

STUDY GUIDE



UNITED NATIONS HISTORIC SECURITY COUNCIL

Agendum-

The Situation in Southeast Asia, 1976.

Freeze Date- 8th September, 1976.

THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

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CHAIRPERSON'S ADDRESS

Greetings Delegates,

The United Nations Security Council stands as the strongest body entrusted with the maintenance of international peace and security, a mandate that extends far beyond conventional warfare and into the complex interplay of ideology, sovereignty and humanitarian responsibility. In 1976, the world finds itself at a risky inflection point where the conclusion of one conflict has not brought stability, but rather unveiled a new and far more intricate web of tensions and alliances (Russia watch out). The end of the Vietnam War has not resulted in peace in Southeast Asia, but instead has created a region known for its uncertainty and ideological divisions.

While the global community hopes to feel relief after the end of a nearly 20 year war, the situation within Democratic Kampuchea (now Cambodia) under the Khmer Rouge has begun to raise serious humanitarian concerns with reports that hint at atrocities on an unprecedented scale- an event that is now recognised as the Kampuchean Genocide with nearly 2 million dead. Adding onto this already fragile environment is the death of the PRC leader Mao Zedong (will be discussed in committee).

Delegates must walk into this committee recognizing that the situation before them is not a singular crisis, but a convergence of multiple issues. As shown above, the agenda for the committee is "The Situation in Southeast Asia, 1976". An agenda that is deliberately broad in scope to empower discussion by granting delegates the flexibility to explore the full scope of issues that define this moment in history.

The Kolkata circuit has long been recognized for its emphasis on technical precision and intellectual capability, both of which are qualities that this committee will both demand and cultivate. Delegates are encouraged to move beyond surface level engagement and immerse themselves in the depths of policy, law, precedent and alliances. This is not merely a simulation of communism

versus capitalism and right versus wrong because on this stage, there is no true right or wrong, the line is blurred and it is our job to find and highlight it.

Every individual present in this committee occupies a position of power and privilege. The power to freely engage with global issues, to voice bespoke perspectives and to influence discourse. As Uncle Ben once said to Peter, "with great power comes great responsibility", the responsibility to approach debate with sincerity and a sense of diplomacy, to respect and celebrate the differences of viewpoints and to contribute meaningfully to discussions. It is important to remember your position as diplomats and know that war is an easy way out, to pull the trigger is easy but to deescalate and to rebuild is difficult. Know that people have lives and that war asks for the same.

With that, I look forward to seeing each one of you rise to the occasion.

Regards,

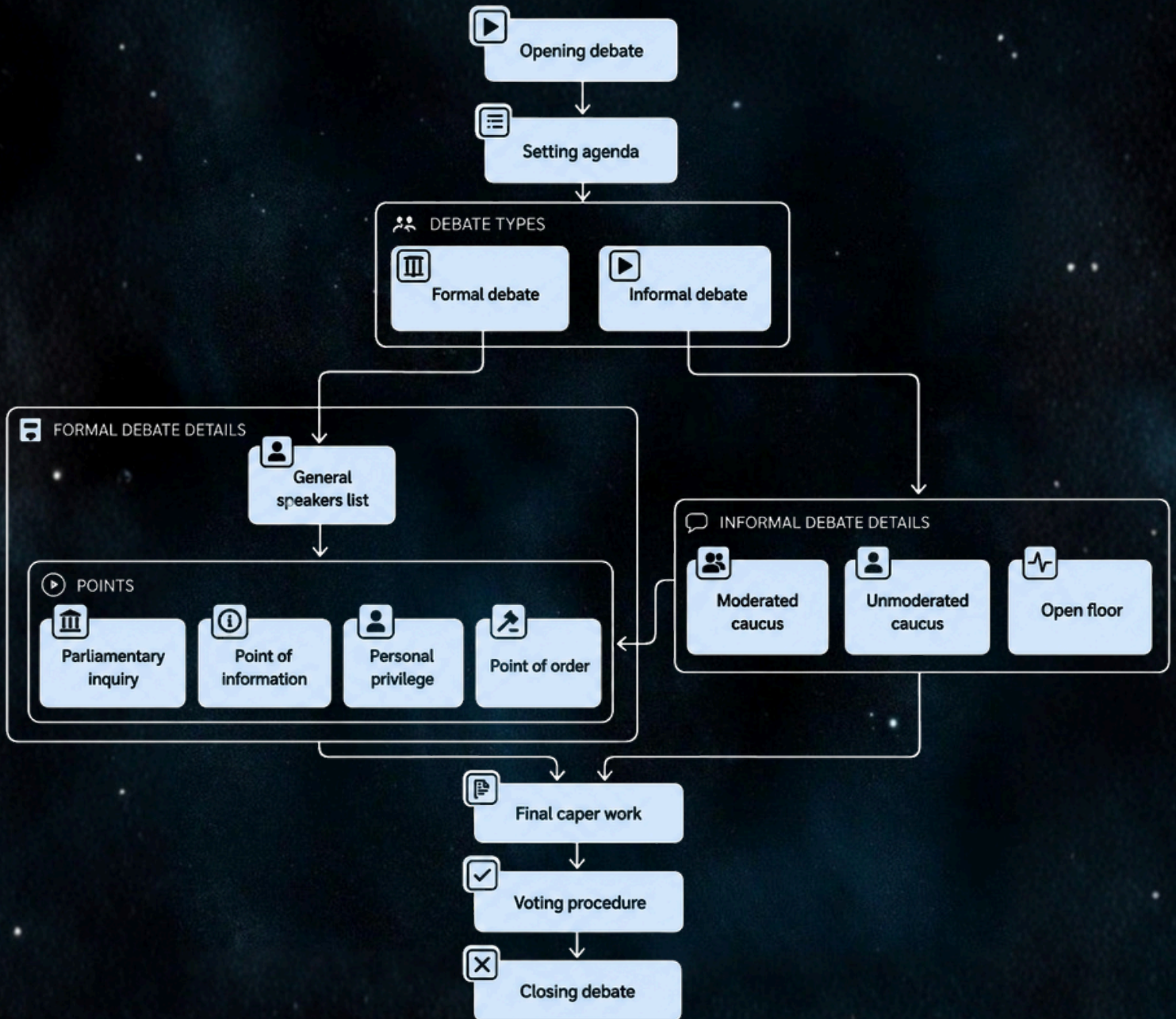
Ayaan Kaushal,

Secretary General,

Chairperson of the United Nations Historic Security Council,

THSMUN'26

FLOW OF DEBATE



THE SECURITY COUNCIL

The United Nations Security Council is the chief executive organ of the United Nations. It is given the mantle and responsibility of maintaining international peace and security. Its powers are given in Chapters VI, VII, VIII and XII of the United Nations Charter.

The United Nations Security Council is empowered under Article 34 of the UN Charter to examine any dispute or situation involving member or observer states that could potentially threaten international peace and security. The Council is responsible for addressing conflicts and preventing situations that may lead to international tension or instability. Its primary functions include:

- **Pacific Settlement of Disputes:**

The Security Council encourages parties involved in a conflict to resolve their disagreements through peaceful methods such as negotiation, mediation, arbitration, or judicial settlement, often through the International Court of Justice.

- **Measures Without the Use of Force:**

If peaceful efforts fail, the Council may impose non-military measures against the aggressor state. These can include economic sanctions, restrictions on trade and communication by air, sea, rail, or post, as well as the suspension of diplomatic relations.

- **Military Action:**

In situations where non-military measures prove ineffective, the Security Council may authorize the use of armed force. Such actions can involve military operations carried out by air, naval, or ground forces contributed by UN member states.

