

10. Indonesia Times August 4, (1990)

11. Financial Express September 18, (1990)

EFFORTS LEADING UP TO THE PARIS ACCORD

Individual nations in the region, such as Indonesia and Thailand, had contributed to the peace process in a more direct fashion by being a direct party to a number of parleys between the warring groups. The Jakarta Informal Talks, the two rounds that started in 1988, the on-and-off get-together in Thailand - the more recent one in Pattaya - had gone the distance in bridging the gap between the feuding Khmer groups. And the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) will taken credit for keeping the Cambodian issue alive regionally and internationally.

With the withdrawal of Vietnamese troops from Cambodia, the scene was set for a UN role. USA too decided in July 1990 that it would no longer recognise the UN seat occupied by the Coalition government of Democratic Kampuchea and was willing to negotiate with Vietnam on the future of Cambodia.<sup>12</sup> Apparently the perverse attitude of the Khmer Rouge to any peace moves became clear to the USA.

On 31 August 1990, the five permanent members of the UN Security Council agreed upon a Peace Plan for Cambodia. A ceasefire between various factions involved in the Cambodian conflict, holding of free and fair elections, administering the country and provision for "perpetual neutrality" in the

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12. Hindu July 20, 1990

constitution were some of the steps envisaged in the plan for a comprehensive solution to the Cambodian issue. The plan, finalised by the U.S., the Soviet Union, France, Britain and China also called for setting up a Supreme National Council (SNC) which will be more or less a symbolic body as the entire administration will be run by the U.N.

The plan called for the verification, monitoring and supervision of the ceasefire by the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC).

That the Khmer groups have kept on with the talks for peace in Cambodia in the last two years or so is no small achievement given their known political stance and the aversion of some of them to go to the negotiating table. In June 1991, the Government in Phnom Penh and the alliance against it had agreed to a ceasefire and a ban on receiving arms from outside, especially from China and Vietnam. Then at the Pattaya beach of Thailand in August the various Khmer factions met under the banner of the Supreme National Council (SNC).

Although the United Nations peace blueprint of August 1990 called for the complete dismantling of all the fighting force, this was easier said than done. For its part, the Khmer Rouge, the strongest group fighting the Government, jumped at the idea for obvious political and propaganda reasons. The Phnom Penh Government would not endorse it for the reason that it had always suspected the intentions of

the dreaded Pol Potists. The fear was that officially the genocidal gang might seem favourable to the idea but continue to nurse the ambition of staging a comeback. If the Phnom Penh regime wanted to maintain all its forces, it was obviously to meet the threat of the Khmer Rouge at any later date. The two other small factions of the anti-Phnom Penh alliance - the Sihanoukists and the Khmer People's National Liberation Front - also had some reservations. But after the parleys of August, the warring factions have agreed to a 70 per cent troop demobilisation, with the remaining units to be grouped and relocated to specifically designated contonment areas under the supervision of the United Nations Transitional Authority For Cambodia (UNTAC).

No less significant has been the understanding on the political front as one of the festering problems had to do with the authority of the Supreme National Council (SNC), particularly its relationship with UNTAC. The comprehensive plan as laid out by the world body called upon UNTAC to impose its solutions if the SNC was not in a position to reach an agreement. This clause came about as it was feared that a consensus might be difficult to come by in the SNC where decisions have to be unanimous. But at Pattaya, the factions empowered Sihanouk to make the "final decision" during the interim period after further consultations with the members of the SNC and the special delegate of the United Nations. This was, indeed, a positive development when compared with the earlier positions - the anti-Phnom

Penh alliance going by the U.N. plan and the Cambodian Government insisting that the overall authority for the country should rest with the SNC where decisions are to be taken by a two-thirds majority.

In September the last obstacle to peace was overcome through an agreement on electoral process - a compromise between a majority vote wanted by Phnom Penh and a proportional system demanded by others.

