

community, and that they would involve risks. At the same time, it is difficult to imagine a more unquestionable humanitarian objective, or a more propitious time, to attempt such an innovation with the full support of the world community. Any such effort could also contribute immensely to the climate for resolution of the conflicts themselves.

Indochina

In spite of intense peace making efforts in 1989, and the Soviet-encouraged withdrawal of Vietnamese troops from the country in September, the conflict in Cambodia continued at year's end, with ominous signs ahead. Following the failure of the Paris conference in August to achieve any breakthrough to peace, fighting again intensified. It also became clear that, through the complex internal and external alliances that have been formed, there is a real danger of the murderous Khmer Rouge of Pol Pot re-emerging as the dominant force in a new government, with the *de facto* acquiescence of the international community.

The situation that has emerged exemplifies the murkiness of the legal, political, moral and tactical issues that can develop in such conflicts and in the international jockeying to which they give rise. Even though the Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia in 1978 displaced the lunatic genocidal regime of Pol Pot, the fact of the invasion and concerns over Vietnamese and Soviet intentions led to widespread non-recognition of the new regime of Hun Sen, and varying degrees of international support for opposition factions.

The Khmer Rouge was explicitly supported by China throughout but with the emergence of a loose coalition of all opposition forces, nominally led by Prince Sihanouk, the vast majority of countries in the United Nations in November 1989 conceded the Khmer Rouge a role in a comprehensive political settlement that ought to be negotiated to provide an interim government and internationally-supervised elections. Canada and most other Western nations were part of this majority – stressing that their goal was not to encourage Khmer Rouge dominance but to accept the inescapable reality of its presence. Finland and Sweden abstained on the resolution in an effort to show a shift in concern from the question of Vietnamese aggression to the threat of Khmer Rouge dominance. Australia and Britain have been at pains to strengthen their links with the Hun Sen government and with Vietnam, with Britain pointedly recognizing that Vietnamese withdrawal has indeed taken place. Canada too has made moves to give some credit and credibility to the Hun Sen government, and stresses that, while still