Permanent Members remain the same.

Non Permanent Members- India, Japan, Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, Philippines, Qatar, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, Australia.

OVERVIEW OF THE AGENDA

The agenda focuses on a region undergoing rapid and dangerous change. The end of the Vietnam War has left a power vacuum and uncertainty relating to reliability and diplomacy across Southeast Asia. At the same time, developments within Cambodia raise serious humanitarian concerns thereby forcing the international community to confront difficult questions about intervention and responsibility.

The death of Mao Zedong further adds to this instability as changes within China may significantly impact regional alliances.

This agenda requires delegates to navigate a mix of humanitarian crises, regional conflicts and global power politics. The challenge lies in balancing sovereignty with responsibility in intervention and national interests with international stability.

Importance of Freeze Date

The freeze date of 8 September 1976 is one of the most important aspects of the committee because Southeast Asia at the time stood at the edge of major geopolitical changes whose outcomes were still uncertain. By September 1976, the Vietnam War had ended and Vietnam had reunified under communist rule but the regional order was still dicey despite the fall of Saigon.

Relations between Vietnam and Kampuchea were worsening through border clashes and ideological hostility. The main significance of the freeze date is due to the death of Chinese revolutionary and fashion icon, Mao Zedong. His death on 9 September 1976 would later reshape Chinese politics and foreign policy. The question of the cause of his death is also to be considered uncertain for the purpose of the committee.

At the same time, detente between the United States and the Soviet Union still formally existed, even if it had weakened significantly after the Vietnam War.

The freeze date is equally important regarding Democratic Kampuchea. By September 1976, reports of executions, forced labour and political purges under the Khmer Rouge were circulating internationally, but the full scale of the Cambodian genocide was not yet understood due to the regime's isolation.

Delegates should avoid acting with complete historical certainty regarding events that have not unfolded in their entirety.

From a procedural perspective, the freeze date establishes the limits of admissible information in committee. Delegates are strongly discouraged from referencing post-1976 events unless introduced through Executive Board updates. Any mentions of events occurring after the freeze date will be treated as violations and will be marked accordingly.

TIMELINE

Freeze Date- September 8, 1976

Details that are italicized are fictitious

1946-1954- The first Indochina war: France invades communist Viet Minh forces led by Vietnamese revolutionary Ho Chi Minh. This conflict became part of the larger Cold War struggle after the US classified it to be under their containment doctrine.

1945- In February 1945, the three heads of states Churchill, Roosevelt and Stalin met in Yalta to decide the fate of Europe after the end of the Second World War. Joseph Stalin, who wanted a buffer zone due to increasing tensions between the Soviet Union and the West, violated the Yalta conference conventions and utilised the Soviet Army presence to make most of East Europe fall under the Soviet influence. In July of the same year, the Potsdam conference saw an extreme shift and the ultimate complete breakdown of relations between the Soviets and the West. The Potsdam conference which saw the division of Germany created a huge divide between the initial grand alliance when it finally came to Berlin. Stalin who staked complete claim to Berlin was brutally challenged and cornered by the now more confrontational heads of Clement Atlee and Harry S. Truman. Berlin was divided between a Western portion controlled jointly by the British, Americans and the eventual French. This led to an extreme anger to foster within the Soviets and Stalin refused to cooperate and work with the West due to this humiliation.

1946- Churchill's iron curtain speech- In March of 1946, after the soviet violations of the Yalta agreement, Winston Churchill now out of power but with still massive political influence gave the Iron Curtain Speech. This speech particularly attacked the Soviets and blamed them for the division of Europe which led to the suffering and separation of the people. In February of 1946 the US diplomat George Kennan released the Long Telegram which detailed how the US should treat the Soviet Union.

The Long Telegram also included a detailed account of how the US should respond to the Soviet Union. The US started to support the UK in their atomic arms development and provided a special fund known as the *Crown Donations* to the UK to help rebuild the United Kingdom from the devastation of the Second World War. The total donation amounted to 6 Billion USD. In December of 1946, the KGB after more than a year of strenuous espionage infiltrated the Ministry of Defence records and discovered the documents of operation *unthinkable*. Joseph Stalin upon finding out about this understood that he could no longer continue to treat the UK and US as merely ideological rivals but also as an existential threat to them. Stalin ordered a mass rearmament campaign and the search for raw materials and resources in Siberia and the Arctic territories of the Soviet Union to fund the Soviet expansion. The Soviet Union also fast paced their atomic weapons development. After conducting espionage and even kidnapping key researchers of the Manhattan project the Soviets had an initial prototype of the atomic bomb in 1946.

1947- Truman Doctrine: The United States officially adopts a policy of supporting countries resisting communism. This officially marks the beginning of the containment policy. *The Soviet Union does their first official test of an atomic weapon.*

1949: We see a communist victory in the Chinese Civil War between the communist Communist Party of China and the capitalist Republic of China. Chairman of the PRC Mao Zedong then established the People's Republic of China. American fear over communist expansion in Asia increases as they fear the alliance of communist China and USSR.

1950: The start of the Korean War and the first real case of containment. UNSCR 83 led to the creation of a US led UN task force in Korea to assist the capitalist South Koreans against the North Korean army. This showed the world that the US was not afraid of assisting its capitalist allies and their containment policy was taken more seriously. The US increased their involvement in Asia. America also increases its aid to France in Vietnam. The emergence of the Domino theory can also be attributed to this point in time. It expressed the American fears of Cambodia, Laos and Thailand also falling to communism if Vietnam was allowed to do so. A strong anti communist stance of their population allowed them to fund counter movements to communist activities.

1954- Battle of Dien Bien Phu: A turning point in the Cold War as France suffers a decisive defeat against Vietnamese communist forces. All French colonial influence in the Indochina region collapses and all eyes turn to the US.

China and the Soviet Union who wanted to avoid a Korea like situation whereby the nation would be divided between a communist and capitalist regime secretly started supporting the Vietnamese. The Soviet Union's support was more technological and intelligence related. While China in a similar manner towards the end of the Korean War provided their support in terms of man power. By the end of this conflict, the French had suffered significant losses. Due to the Vietnamese exploiting guerilla warfare tactics was able to kill over 50,000 French servicemen. A significant development was the sinking of the battleship Jean Bart. The vessel was used for shore bombardment and with help from Soviet intelligence the Vietnamese used a suicide guided torpedo to destroy the warship which killed 1100 out of the 2300 servicemen onboard. After this event the United States Navy stationed in Okinawa decided to intervene to aid the French forces in terms of rescue. The next action of the US was still not decided yet.

Geneva Conference of 1954: Following the Battle of Dien Bien Phu, Vietnam is temporarily divided at the 17th parallel with north vietnam being communist and south vietnam being anti communist. Nationwide elections are proposed but they are never held. The US (funnily) refuses to fully support the agreement due to a fear of communist victory (a very real fear as Ho Chi Minh was getting more favoured due to French atrocities, a weak capitalist government and general harsh treatment by the French).

Late 1950s-Early 1960s: 1955 is regarded as the official start to an unofficial war (the US never declared war on Vietnam) and the US heavily supports South Vietnam financially and militarily. This leads to growing communist insurgency in the South through the Viet Cong. *The Chinese and the Soviets provide overwhelming support to the North Vietnamese in the form of 84 mig 21 aircraft, along with a variety of surface to air missiles which brought the total loss of US air assets to 18,000 by the end of the war.*

1963: South Vietnamese President Ngo Dinh Diem is overthrown and assassinated in a coup. Political instability in South Vietnam worsens. *The Chinese who had now*

established a significant influence of communism in the North and this influence was growing in the South. This made the US effort extremely difficult and exacerbated casualties.