The achievements following the Thailand meet was a major breakthrough and led to the Paris accord - a modified version of the UN plan. In agreeing to it the Hun Sen Government has given up one of its major demands - that the Khmer Rouge, one of three guerilla factions, should be condemned for the genocide it committed during its years in power (1974-79) and in fact that its leaders, like Pol Pot, should undergo a Nuremburg-style trial. It does not say much for the Western powers commitment to human rights that the Hun Sen Government was pressurised to give up this condition in the face of China's resistance. The Phnom Penh Government is also unhappy over the clause envisaging the disbanding of forces as this gives an unfair advantage to the guerillas - particularly the Khmer Rouge.

The UN peace plan envisages a UN Peacekeeping Force to supervise the ceasefire, disarm the forces and keep peace and a civilian wing to run the country in conjunction with the SNC and oversee the elections.

FACTORS LEADING TO ACCORD

How is it that, when even two years back the four warring factions in Cambodia had seemingly irreconcilable differences among themselves, the course of a few months in 1991 has seen them reach an accord ?

There is no doubt that the sustained and patient efforts of Indonesia, Thailand and France have paid off, ultimately, to bring the parties to come to a negotiated settlement. But even more than that it is the changed international circumstances. No observer can miss the fact that the parties concerned in the matter were not merely the four warring groups in Cambodia there were other big players - China, Vietnam, the USA and the Soviet Union.

The changed international environment had a lot to do with the Khmer groups trying to find a way out of the impasse.

With the dramatic changes taking place in the Soviet Union and eastern Europe the two Asian communist powers, China and Vietnam, realised that the strategic situation had undergone dramatic changes and it was in their interests to bury the hatchet and for that the settling of the Cambodian problem was a prerequisite. The overthrow of Pol Pot in 1979 was the beginning of a rapid downslide in their bilateral relations. Beijing had never forgiven Hanoi for that. The border dispute between them erupted into a battle of sorts

in 1979, and they sparred over the Spratly islands in the South China Sea in 1988. Politically China insisted on a role for the Khmer Rouge in a post settlement phase, and after holding on to high ground, both Vietnam and the Government in Cambodia relented, showing not only flexibility but also some pragmatism: it is 'easier' to control the Khmer Rouge from within the governmental structure. A settlement between the Khmer Rouge and the communist Hun Sen government - though some in the West expected that - was not favoured because both Hanoi and Beijing were agreed that it was an international and not a purely regional problem and therefore, the UN should play an important role.

Things began to move rapidly when Vietnam Defence Minister Le Due Anh was invited to visit Beijing. The general paid a visit in July and agreement was reached : a constructive role was to be given to the Khmer Rouge and in return Beijing expressed willingness to accept the Hun Sen government. Mr. Hun Sen whom China never recognised as Cambodia's legitimate Prime Minister visited Beijing twice in July and held discussions with Mr. Li Peng. This was followed by Vietnamese Deputy Foreign Minister Nguyen Dy Nien's visit to China. In a joint statement issued with his Chinese counterpart on August 10, it was agreed to "quietly restore relations in economy, trade, communication, postal services and other fields".

Once relations between China and Vietnam were on the



mend, a settlement of the Cambodian problem became easy. It clearly shows that the Cambodian fighting was prolonged because of the strategic interests of external powers; left to themselves and deprived of outside support, the problem would have been resolved much earlier.

Yet, the factions cannot escape blame. The Sihanoukists and the Son Sann group were prepared to ally themselves with the Khmer Rouge in spite of being fully aware of the bloody deeds of the Pol Pot gang; they provided the respectable facade and enabled the West to support the Khmer Rouge.

Economic realities accompanying the political changes also played a role in hastening the peace process. The fall of communism in Eastern Europe and changes in Soviet Union certainly affected the inflow of aid to Vietnam and the Cambodian Government.

What is significant about the Cambodian problem is that it can only be understood in the context of the rivalries of the great powers. China thwarted in its ambition to dominate tried to bleed Vietnam white by supporting Khmer Rouge. The West was willing to support China in its game because it perceived China as an ally against the Soviet Union. Now that the strategic environment has undergone a dramatic change, the earlier perceptions have become meaningless; Cambodia has lost its international importance. It is no longer a battle field where external powers fight through proxies. A settlement is therefore possible.

