

36. KAMPUCHEA

Background

The roots of the current war in Kampuchea may be traced back to the the collapse of French colonial order in Indochina in the 1950s, the subsequent instability of Cambodia as it was then called, and more recently to the genocidal policies of the Khmer Rouge regime during the 1975-78 period. The immediate cause of the war was the invasion and subsequent occupation of Kampuchea by Vietnam in December 1978.

The United Nations General Assembly condemned the Vietnamese occupation in 1979 and the exiled Government of Khieu Samphan continued to occupy Kampuchea's seat in the Assembly. The newly formed Government in Phnom Penh implemented policies designed to revive an economy shattered by a decade of war, while the Vietnamese army launched a counterinsurgency campaign to eradicate opposition forces. These opposition forces formed a loose alliance in 1982, creating the Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea (CGDK) under the formal leadership of Prince Norodom Sihanouk. The CGDK still occupies the Kampuchean seat in the General Assembly.

The Coalition is composed of three groups: the largest force is the remnant of the Pol Pot regime, the Khmer Rouge, which receives military support from China; the other two, the Khmer People's National Liberation Front (KPNLF) and the Sihanoukist National Army (ANS), are non-communist organizations supported by the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and by China. In July 1985 the United States extended military assistance to these two non-communist resistance organizations.

Several proposals to resolve the conflict have been put forward by ASEAN and the Indochinese countries. The Kampuchean Government submitted its own proposal in 1985: it included the holding of elections in 1987 and the complete withdrawal of Vietnamese troops by 1990. In August 1985 the