1964- Gulf of Tonkin Incident: Alleged attacks on US naval vessels are seen by North Vietnam in a naval confrontation. This led the US Congress to pass the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution, giving President Lyndon B. Johnson even more scope for military action in Vietnam. *Following the passing of this resolution the Chinese became extremely paranoid and understood that merely having nuclear weapons would not be enough. Due to the large scale integration of intelligence which occurred owing to the Korean War and the eventual Vietnam War started procuring more Soviet Weapons and in particular the technology to produce Soviet diesel electric submarines in particular the Whiskey-Class.*

1965: Large scale deployment of American combat troops begins and Operation Rolling Thunder starts which is a massive bombing campaign across North Vietnam. Due to the use of guerrilla forces by the North Vietnamese Army, bombs are dropped over forests and innocent civilians leading to many civilian casualties. Massive bombing campaigns target North Vietnam.

1965-1973: The US begins its use of napalm, white phosphorus and chemical defoliants such as Agent Orange. Millions of civilians and children are affected by this which draws international criticism against American conduct in the war. Photographs such as 'Napalm Girl' and other journalist work proves instrumental in uncovering the real extent of American 'atrocities'.

1968- **Tet Offensive:** This major surprise offensive launched by North Vietnamese and Viet Cong forces beginning January 31, 1968, during the Lunar New Year holiday. This was costly for American morale. A coordinated attack of over 85,000 communist troops attacked over 100 cities, towns and military installations, including the U.S. Embassy in Saigon and took over most of these from American control.

Despite eventually losing control, the campaign led to American media criticizing the American spending in Vietnam (\$300,000 per confirmed Vietcong kill) and it still proving ineffective. Huge protests broke out in the US homeland against the war.

Late 1960s-Early 1970s: Further anti-war protests spread across the United States. The hippie and counterculture movements become strongly anti-war. This public pressure led to the American congress having to reconsider the extent of their involvement in Vietnam.

1969: Richard Nixon becomes President and introduces Vietnamization which overviews gradual withdrawal of US troops and giving greater reliance on South Vietnamese forces.

1970: US and South Vietnamese forces invade Democratic Kampuchea to attack Viet Cong bases present in the region which causes instability to significantly increase in the country and the regions surrounding it.

1971: The People's Republic of China becomes the official representative of mainland China in the United Nations following UN resolution 2758.

1972- Nixon's Visit to China and the Shanghai Communique- For the purpose of the committee, these events are to not be considered and any future diplomatic alliance from the aforementioned date between the US and China are to not be considered.

1973- Paris Peace Accords: The final straw of the Vietnam war and led to the complete removal of US troops from Vietnam. Signed by the United States, North Vietnam, South Vietnam and the Provisional Revolutionary Government.

March 1973: All American combat troops and weapons leave Vietnam. Direct US military involvement ends and financial ties are also greatly reduced.

April 1975- Fall of Saigon: Saigon (capital of south vietnam) falls to North Vietnamese forces and Vietnam reunifies under communist rule. The US evacuation from Saigon became a symbol of American defeat in Vietnam.

April 1975: The Khmer Rouge captures Phnom Penh in Cambodia and establishes the country of Democratic Kampuchea under the leader Pol Pot.

1975-1976- Kampuchean Genocide begins: Most major cities are emptied and forced labor camps are established. These camps are made for intellectuals, minorities and political opponents. Reports of mass killings and starvation begin emerging internationally yet under article 2(7) of the UN charter, intervening in a sovereign country without a proper investigation regarding its threat to international peace is considered illegal.

1975-1976: Border tensions between Vietnam and Cambodia escalate. Vietnam becomes increasingly aligned with the USSR while Kampuchea develops closer ties with China (note the alliance for committee).

July 2 1976: Vietnam is unified under the Socialist Republic of Vietnam and it becomes a permanent observer in the United Nations.

On 8 September 1976: The United States had fully withdrawn from Vietnam. Southeast Asia remains unstable and ly divided. Cambodia faces a growing humanitarian catastrophe. Cold War rivalries between the US, USSR and China continue shaping the region. The international community faces growing pressure to respond to escalating crises in Southeast Asia.

UNCOVERING THE NEW ALLIANCE

(These details are fictitious and made for the purpose of committee)

During the middle of the Vietnam war, an alignment formed between Vietnam, China and the Soviet Union based on ideological uniformity. This alliance was made to be strongly united by their common objective of defeating American influence in Southeast Asia.

Details of the alliance-

Although ideological tensions between China and the Soviet Union were there during the Sino-Soviet split, both nations continued to provide extensive support to North Vietnam throughout much of the conflict. This led to the creation of a highly significant military coordination framework against the Western bloc.

China played a major role in sustaining the North Vietnamese war effort by supplying massive quantities of small arms, ammunition, artillery, logistical equipment and engineering assistance. Chinese support included weapons such as the Type 56 assault rifle, Type 53 rifles, heavy machine guns, mortars, anti-aircraft artillery and large quantities of Soviet-designed ammunition manufactured domestically within China. Beijing also deployed thousands of engineering and support personnel into North Vietnam over the course of the war to repair bombed railways, roads, bridges and supply routes damaged by American bombing campaigns. This is what allowed Vietnamese troops to remain concentrated on combat operations and ultimately lead to the retreat of the USA.

At the same time, the Soviet Union emerged as North Vietnam's largest provider of advanced military technology and heavy weaponry. They supplied the Vietcong with strong air defense systems and modern combat equipment that increased the cost of American operations in the region and was the reason congress was forced to pressure an end to the war. Soviet military assistance included SA-2 Guideline surface to air missiles, MiG-17 and MiG-21 fighter aircraft, T-54 tanks, radar systems, armored personnel carriers, heavy artillery, Katyusha rocket launchers, anti-aircraft guns and vast amounts of ammunition and fuel. Soviet advisors were also ly involved in training North Vietnamese personnel in operating advanced missile and radar systems, particularly during major American bombing operations such as Operation Rolling Thunder and

later Linebacker campaigns. Many of the American aircraft losses over North Vietnam were attributed directly to Soviet-supplied missile systems and air defense coordination. The Soviet Union additionally used Chinese rail networks and logistical corridors for the transfer of weapons and equipment into Vietnam during earlier stages of the war, creating an indirect military supply chain connecting the three capitals.

This triangular relationship effectively formed an anti Western axis during the war. Despite the underlying distrust between China and the Soviet Union, North Vietnam caused a balance between them and allowed the three to focus on the common enemy. Seeing this new alliance however, there is no certainty of how the western powers will react and what steps they might take to neutralise this communist force.

Although relations are still fragile, it is up to the delegates to consider the facts and determine the future of this alliance. (Vietnam and China are divided over Kampuchea, USSR and China had the Sino-Soviet Split etc. but they have to decide whether their distrust is strong enough to break such an important alliance).

STAKEHOLDERS AND THEIR POSITIONS

THE SITUATION IN VIETNAM

By September 1976, the Socialist Republic of Vietnam was one of the major nations of Southeast Asia with regards to geopolitical influence. The conclusion of the Vietnam War and the Fall of Saigon in April 1975 marked not only the defeat of South Vietnam but also one of the greatest strategic and political humiliations in the history of the United States. Vietnam had successfully defeated 2 nuclear bearing p5 countries. First the French forces during the First Indochina War and later arguably the most militarily advanced powers in the world, the US. The victory of North Vietnam demonstrated that ideological determination, guerrilla warfare and likability could overcome overwhelming military and economic superiority. From this, Vietnam's status across the world rose dramatically and caused many to view it as the centre for revolutionary success in Asia.