## PARIS ACCORD

Southeast Asia and the world at large must have a sigh of relief at the historic signing of the Paris accord on Cambodia that would hopefully pave the way for the return of normality to that hapless country after nearly two decades.

The Paris accord came on October 23, 1991. Cambodia's warring factions and the 19 member-states of the Paris conference signed the treaty. The treaty is aimed at halting a 13 year old civil war between the Vietnamese-backed Government of Prime Minister Hun Sen and a three-party guerilla coalition comprising the Cambodian National Resistance of Prince Norodom Sihanouk, Son Sann's Khmer People's National Liberation Front, and the Chinese-backed Khmer Rouge led by Khieu Samphan.

The signatories included besides Cambodia represented by the Supreme National Council (SNC), Javier Perez de Cuellar, the five UN Security Council permanent members, the ASEAN countries (Brunei, Singapore, Indonesia, the Philippines, Thailand, Malaysia), India, Vietnam, Laos and Yugoslavia.

## HIGHLIGHTS OF THE AGREEMENT

Cambodia will emerge as a nonaligned nation and its perpetual neutrality will be proclaimed and enshrined in the country's new Constitution to be adopted after free and fair elections sometime in early 1993.

The Paris conference peace agreement signed on October

23 ensures that Cambodia, after becoming independent, will "refrain" from permitting the introduction or stationing of foreign forces, including military personnel in any form whatsoever.

The agreement also prevents the establishment or maintenance of foreign military bases, strong points of facilities in Cambodia, except pursuant to U.N. authorization for the implementation of the comprehensive political settlement.

According to an article in the agreement, Cambodia will terminate treaties and agreements that are incompatible with its sovereignty independence, territorial integrity and inviolability, neutrality and national unity.

The parties to the agreement, under Article 2 pledged to recognise and to respect in every way the abovementioned provisions of the article one and to this end among other things they undertake:

- To refrain from entering into any military alliances or other military agreements with Cambodia that would be inconsistent with Cambodia's neutrality, without prejudicing Cambodia's right to acquire the necessary military equipment, arms, munitions and assistance to enable it to exercise its inherent right of self-defence and to maintain law and order.

- To refrain from interference in any form whatsoever, whether direct or indirect, in the internal affairs of Cambodia;

- To refrain from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of Cambodia, or in any other manner inconsistent with the purposes of the United Nations;

- To settle all disputes with Cambodia by peaceful means will enjoy the rights and freedom embodied in the universal declaration of human rights and other relevant international human rights instruments.

Without directly referring to the atrocities of Pol Pot's regime, the agreement provides that Cambodia will have the right to take effective measures to ensure that the policies and practices of the past shall never be allowed to return and ensure respect for observance of human rights and fundamental freedom in that country.

The article also commits the other parties to this agreement to ensure prevention of recurrence of human rights abuses. The U.N. Commission on Human Rights should continue to monitor closely the human rights situation in Cambodia, including, if necessary, the appointment of a special rapporteur.

In the event of a violation or threat of violation to the independence and sovereignty of Cambodia, the parties to

this agreement will consult immediately with a view to adopting appropriate steps to ensure respect for these commitments and resolving any such violations through peaceful means.

In the event of serious violations of human rights in Cambodia, they will call upon the competent organs of the U.N. to take appropriate steps for the prevention and suppression of such violations in accordance with the relevant international instruments.

The agreement on " reconstruction should aid Cambodians without prejudice" provides for undertaking a programme which will undertake detailed assessments of Cambodia's human, natural and other economic assets. "It will be necessary for a census to be conducted, developmental priorities identified, and the availability of resources, internal and external, determined. To this end, there will be scope for sending to Cambodia factfinding missions from the U.N. system, international financial institutions and other agencies, with the consent of the future Cambodian Government."

The agreement reiterated that no attempt should be made to impose a development strategy on Cambodia.

