

However, if the current attempt by Vietnam to come to some settlement with Kampuchea is coupled with a willingness to discuss the border dispute with China, there is a basis for hope.

The validity of the proposal discussed in this paper should be seen in this context. The difficulties that will be faced. There are encouraging negotiations in this region between the different actors. However, as long as these nations do not cooperate in a regional solution--which would enable them to reduce their military efforts and, at the same time, improve their national and regional security, as well as strengthen their economic performance -- the region's stability will continue to be very fragile. Forming a RAN, adapted to regional needs, would certainly be a major step forward.

A Regional Association of Nations in this region might include Vietnam, Laos, Kampuchea and Thailand.⁶ If, at the same time, these countries would cooperate economically, eventually forming a common economic market, both economic and military security could eventually replace the present chaos.

could be the first step leading towards the reduction of international tensions and the establishment of open communication. Thus, it could become one important step in the transition to

CONCLUSION

The existing world-wide trend of "improvements" in the effectiveness of weapons, and the ongoing proliferation of nuclear, chemical and bacteriological weapons, are facts of our time. Furthermore, any serious attempt to avoid war must begin by seeing war as a world-wide phenomenon, not one which can be isolated as an East-West issue. The global political-

⁶ Although Thailand belongs to the ASEAN grouping with Malaysia, Singapore, the Philippines and Indonesia, it would be to its advantage to join an association including the nations of former French Indochina as well. There is nothing to preclude membership of a nation in two regional associations. Such cross-linking can even be an advantage.