Beneath this image of victory however, would have laid a nation struggling to survive the consequences of war were it not for a new alliance between the communist powers. Despite years of intense American bombing campaigns, widespread destruction of infrastructure and the use of 'chemical' agents had left much of the country economically shattered and environmentally damaged but Vietnam was recovering fast from its newfound support. However, despite the economic help, the broken populace could not be repaired and Vietnam was still set back on agricultural production and human support, the two things it was the most dependant on. The government faced severe shortages of food, medicine and housing, while simultaneously attempting to reunify the formerly divided North and South under a single communist administration. The process of reunification itself was difficult, as the South remained politically unstable and economically dependent after years of American influence. No amount of support could have fixed this and it left Vietnam bitter and war against outside powers. The communist government initiated campaigns of political consolidation, including the restructuring of institutions, suppression of opposition and the establishment of re-education camps for former South

Vietnamese military personnel and officials. Such measures however increased criticism from Western nations who claimed Vietnam was an authoritarian governance and had significant human rights violations (funny of them to say), while its allies largely defended the policies as necessary for national stability and revolutionary consolidation.

As noted previously, Vietnam had become ly aligned with the Soviet Union and China but this alliance also had a lot of problems. This was mostly due to the Sino-Soviet split but the Vietnam war had caused improvements in relations. However, things were only going to get worse due to the emergence of Kampuchea into the picture. Vietnam had long been wary of Kampuchea due to their genocidal leader Pol Pot who caused multiple cross border skirmishes between the two countries. (Vietnam also invaded Kampuchea in 1978 due to escalation by Kampichea which led to the entirety of Kampuchea being occupied in 2 weeks and Vietnam keeping the country for the following decade). Despite happening after the freeze dates, evidence of the divide between these two countries could be seen and significantly complicated the good relations formed during the Vietnam War.

At the time of the freeze date, Vietnam and China were in a peculiar state. Despite decades of support by China against France and the USA, the cultural revolution and Chinese support for Cambodia caused distrust from Vietnam. For the representation of Vietnam, the decision of pro/anti China will be very important for the committee.

THE SITUATION IN DEMOCRATIC KAMPUCHEA

Democratic Kampuchea was deemed to be very unstable since its inception. It was formed through a violent military overthrow driven by the Communist Party of Kampuchea (CPK). Its establishment was a consequence of the breakdown of Cambodia's brittle neutrality during the Vietnam war and the destabilisation of Indochina. Under Prince Norodom Sihanouk, Cambodia had tried to maintain formal neutrality as the conflict grew. But, it was always under strain due to the inflow of North Vietnamese forces using sanctuaries in Cambodia along the eastern border. Widespread bombing by the United States led to a huge amount of internal instability. 1969 onwards, the US also engaged in covert and then overt bombing of Cambodian territory during Operations Menu and Freedom Deal to disrupt communist supply lines. These bombings caused a lot of dislocation of civilians, destruction of crops and growing resentment of the Lon Nol government.

All of this reached its tipping point when General Lon Nol overthrew Sihanouk in 1970 and brought Cambodia closer to US. A violent civil war erupted and ended with the Khmer Rouge winning from increasing rural support as they presented themselves as anti-imperialist liberators fighting both American aggression and home-grown corruption. Finally, Pol Pot and the Khmer Rouge captured Phnom Penh on 17 April 1975 and officially established the new government by January 1976.

When it gained power, Democratic Kampuchea initiated one of the most radical revolutionary transformations of the twentieth century. Under the influence of a agrarian communist ideology, the Khmer Rouge intended to eradicate all traces of urban, intellectual, religious and foreign presence in Cambodian society. The authorities engaged in violence, completely emptying cities of their inhabitants and forcibly marching thousands of civilians into the countryside. Private property was abolished along with currency, as the state attempted to rebuild a society around collective agricultural labour. The implementation of the regime's policies resulted in widespread starvation, forced labor, arbitrary detention and executions of political opponents, ethnic groups, professionals and even members of the Khmer Rouge. By the freeze date, widespread state terrorism was common

throughout the country. These acts were grave violations of basic principles of international humanitarian law and human rights law such as in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Geneva Conventions to name a few. Despite these grave violations however, foreign countries and even the United Nations could just watch as Kampuchea claimed the above as an internal matter thereby giving rise to questions under Article 2(7) of the UN Charter. At the time, Right to Protect was not codified in international law so legal unilateral action and even a UN task force was out of scope.

Democratic Kampuchea may have been diplomatically isolated by the freeze date of 8 September 1976 but it had a special strategic significance- The People's Republic of China. Credible sources have uncovered almost \$1 billion in interest-free economic and military aid in 1975 alone from the PRC which accounted for almost 90% of all foreign economic aid. The two regimes were ideological mirror images with Democratic Kampuchea modeling itself on Maoist ultra-radicalism thereby hoping to incorporate the Cultural Revolution and the Great Leap Forward.

Ultimately,

At the time of the freeze date, Kampuchea had a clear alliance in place with the PRC but its survival in the upcoming crises seemed bleak without stronger regional alliances. For the representation of Kampuchea, the decision of alliances will play a strong part of its stance in committee (especially if war breaks out).

THE SITUATION IN CHINA

he People's Republic of China entered the 1970s as one of the most transformative and unpredictable actors within the global Cold War order. Following the victory of the Chinese Communist Party in the Chinese Civil War in 1949, Mao Zedong announced the establishment of the People's Republic of China (PRC). The Communist victory fundamentally altered the strategic balance in Asia and was perceived by the United States and its allies as one of the greatest geopolitical setbacks of the early Cold War. It sought to export revolutionary ideology throughout Asia, Africa and Latin America while simultaneously consolidating internal control through campaigns such as land reform, collectivization and political purges. China's intervention in the Korean War between 1950 and 1953 demonstrated its willingness to directly challenge American military power and cemented its image as a militant revolutionary state prepared to use force to defend communist influence in Asia.

During the 1950s and early 1960s, China formally aligned itself with the Soviet Union under the framework of socialist solidarity. However, ideological and strategic tensions gradually shattered this relationship in what became known as the Sino-Soviet Split. Mao increasingly accused the Soviet leadership under Nikita Khrushchev of "revisionism," saying that Moscow had abandoned revolutionary principles in favor of peaceful coexistence with the West. At the same time, Soviet leaders viewed Mao's policies as reckless and extreme.

However, the Vietnam war came in as a beacon of unity. It allowed both the powers to put aside their differences and jointly support their ideological ally Vietnam in whatever way they can. This cooperation led to surprisingly good relations considering how recent the sino-soviet split was (about a 7 year gap between good relations and the split). However, this was not sustainable. Similar to the end of the second world war where the US and USSR's cooperation ended after the defeat of Germany, the tripartite alliance stands at a similar crossroad. China is faced with the difficult choice of embracing extreme divide against the west while the USSR attempts to create a peaceful coexistence or to work with the USSR and Vietnam for stronger overall cooperation but by letting go of its founding principles (could be costly to the new leader when Mao Zedong is on the verge of death) and also possibly cut its ties with Kampuchea.