#### PROSPECTS

The way to peace is not all that smooth and easy. There are stumbling blocks, the major one being the role

that the Khmer Rouge chooses to adopt.

Few in the comity of nations believed that Pol Pot is no longer calling the shots, that he has been "retired". In fact, recent intelligence reports have it that he is very much leading the genocidal gang. And fewer still believe that the Khmer Rouge has changed its ways to get political credibility and respectability. There will always be scepticism in some Asian capitals as Pol Pot's track record is for all to see. It is now left to countries such as China to see that the game is played according to the rules. The Khmer Rouge continues to control many refugee camps through coercion, and their antiurban philosophy has surfaced in their warmup election statements. Western leaders have warned them not to bring back the days of Pol Pot, but it remains problematic as to just what anyone can do if the Khmer Rouge decides to do exactly that. A Khmer Rouge electoral victory is not too far-fetched. And nobody can be certain that the Khmer Rouge will accept the election result if it is unfavourable to them.

Disarming a guerilla force can be a problem; once the arms are hidden the guerillas can merge with the people. Thus the agreement to reduce the armies by 70 per cent and disarm the remainder and place them under the UN, which will

also control and store all the weapons and ammunition is really meaningless because while it can be applied strictly to the government forces, the guerillas will be able to hide their arms and ammunition. The government was therefore justified in demanding that its special A-3 police force should be excluded from the formula of disarmament. It was with some difficulty that the Khmer Rouge was persuaded to accept this.

The UN is supposed to supervise the orderly return of thousands of refugees now on the border with Thailand to destinations of their choice. This can be a problematic exercise in that the Khmer Rouge, with an eye on the elections, has sought to repatriate forcibly refugees into areas under their control.

Among the Cambodian groups, the Khmer Rouge is the one capable of wrecking the process of peace.

Another problem is that of money. To campaign for the elections all the Cambodian factions are scrambling for funds. Even more difficult is forcing the world community to provide the cash needed to start the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia. UNTAC will be more than a peace-keeping force. Because of the distrust that exists among the Cambodians, it will have to work as a de facto government, running Phnom Penh, disarming the various armies, and organising elections along the way. It could take years to

complete its task; just opening shop carries a two - billion dollar price tag.

Cambodia's challenges in "peace time" are significant. The war has ruined the country. Law and order has deteriorated. The locals have got used to a violent way of life and disarming them is going to be a tough proposition. Social problems may also crop up, as the Cambodians who had remained in the country may not take too kindly to the idea of giving special attention to those who had fled.

#### FURTHER DEVELOPMENTS

Even before the Paris<sup>6</sup> accord, the Phnom Penh regime took certain steps to make it more acceptable in the changed international scene. The regime abandoned socialism for liberal democracy with a multi-party system and guaranteed human rights for all. Having discarded its Marxist-Leninist ideology the Communist Kampuchean People's Revolutionary Party has renamed itself the Prachachorn Party (People's Party). Heng Samrin has been replaced as president by Chea Sim, though it is Hun Sen who will be wielding power as PM.

Prince Norodom Sihanouk returned from China to Phnom Penh on November 14, 1991 as head to Cambodia's interim government. He was escorted back by the Cambodian Prime Minister



Mr. Hun Sen. The return of the Prince set in motion the UN sponsored peace plan for the country.

On November 23, it was reported that the Cambodian People's Party (Mr. Hun Sen's party) had arrived at an agreement with the Funcinpec, the former resistance party led by Prince Norodom Ranariddh, son of Prince Sihanouk. Besides forming an alliance to fight the 1993 elections, they had also agreed to form a coalition government in the immediate future. The Funcinpec had been formed in exile by Prince Sihanouk after Vietnamese forces occupied Cambodia in 1979.

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CHAPTER-IV

CONCLUSION

Seeing the progress of events that have occurred in Cambodia over the last fifteen years it becomes evident that the actual crisis in Cambodia started even prior to the Vietnamese intervention. The crisis actually began with the emergence of the Democratic Kampuchea Regime and was manifested in the atrocities which were perpetuated by the Pol Pot - Ieng Sary clique.

