

resolved by the Cambodians themselves.<sup>117</sup> This process, which is already underway with the informal "cocktail party" meetings initiated by Indonesia, is acceptable to all those involved in the conflict, whether directly or indirectly, including China.

- the difficulty which those states that wish to keep Vietnam diplomatically and economically isolated have experienced in maintaining a solid front. Disagreements within ASEAN concerning policy towards Vietnam; the beginning of direct trade links by some members of the Association and the increasing presence of Japan (and of Korea) in Vietnam, are some of the factors which threaten the effectiveness of ASEAN's original sanctions. The Association risks being left with only a symbolic unity as expressed in its annual resolution at the United Nations. In short, all parties now have an interest in reaching an honourable solution.

If one eliminates the possibility of a military victory by one side or the other in the foreseeable future there would seem to be two possible outcomes: the first is that the status quo would be maintained until 1990 when the Vietnamese intend to withdraw all their troops; the second is a compromise which would turn Cambodia into a neutral state.

For reasons already given it seems very unlikely that either side can win a decisive victory; despite all its efforts, Vietnam will not succeed in putting an end to the resistance movements by 1990 any more than the latter can overthrow the regime of Heng Samrin by force. As for China, it is inconceivable that in the present circumstances it could launch a military attack on Vietnam in order to force an immediate withdrawal of Vietnamese troops from Kampuchea.

On the other hand it is quite likely that the present situation may continue unchanged until 1990. During the next three years each of the principal antagonists, while preserving its position unchanged, is likely to

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<sup>117</sup> *Ibid.*, 5 December 1987, page 36.