Returning to the mid 1960s, the Cultural Revolution destabilized nearly every institution within China. Schools and universities closed, senior party officials were hunted, intellectuals were persecuted and Red Guard factions engaged in violent ideological campaigns across the country. Although the main aim of the Cultural Revolution was the targeting of domestic opponents, it also reinforced China's increasingly militant and revolutionary worldview to the West. The government encouraged revolutionary movements throughout Asia and portrayed itself as the authentic defender of anti imperialist struggle against capitalism.

This ideological atmosphere became particularly influential in shaping China's policies toward Cambodia during the mid-1970s. Throughout much of the Vietnam War, China continued supporting North Vietnam against the United States through arms transfers, engineering assistance, anti-aircraft units and infrastructure support. Beijing publicly framed this assistance as part of a broader anti-imperialist struggle against American aggression and interventionism in Southeast Asia. Chinese leadership condemned American bombing campaigns, troop deployments and operations in Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia as violations of state sovereignty and territorial integrity under principles reflected in Article 2(4) of the UN Charter. The extensive civilian casualties caused by operations such as Rolling Thunder strengthened Chinese propaganda portraying the US as an imperialist power seeking domination over Asia through military force.

Despite this earlier cooperation, relations between China and Vietnam seemed to deteriorate after the reunification of Vietnam in 1975 as discussed before. Chinese leadership increasingly feared that Vietnam sought to establish itself as the dominant regional power in Indochina and feared it would do so under Soviet support. China saw Soviet influence in Vietnam as part of a broader strategy of strategic encirclement aimed at isolating China geopolitically if it did not cooperate. The signing of economic and military agreements between the USSR and Vietnam increased the concerns that Vietnam would function as a Soviet proxy directly along China's southern frontier. Ideological tensions further ened these suspicions. Vietnamese communism had historically been influenced by both Soviet and Chinese revolutionary thought, but after 1974, Vietnam seemed to increasingly favor Soviet models of centralized state development over Maoist revolutionary protocols (may have been Chinese paranoia but they were wary of the tripartite alliance turning against them). Chinese policymakers interpreted this shift not simply as ideological divergence but as a direct threat to regional balance and Chinese strategic interests.

During this time, China also cultivated very close ties with Democratic Kampuchea under Pol Pot and the Khmer Rouge. Beijing viewed the Khmer Rouge as ideologically compatible and in pursuit of a radical agrarian socialist transformation that was inspired partially by Maoist principles. Chinese support for Democratic Kampuchea included military aid, economic assistance, infrastructure projects, diplomatic recognition and political backing within international forums. China became the Khmer Rouge regime's main foreign patron after 1975 giving nearly 90% of the country's foreign aid. China viewed Kampuchea as an important avenger to Vietnam in case their alliance failed. By strengthening Democratic Kampuchea, China hoped to prevent the emergence of a unified Soviet-aligned bloc stretching across Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia.

Legally and diplomatically, China consistently emphasized principles of sovereignty, territorial integrity and non-interference in state affairs, particularly in response to foreign military intervention in Asia. It frequently condemned American military operations in Vietnam and Cambodia as violations of international law and the UN Charter. At the same time, however, China's extensive support for revolutionary movements and armed factions throughout Southeast Asia complicated its own claims regarding non intervention. The biggest example of this hypocrisy is the backing of the Khmer Rouge. The above reasons caused greater tensions across the world and even reflected in China's alliance with Vietnam which was beginning to deteriorate due to Vietnam's policy against Kampuchea.

By the freeze date of 8 September 1976, China stood at a critical transitional moment. Mao Zedong was barely alive after suffering a heart attack just 5 days prior, the Cultural Revolution had severely weakened state institutions and political stability and China had to choose between an alliance that would single handedly shape its future. The struggle for succession within the Communist Party intensified between radical Maoist factions associated with the Gang of Four and more pragmatic leaders such as Hua Guofeng and Deng Xiaoping. Internationally, China remained suspicious of both Soviet intentions and Vietnamese regional ambitions while continuing to support Democratic Kampuchea as a strategic buffer against Soviet influence in Southeast Asia.

For the representation of China, the decision of supporting the alliance of Vietnam and USSR or leaving it could change not only the country's future, but also of the entire committee.

THE POSITION OF THE USA

In the late 1970s, America faced an unprecedented crisis. The freeze date of 8 September 1976 marked the end of the view of Southeast Asia as only a remote conflict area for America. Southeast Asia became seen as the only place where the entire global balance of power and American military credibility had been tested, where the future of Cold War containment and the limits of superpower involvement were both visibly demonstrated. The fall of South Vietnam in April 1975 was viewed as more than just the collapse of an ally. The defeat of South Vietnam provided proof of America's 20 years of unsuccessful strategic planning in that country and would fundamentally change the way that policymakers, military and intelligence personnel, allies, enemies and the American public viewed the role of the United States as a global superpower.

The American involvement in Southeast Asia cannot be understood in isolation from the geopolitical consequences of WWII. As European colonial empires fell apart, the United States and the Soviet Union took their place as two competing rival superpowers with ideological and strategic goals and ambitions. The US's increasing desire to use the framework of containment was evident through the Korean war, Cuban missile crisis and most of all in the Vietnam War. All of these have to be discussed to get a good sense of where the US stood.

The Korean War outbreak in 1950 heightened fear for many Americans. It was proof that the Soviet Union and Communist China were responsible for coordinated aggression and that they were actively involved in trying to spread communism, especially in Asia. Therefore, it is no surprise that Southeast Asia held a lot of strategic value to the US despite being of little or no direct economic significance to the United States. The Truman, Eisenhower, Kennedy and Johnson administrations gradually embraced the Domino Theory. It stated that the collapse of one state to communism would destabilize neighboring governments and trigger a huge regional realignment against Western interests. Vietnam therefore became viewed not merely as an isolated conflict but, as the US hoped, a symbol of capitalist success against the evil forces of communism.

Initially, American involvement in Indochina focused on supporting France during the First Indochina War. By the early 1950s, the United States financed a substantial portion of French military operations against the Viet Minh led by Ho Chi Minh. The US feared that French defeat would accelerate communist expansion throughout Asia. This began to be seen after the French collapse at Dien Bien Phu in 1954 and fundamentally altered the regional landscape. The Geneva Accords temporarily divided Vietnam at the 17th parallel into the communist Democratic Republic of Vietnam in the North and the anti-communist Republic of Vietnam in the South. Nationwide elections intended to reunify the country were scheduled but ultimately never occurred. American officials feared that Ho Chi Minh's immense popularity and anti-colonial legitimacy would guarantee communist victory. As a result, the US increasingly committed itself to constructing and preserving a viable anti-communist South Vietnamese state.

The rise of Ngo Dinh Diem in South Vietnam became central to this strategy. American officials portrayed Diem as a nationalist modernizer capable of resisting communist insurgency while building stable anti-communist governance. Yet the South Vietnamese government rapidly developed severe internal weaknesses. Political repression, corruption, religious discrimination against Buddhists, economic inequality and authoritarian governance undermined public legitimacy. At the same time, communist networks within South Vietnam reorganized through the National Liberation Front, commonly known as the Viet Cong. From the American perspective, the insurgency represented externally directed communist aggression supported by North Vietnam, China and the Soviet Union. From the perspective of many Vietnamese revolutionaries, however, the struggle represented resistance against an illegitimate regime sustained through foreign intervention.

Throughout the early 1960s, American involvement escalated steadily. The Kennedy administration increasingly embraced theories of flexible response and unconventional warfare, believing that communist insurgencies required sophisticated counterinsurgency rather than conventional military deterrence alone. Yet the instability of South Vietnam worsened dramatically following the overthrow and assassination of Ngo Dinh Diem in 1963. Furthermore, coups, political fragmentation, military instability and declining morale within the South Vietnamese government intensified fears that communist victory was becoming inevitable without direct American intervention.

