

## THE TIME FACTOR AND A HARD LINE

The United Nations is the forum where ASEAN continues to gain its most tangible victory. Every autumn since 1979 the Association has sponsored a resolution calling for the withdrawal of all foreign forces from Kampuchea, the restoration of Kampuchea's independence, the right of its people to self-determination, and an undertaking by all the other countries in the region not to interfere in the internal affairs of Kampuchea. In 1979, ninety-one countries voted in favour of this resolution and twenty-one against;<sup>70</sup> in 1987 one hundred and seventeen voted in favour and twenty-one against.<sup>71</sup>

Although every year ASEAN receives increased votes in favour of its resolution it has never obtained the definitive support it hoped for. In July 1981, for instance, ASEAN thought it had succeeded by having a large-scale international conference on the subject of Kampuchea take place in New York. Despite the refusal of Vietnam, the Soviet Union and many other East Bloc countries to attend, ninety-three countries took part. ASEAN did not succeed, however, in getting a resolution adopted which called for the disarmament, under UN supervision, of all the Cambodian factions, the withdrawal of the Vietnamese forces and the holding of free elections.<sup>72</sup> China was strongly opposed to disarming the Khmer Rouge or to any encroachment on the sovereignty of Democratic Kampuchea — the only regime recognized by the United Nations. By supporting China, the United States, to the great displeasure of ASEAN, made China an essential participant in any eventual settlement of the conflict in Indochina.

In September 1983, the five members of ASEAN simultaneously launched a joint appeal for the independence of Kampuchea.<sup>73</sup> The Association referred to the will of the international community and called for a phased withdrawal of the Vietnamese troops. The whole

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<sup>70</sup> See *ASEAN Newsletter*, no. 17, September-October 1986, page 8.

<sup>71</sup> *The New York Times*, 15 October 1987, page A5.

<sup>72</sup> On the 1981 Conference on Kampuchea see for example Justus M. Van der Kroef, "Dynamics of the Cambodian Conflict," *Conflict Studies*, no. 183, London 1986.

<sup>73</sup> BBC, *Summary of World Broadcast (SWB)*, 23 September 1983, page A3/1.