Though the crisis took shape basically as an internal issue of Cambodia, it had widespread ramifications on the international scenario, considering the state of international relations today, it is difficult to express whether any crisis can remain singularly internal. The nature of relations among nations and the growing interdependence between states makes it almost impossible to isolate situations wholly internal. In the case of Cambodia this proved to be true because the internal problems had external manifestations, when the Vietnamese intervened in Cambodia, the crisis was further enlarged. What had till then remained largely an internal issue was cast out as a problem of intervention and occupation. The overthrow of Pol Pot did not bring about the much expected sense of relief but furthered the issue in the international arena. This set the scene for the future of the region which found itself threatened by the conflicting ideologies of the

cold war cult. Not only did Vietnam find itself in the quagmire of the Cambodian issue but it also pulled China, ASEAN the United States and the erstwhile Soviet Union along with it, the whole issue of the Cambodian crisis and the deadlock among the international powers had occurred only due to the ideological leanings of these powers. The conflicting ideologies of the East-West relations was manifested in the Cambodian crisis despite direct participation by either United States or the (erstwhile) Soviet Union or China. In carrying on the war in Cambodia, the two powers managed to use the regional states as their pawns. For each of the nations entangled in the issue has caused the crisis to develop to the extent to which it has reached. Each principal actor has contributed to the deepening of the conflict in Cambodia. The need to have its security ensured caused Vietnam to use Cambodia as its buffer with China. China for its part tried to influence the resistance in to opposing the new Vietnamese backed government and thus weaken the Vietnamese presence. The role of ASEAN too has not helped the Cambodian state. Its decision to throw its lot with China and assist the resistance made it a willing participant in keeping the war alive. The Soviet Union and the United States have kept alive the flames and have used the regional states as their instruments to fight

their cold war battle. For Cambodia the war has meant nothing but destruction and she has become a pawn in the game among the international players. In trying to achieve and secure their own ends all the international powers have lost sight of one important factor - The human angle. In trying to make Individual gains, the nations had forgotten the need to ensure peace and progress through collective action. The world community felt that the withdrawal of the Vietnamese troops would be the beginning of the process whereby the Cambodians would settle their problems by themselves. The change in policy of the United States and China's claim that a dominant role would not be demanded for the Khmer Rouge are strong initiatives towards peace.

There is no doubt that the sustained and patient efforts of Indonesia, Thailand and France have paid off, ultimately to bring the parties to come to a negotiated settlement. But even more than that it is the changed international circumstances. The changed international environment had a lot to do with the Khmer groups trying to find a way out of the impasse. With the dramatic changes taking place in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe the two Asian Communist powers, China and Vietnam, realised that

and the strategic situation had undergone dramatic changes and it was in their interests to bury the hatchet and for that the settling of the Cambodian problem was a prerequisite. Once relations between China and Vietnam were on the mend a settlement of the Cambodian problem became easy.

Economic realities accompanying the political changes also played a role in hastening the peace process. The fall of communism in Eastern Europe and changes in (earst-while) Soviet Union certainly affected the inflow of aid to Vietnam and the Cambodian Government.

What is significant about the Cambodian problem is that it can only be understood in the context of the rivalries of the great powers. China thwarted in its ambition to dominate tried to bleed Vietnam white by supporting Khmer Rouge. The West was willing to support China in its game because it perceived China as an ally against the (earst while) Soviet Union. Now that the strategic environment has undergone a dramatic change, the earlier perceptions have become meaning less, Cambodia has lost its international importance. It is no longer a battle field where external powers fight through proxies. Once the change in security perceptions of the interested powers was

clear the hectic negotiating process for the settlement of the crisis in Cambodia could be taken up with initiatives from all sides and the conflicting parties extending cooperation and concessions in many forms and changing their earlier stands. Though a solution is in sight, the problem is not yet solved and there remains political instability. The road to a settlement is long.

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