All of this built up to the Gulf of Tonkin incident in August 1964. This became the decisive turning point. Following reports of attacks against American naval vessels by North Vietnamese patrol boats, Congress passed the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution which granted President Lyndon B. Johnson authority to expand military operations without a formal declaration of war. Although the factual basis of the second reported attack later became very disputed, the incident provided political justification for large-scale escalation. What followed was one of the largest military interventions in modern history, that too without any declaration of war. American troop deployments surged from advisors numbering in the thousands to combat forces exceeding half a million personnel. Massive bombing campaigns such as Operation Rolling Thunder targeted North Vietnamese infrastructure, transportation systems, industrial facilities and military positions. Simultaneously, the United States launched extensive search-and-destroy operations, pacification programs, strategic hamlet initiatives, intelligence campaigns and counterinsurgency missions throughout South Vietnam.

American military strategy relied heavily upon overwhelming technological superiority as it possessed unmatched airpower, artillery capabilities, naval dominance, helicopter mobility, electronic surveillance systems and industrial production capacity. Policymakers also strongly believed that sustained military pressure would eventually destroy communist operational capabilities and force Hanoi into negotiations on favorable terms. Yet the structure of the conflict undermined many American assumptions. The Viet Cong and North Vietnamese Army relied upon guerrilla tactics, political mobilization, decentralized networks, tunnel systems and prolonged warfare rather than conventional battlefield confrontation. Communist forces demonstrated extraordinary resilience despite enormous casualties and material destruction.

As the war intensified, the methods employed by the United States generated escalating international criticism and domestic opposition. Bombing campaigns extended into Laos and Cambodia in efforts to disrupt the Ho Chi Minh Trail and communist sanctuary zones. Covert operations such as Operation Menu subjected Cambodia to extensive aerial bombardment while officially remaining secret from much of the American public. Entire rural areas across Indochina were devastated through bombing, defoliation, forced relocation and military operations. The United States employed chemical defoliants such as Agent

Orange to destroy forest cover and agricultural production, generating severe long-term environmental and humanitarian consequences. Napalm strikes and artillery bombardments caused a lot of civilian suffering which greatly reduced the popularity of the South Vietnamese government. Millions of civilians throughout Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia were displaced, while infrastructure, farmland and urban areas suffered catastrophic destruction.

These actions generated profound legal and moral controversy. Critics argued that American operations violated fundamental principles of international law, including Article 2(4) of the United Nations Charter prohibiting the use of force against state sovereignty and territorial integrity. Bombing campaigns in Laos and Cambodia raised additional concerns because they occurred extensively without formal declarations of war or any justification for war. Under the framework of Jus ad Bellum, critics questioned whether American escalation satisfied any of the principles of necessity, proportionality, legitimate authority and last resort and by the end, even the criteria of a decent chance of success was coming into question. Simultaneously, the conduct of the war itself generated accusations of violations under Jus in Bello, the Geneva Conventions and the UDHR. The principles of distinction between civilians and combatants, proportionality in attacks, military necessity, humane treatment of detainees and prohibitions against collective punishment became the main points of criticism against the US.

The My Lai Massacre of 1968 became globally symbolic of the brutality associated with the conflict. American soldiers killed hundreds of unarmed Vietnamese civilians during a counterinsurgency operation. All of this was initially covered up and reported as a success with hundreds of Viet Cong deaths. However, as independent journalists looked closer and pressured Washington, the reality of the details came out. The massacre was one of the biggest reasons of anti war sentiment and damaged American credibility internationally. Allegations regarding torture, unlawful detention, forced displacement, destruction of civilian infrastructure and indiscriminate bombardment greatly increased perceptions that the United States had become trapped within a morally and strategically destructive conflict. The publication of photographs depicting napalm victims and civilian suffering transformed the public's opinion regarding the war.

Inside the US, the Vietnam War produced one of the greatest political crises in modern American history. Massive anti-war demonstrations erupted across universities and major cities. Student activism, civil rights movements, journalists, intellectuals and veterans challenged the legitimacy of the war. The Tet Offensive of 1968 proved especially devastating as it saw the capture of every single US base and embassy at once. Although communist forces suffered severe military losses during the offensive, the attacks demonstrated that the war was far from victory despite repeated official assurances from the US. Even after winning back the bases at a very hefty price, the damage was done. Considering that per confirmed kill cost about \$300,000, the American public was done with the war and urged for an end to it. The publication of the Pentagon Papers later also exposed internal awareness among senior officials that many public claims regarding progress in Vietnam had been misleading or deceptive.

This eventually led to president Richard Nixon's strategy of "Vietnamization" which aimed to transfer combat responsibilities gradually to South Vietnamese forces while reducing American troops. Simultaneously, Nixon expanded bombing campaigns and covert operations in Cambodia and Laos in attempts to pressure North Vietnam militarily before negotiations and to show that the US, despite retreating, was not weak. The Paris Peace Accords of 1973 formally ended direct American combat involvement, yet the underlying conflict continued. South Vietnam remained heavily dependent upon American financial and military assistance while North Vietnam retained significant military capabilities.

The final collapse of South Vietnam in April 1975 shattered remaining illusions regarding American success. As North Vietnamese forces advanced rapidly toward Saigon, scenes of chaotic evacuation from the American embassy became internationally symbolic of defeat and humiliation. For many within the US, the fall of Saigon represented the collapse of American credibility itself. Policymakers were afraid that allies across Europe, the Middle East and Asia would question the reliability of American security guarantees, while adversaries would interpret withdrawal as evidence of declining American strength.

This perception strongly shaped American foreign policy by September 1976. The United States faced a strategic contradiction. On one hand, many officials believed that failure to resist communist expansion encouraged Soviet assertiveness globally.

On the other hand, the trauma of Vietnam created enormous reluctance toward future large-scale military interventions. This phenomenon became known as the “Vietnam Syndrome”.

The broader geopolitical environment increased these anxieties. Although détente formally continued between the United States and the Soviet Union through agreements such as SALT I and the Helsinki Accords, many American strategists increasingly believed that Moscow was exploiting détente opportunistically. Soviet influence expanded across Africa, the Middle East and Asia during the mid-1970s. Angola, Ethiopia, Afghanistan’s instability and Vietnam’s alignment with the USSR all appeared to suggest growing Soviet confidence. Southeast Asia therefore became viewed within the US as evidence of shifting global momentum favoring Soviet expansion.

Developments in Cambodia further complicated American policy. The Khmer Rouge victory in April 1975 initially appeared as another communist success linked to American retreat from Indochina but reports gradually emerged regarding forced evacuations, executions, famine, labor camps and mass political purges under Democratic Kampuchea. Although the full scale of atrocities remained unclear by September 1976, American officials increasingly recognized Cambodia as both a humanitarian disaster and a variable within the Sino-Soviet rivalry.

The regional security environment remained unstable. Vietnam increasingly aligned with the Soviet Union. Laos had fallen under communist control. Cambodia remained under the extremist Khmer Rouge regime supported by China. Thailand feared insurgency and Vietnamese expansionism. ASEAN states increasingly emphasized sovereignty and non-interference as defensive principles against ideological destabilization and external intervention.

Considering the above, perhaps the greatest American fear by 1976 was the possibility that the international balance of power itself was shifting irreversibly. Policymakers feared that revolutionary movements throughout the developing world increasingly viewed Vietnam as proof that prolonged guerrilla warfare could defeat even the strongest military power on earth. Soviet leaders appeared increasingly assertive. Every crisis throughout Southeast Asia acquired significance far beyond the region itself because it intersected with the wider global view of deterrence and containment.

