

No communiqué could be issued at the close of the visit. On the other hand the secretary of the Vietnamese Labour Party visited Moscow the following month. At the close of this official visit a communiqué was issued which expressed “a complete identity of views between the two countries concerning foreign policy.”

The first two aid agreements with the Soviet Union were signed shortly after this, one being for immediate assistance, and the second for aid in the context of Vietnam’s second Five Year Plan. In the latter case the aid amounted to US \$2.5 billions.³⁹

In February 1976 Le Duan visited Moscow once again and participated in the 25th Congress of the Soviet Communist Party, where he attributed Vietnam’s victory to the support it had received from the Soviet Union. In December of the same year the Vietnamese Communist Party held its fourth Party Congress in Hanoi, the first such meeting since re-unification. What had been previously been known as the Labour Party, became officially known as the Communist Party of Vietnam and all the pro-Chinese members were expelled from its ranks and from various levels of the bureaucracy.⁴⁰

At the beginning of 1977 China announced that there were seven points at issue between it and Vietnam: Vietnamese slanders concerning China, the land boundary, railway maintenance, the status of the Nansha (Paracels) and Xisha (Spratly) Islands, the waters of the Gulf of Beibu, the position of the Chinese in Vietnam, and economic aid. The list of grievances was a long one but it omitted the real point of contention — the situation in Kampuchea. As it happened, this period of the conflict in Kampuchea was developing in a way which relegated China to the background. Only China’s territorial claims concerning border areas, its control of the Paracels Islands since 3 January 1974, and its claims to sovereignty over the Spratly Islands, constituted more tangible points of

³⁹ Léon Vandermeersh, *Le nouveau monde sinisé*, Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1986, page 115.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, page 115.