

taken place. The visit of the UN Secretary General in February and the time spent by Prince Sihanouk in Australia were indications of the diplomatic bargaining which was going on. The visit to Vietnam in March of the Australian Foreign Minister, William Hayden, was part of these transactions but this provoked so much controversy that it led to a notable slackening in Australia's diplomatic efforts.⁸⁷ As it happened, Hayden's visit coincided almost exactly with the most serious Vietnamese attacks to date, which the latter launched as part of its 1985 major offensive against the Khmer resistance camps; in addition, Hayden met Hun Sen, the Foreign Minister for the Heng Samrin regime during his visit to Ho Chi Minh City. This meeting was thereafter interpreted as implying recognition of the Phnom Penh regime — quite unacceptable as far as ASEAN was concerned. Indeed, all the Australian initiatives aroused misgivings and opposition, particularly on the part of Indonesia which had seen itself from the very beginning as the power best suited to serve as an intermediary with Vietnam.

From 1984 the contacts which had already been established between Vietnam and Indonesia became more frequent and sometimes produced remarkable results. The most controversial incident occurred when Benny Murdani, the Commander of the Indonesian Armed Forces declared, after his visit to Hanoi in February 1984, that the Indonesian army and the Indonesian people did not look upon Vietnam as the greatest threat to Southeast Asia.⁸⁸ As far as could be told, this statement, which was considered provocative, particularly by the other members of ASEAN, implied that Indonesia, which had not had diplomatic relations with China since 1965, considered the latter to be a greater threat to the area than Vietnam. Indonesia tried — and continues to try — to take initiatives which will encourage the other members of ASEAN to moderate their extreme position and show greater understanding of Vietnamese nationalism and Vietnam's concerns about its own security. Indonesia also insists on the need to give up applying useless sanctions to Vietnam.

⁸⁷ H.S. Leng and S. Silwood, *op.cit.*, pages 103-104.

⁸⁸ On Indonesia's policy towards Vietnam see the very well documented article by Andrew J. MacIntyre, "Interpreting Indonesian Foreign Policy. The Case of Kampuchea 1979-1986," *Asian Survey*, vol. 27, no. 5, May 1987, pages 515-534.