By the freeze date of 8 September 1976, the United States no longer viewed Southeast Asia as a failed intervention. It viewed the region as the central lesson. This would shape the future of American policy. Every crisis, no matter how small, was now of utmost priority to the US who feared non involvement would result in complete destruction of the capitalist world (funnily their involvement also causes the same thing).

THE POSITION OF THE USSR

By September 1976, the Soviet Union viewed itself as the strongest defender of socialism and the leading force opposing capitalist influence across the globe. After the communist victory in Vietnam and the withdrawal of the United States from Southeast Asia, the Soviet Union regarded the region as one of the greatest strategic successes of the Cold War. The emergence of an alliance between the Soviet Union, China and Vietnam represented a historic opportunity to consolidate communist influence throughout Asia and challenge the dominance of the Western bloc. Soviet policymakers believed that the defeat of American forces in Vietnam had demonstrated the limitations of Western military power and validated the effectiveness of this new alliance. Due to the same reasons, the Soviets hoped to deepen military, economic and technological integration among its Asian allies while presenting itself as the guarantor of regional stability and revolutionary progress.

The Soviet Union's support for this alliance was founded upon military cooperation during the Vietnam War which included MiG 21 fighter aircraft, T 54 and T 55 main battle tanks, SA 2 surface-to-air missile batteries, BM 21 Grad multiple rocket launchers, anti aircraft artillery systems, radar networks, armored personnel carriers and substantial quantities of ammunition and spare parts. Through weapons transfers and intelligence sharing arrangements, the Soviet leadership tried to create a unified socialist security architecture capable of deterring intervention by both Western and Eastern capitalist powers. The alliance also provided the USSR with greater access to strategically important ports across Southeast Asia thereby expanding influence in the indo-pacific.

During the mid 1970s, the Soviet Union positioned itself as a champion of anti imperialism and national liberation movements. Its diplomats argued that the people of Vietnam had exercised their right to self-determination by rejecting foreign domination and establishing a socialist government. Furthermore, they strongly condemned American bombing campaigns and especially the use of chemical weapons such as Agent Orange. At the same time, Soviet leaders portrayed their own involvement as legitimate international solidarity rather than foreign interference.

However, beneath this public image lay significant strategic calculations. The Kremlin understood that maintaining unity among China and Vietnam was essential for preventing the Western bloc from exploiting divisions within Asia. A stable socialist alliance would secure Soviet influence across a vast geographical area stretching from Eastern Europe to the South China Sea and would dramatically strengthen Moscow's position in the global balance of power. Therefore, by September 1976, the Soviet Union's primary objective was not merely the survival of socialist governments in Southeast Asia, but the transformation of the region into a permanently aligned sphere of communist cooperation capable of countering American, NATO, and Japanese influence for decades to come. In the eyes of Soviet leadership, the struggle in Southeast Asia was no longer about winning a war but was about securing the future of socialism itself.

However, it would not be so easy. With the rise of the Khmer Rouge and Pol Pot in Kampuchea, the alliance started to sour. With China's uncertainty regarding its position between Vietnam and Kampuchea, a new division within the socialist forces seemed imminent (USSR, Vietnam and China, Kampuchea). For the representation of USSR in committee, it will be extremely important to decide the future of this alliance. Will the USSR be able to hold together the strongest communist alliance of the time or will they succumb to diverging internal interests.

THE POSITION OF THE NATO (NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY ORGANIZATION)

By September of 1976, the emergence of an alliance between the Soviet Union, China and Vietnam represented one of the most significant geopolitical developments of the Cold War from the perspective of the Western bloc. For NATO, this alliance was not just some weak regional arrangement (ASEAN cough) but the formation of a powerful and capable communist axis which was already altering the global balance of power. The alliance essentially united the best between the three countries- the industrial and military capabilities of the Soviet Union, the enormous population and manufacturing potential of China and the battle-hardened armed forces of Vietnam. To many policymakers in the USA, UK, France, West Germany and other NATO capitals, the alliance was one of the greatest fears of Cold War strategists. The defeat of their strongest country, the United States, in the Vietnam War had already shaken confidence in Western power and raised concerns about the effectiveness of the Containment Doctrine. The formation of this new alliance seemed to suggest that rather than slowing communist expansion, the events of the previous decade had strengthened it.

From a military perspective, the alliance presented a serious concern. The Soviet Union had one of the world's largest and most technologically advanced armed forces and also had a huge nuclear arsenal along with sophisticated missile systems. China contributed a massive standing army and rapidly expanding industrial base capable of sustaining long-term military production. Vietnam brought extensive combat experience gained through decades of warfare against both French and American forces. Soviet military assistance had already transformed Vietnam into a strong military power after acquiring the MiG 21, T 54 and T55 tanks, SA2 surface-to-air missile systems and advanced radar networks and logistical support. Combined with the raw manpower of China, NATO feared the alliance could establish a military bloc capable of resisting external pressure

Economically, NATO governments also viewed the alliance with concern. A coordinated socialist bloc spanning Eastern Europe, the Soviet Union, China and Southeast Asia had the potential to create extensive trade networks, resource-sharing agreements, and industrial cooperation mechanisms that could reduce dependence on Western markets and institutions. A consistent weak point for the communist blocs where their economic strength but with such a diverse alliance, that seemed to be disappearing. This was not in the interest of NATO as without any hardships faced by the people under socialism, they would not be ready to accept a new form of governance.

Despite these concerns, NATO's weak response (they did nothing) was constrained by the situation of the post-Vietnam era. The enormous military and political costs of the Vietnam War had created widespread public opposition to another major military intervention in Asia. Western governments understood that direct confrontation with the alliance risked escalating into a broader conflict involving multiple nuclear powers. Therefore, NATO increasingly focused on strengthening regional partnerships and expanding intelligence cooperation. Greater emphasis was placed on cooperation with members outside of the North Atlantic such as Japan, Australia, South Korea and Southeast Asian states that remained outside the communist sphere.

Ultimately, by the freeze date, NATO saw the Soviet-China-Vietnam alliance as the most significant strategic threat facing the Western world. It represented an ideological, political, economic and most importantly a gruesome military challenge. The alliance seemed very capable of reshaping the balance of power across Asia, thereby undermining decades of Western containment efforts and providing communist movements worldwide with a powerful example of successful cooperation. For NATO, the challenge was no longer simply defending Western Europe against Soviet expansion but it was preserving the broader international balance against communism, especially in Southeast Asia.

INTERNATIONAL LAW RELEVANT TO THE ISSUE AT HAND

The situation in Southeast Asia in 1976 is ly connected to several principles of international law, particularly those relating to sovereignty, humanitarian protection, armed conflict and most importantly, the maintenance of international peace and security. The following laws, conventions, agreements and international frameworks are especially relevant to the issue at hand and form the legal foundation upon which debate in committee may be based.

1. United Nations Charter (1945)

The United Nations Charter is the primary legal framework governing international relations. Important articles include Article 2(4), 2(7), 39-42, 51 and many more. These articles (and more) are especially relevant in the context of Cambodia and rising Vietnam-Cambodia tensions, where the UNSC must determine whether the issue remains an internal matter or constitutes a broader international threat.

2. Geneva Conference of 1954 and Geneva Accords (1954)

The Geneva Conference ended the First Indochina War and temporarily divided Vietnam at the 17th parallel into North and South Vietnam. The agreements recognized the sovereignty and territorial integrity of states in Indochina and called for elections to reunify Vietnam. Although the United States did not fully support the accords (the 10 resulting documents from the Geneva conference), they remained internationally significant and formed the diplomatic basis for later discussions on intervention and foreign involvement in Southeast Asia. The agreements are important because they established the legal expectation that foreign powers should not interfere militarily in the internal affairs of the region, an issue that became increasingly controversial as the Vietnam War escalated.

3. Paris Peace Accords

Signed in 1973 by North Vietnam, South Vietnam, the United States and the Provisional Revolutionary Government, the Paris Peace Accords officially ended direct American military involvement in Vietnam.

The agreement called for a ceasefire, withdrawal of foreign troops, respect for Vietnam's territorial integrity and the exchange of prisoners of war. While the accords failed to establish lasting peace, they remain highly relevant because they reaffirmed the principles of sovereignty and non intervention. The collapse of South Vietnam in 1975 and the reunification of Vietnam under communist rule fundamentally altered the balance of power in Southeast Asia and contributed to rising tensions with Cambodia by 1976.

4. Geneva Conventions

The four Geneva Conventions of 1949 established the modern foundations of international humanitarian law. They provide protections for civilians, wounded soldiers, prisoners of war and non-combatants during armed conflicts. The conventions prohibit torture, inhumane treatment, collective punishment and deliberate attacks on civilians. Allegations of forced labour, executions, starvation and mass displacement under the Khmer Rouge regime directly contradict the humanitarian principles outlined within these conventions. Additionally, criticisms of American military conduct during the Vietnam War, including bombings and the use of incendiary and chemical agents, were often evaluated through the lens of the Geneva Conventions.

5. Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide

The Genocide Convention was adopted by the United Nations following the Holocaust and defines genocide as acts committed with intent to destroy national, ethnic, racial, or religious groups. Signatory states are obligated to prevent and punish genocide wherever it occurs. By September 1976, the full extent of atrocities in Cambodia was not yet internationally confirmed, but reports of systematic killings and persecution had begun to emerge. This convention is therefore highly relevant to discussions surrounding whether the international community has a legal or moral obligation to respond to developments in Democratic Kampuchea.

6. Geneva Protocol

The Geneva Protocol prohibited the use of chemical and biological weapons in warfare. During the Vietnam War, the United States used substances such as Agent Orange and other chemical defoliants, arguing that they were herbicides rather than chemical weapons. Critics strongly challenged this interpretation, claiming such substances caused severe environmental destruction and long-term civilian suffering. The debate surrounding the legality and morality of chemical use in Vietnam remains one of the most controversial legal aspects of the conflict.

7. Nuremberg Trials Principles

The Nuremberg Trials established the principle that individuals, including state officials and military leaders, can be held accountable for war crimes, crimes against humanity and violations of international law. These principles reinforced the idea that “following orders” is not an acceptable defense for large-scale atrocities. Although the trials occurred after World War II, the legal standards established there remained highly influential by 1976, particularly in evaluating mass killings and state-sponsored violence in Cambodia and alleged violations during the Vietnam War.

8. United Nations General Assembly and Security Council Resolutions

These are the cornerstone of international law and the creation of new precedence. Important GA resolutions like Resolution 2625 clarified important principles of international law, including sovereign equality, peaceful settlement of disputes, non intervention and the prohibition of force against another state whilst SC resolutions like UNSCR 83 gave precedence for a military deployment by the Security Council. Such resolutions are extremely important for the committee and are a great help in backing claims, arguments and solutions. Their (correct) use is highly encouraged.

PAPERWORK GUIDE

Committee Email: unhsc.thsmun@gmail.com

Delegates of this committee can send the following kinds of paperwork to the Executive Board:

Position Paper (compulsory): A position paper is a brief document that outlines a country's stance on the committee's agenda. It usually includes background on the issue, the country's perspective and policies, and possible solutions that align with its national interests. Position papers help delegates organize their research, demonstrate preparation, and guide debate and resolution drafting during the conference. A position paper is a compulsory paperwork required to be submitted by all delegates.

Deadline for Submission- 14th June, 2026; 11:59pm

Draft Resolution: A draft resolution is a formal proposal that outlines the collective ideas and solutions of delegates on the topic being discussed. It represents the committee's attempt to address the issue at hand through structured, agreed-upon actions. Draft resolutions are debated, revised, and voted on, and if passed, they reflect the official stance and decisions of the committee.

Public/Private Communique: A communique is a form of paperwork with the purpose of conveying new information to the executive board and committee. Private communiques are only meant to be seen by the executive board in their entirety and if ratified, may be presented as an update. A public communique on the other hand will be presented to the committee in its entirety if ratified. A maximum of 2 pre committee communiques or other forms of paperwork are allowed per delegate. Joint paperwork involving multiple delegates will be counted towards the total number of communiques.

Deadline for Submission- 15th June, 2026; 11:59pm.

Please keep communiques and communique arcs grounded with the current situation and realistic (they can be radical and disruptive).

Additional Documents:

1. Statutes
 2. Bilateral and Multilateral Treaties
 3. Memorandum of Understanding (MOUs)
 4. Conventions
 5. Presidential Statements
 6. Action Orders
 7. Charters
 8. Directives
- Treaties must be compliant with the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties.

Statutes must be compliant with actual statutes and their format (eg- The Rome Statute).

EXPECTATIONS OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

- The humanitarian concerns of the Vietnam War are discussed.
- The updates are discussed adequately.
- The threats to international peace are discussed regarding the cambodian genocide.
- Alliances are thought out well and be in line with the updates presented by the executive board.
- The final paperwork for this committee will be a Draft Resolution but action orders may be discussed based on committee consensus.
- The draft resolution should not be made useless and ineffective in an attempt to make it “unscrappable”.
- War be the last resort of the committee and only be done under circumstances where no more diplomacy and deliberation is possible.
- The use of Artificial Intelligence is strictly prohibited during committee sessions. If caught, the executive board reserves the power to make deductions as seen fit.

CITATIONS

- [United Nations Charter](#)
- [Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#)
- [Geneva Conventions of 1949 \(ICRC\)](#)
- [Customary International Humanitarian Law Database](#)
- [Hague Conventions 1899 & 1907 \(ICRC\)](#)
- [United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea \(UNCLOS\)](#)
- [Permanent Court of Arbitration - Philippines v. China Award \(2016\)](#)
- [Montevideo Convention on the Rights and Duties of States \(1933\)](#)
- [Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties \(1969\)](#)
- [Chicago Convention on International Civil Aviation](#)
- [Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court](#)
- [Articles on Responsibility of States for Internationally Wrongful Acts](#)
- [Cold War International History Project - Wilson Center](#)
- [Office of the Historian - U.S. Department of State](#)
- [Encyclopaedia Britannica - Cold War](#)
- [NATO Official History & Archives](#)
- [Encyclopaedia Britannica - Vietnam War](#)
- [U.S. National Archives - Vietnam War Records](#)
- [Library of Congress - Vietnam War Resources](#)
- [Pentagon Papers Archive - National Archives](#)
- [United States Holocaust Memorial Museum](#)
- [Yale Cambodian Genocide Program](#)
- [Encyclopaedia Britannica - Khmer Rouge](#)
- [Office of the Historian - Nixon Visit to China](#)
- [Encyclopaedia Britannica - Cultural Revolution](#)
- [Encyclopaedia Britannica - Soviet Union](#)
- [Wilson Center - Soviet Foreign Policy Archives](#)
- [NATO Official Website](#)