

Singapore and the Cold War (1965-91) (Part 2/3)

Responses to the Third Indochina War

Recall the Third Indochina War from the previous lecture notes. This part of the Singapore and the Cold War focuses on how Singapore responded to the Third Indochina War. You should consider:

- *What were Singapore's interests? (national, regional, international)*
- *How did Singapore's actions show it safeguarding these interests?*
- **Singapore's position on sanctity of sovereignty**
 - Singapore adopted an unprecedentedly high profile after Vietnam's invasion of Cambodia.
 - The Singapore's government saw Vietnam's invasion of Cambodia as an affront to the principles of sovereignty and non-interference, principles that the leadership held dearly because of its geopolitical position as the smallest state in Southeast Asia.
 - To protect its national interests from the geopolitical challenges posed by the invasion, the Singapore foreign policy apparatus strove to achieve several objectives:
 - Keep the Cambodian Crisis on the international agenda and delegitimise the puppet government, the People's Republic of Kampuchea
 - Support the formation of a coalition government as an alternative non-communist leadership to Pol Pot's Khmer Rouge or Heng Samrin's puppet government
 - Encourage the US government to remain committed to the region despite the 'Vietnam syndrome'
 - Convince China to support the peaceful resolution of the conflict.
 - Achieve a resolution to the Cambodian crisis through ASEAN diplomacy
- **Lobbying efforts at Non-Aligned Movement conferences and the UN**
 - Singapore strove to keep the Cambodian Crisis on the international agenda as well as delegitimise the puppet government, the People's Republic of Kampuchea (The government in Cambodia at the time).
 - Lobbying at Non-Aligned Movement Conferences
 - Unlike the United Nations, Singapore found it more difficult to deal with the members of the Non-Aligned Movements, many of which were sympathetic or more strategically align to the USSR and Vietnam.
 - Havana Summit (1979)

- ✓ At the 6th Non-Aligned Movement Summit, also known as the Havana Summit, that was held in September 1979, Cuba, as the Chairman of the summit, steered to NAM to a pro-Soviet alignment and was politically supportive of the Heng Samrin's Vietnamese-backed regime.
 - ✓ Much to the unhappiness of Singapore's Foreign Minister S. Rajaratnam and the ASEAN countries Malaysia and Indonesia, Cuba unilaterally and deliberately removed Democratic Kampuchea (DK)'s seat at the NAM summit, and while the NAM also did not grant recognition to the People's Republic of Kampuchea (PRK), Fidel Castro invited Heng Samrin to pay an official visit to Havana while the summit was in progress.
 - ✓ Even though Rajaratnam spoke out robustly and defiantly against Cuba and the other Soviet supporters, he and the other ASEAN delegates could not rescue DK's seat.
 - ✓ The political declaration made at the end of the summit also failed to mention and condemn Vietnam's military intervention nor called for Vietnamese withdrawal from Kampuchea.
- New Delhi NAM Conference (1981) and 7th Non-Aligned Summit (1983)
- ✓ In February 1981, Singapore, Malaysia and Indonesia tried but failed to reinstate the DK's seat at the NAM.
 - ✓ The reason was that India, the host of the Delhi NAM Conference, adopted a pro-Soviet-Vietnam position. Like Cuba, India invited Heng Samrin for the opening ceremony while simultaneously denying both the DK and PRK.
 - ✓ Singapore again failed to reverse the decision made at Havana (1979) New Delhi (1981) again at the 7th Non-Aligned Summit that was also held in New Delhi in March 1983 regarding the DK's seat at the NAM.
 - ✓ Since many NAM countries believed the NAM and socialist countries were 'natural allies' who shared the same interests in thwarting Western imperialism, they were more sympathetic towards Vietnam's intervention in Kampuchea.
 - ✓ Singapore, together with the ASEAN countries, were thus relatively less successful at the NAM meetings than at the UN in pushing their agenda on the Cambodian issue although they did succeed in resisting the attempt by Cuba and the Vietnamese supporters to seat the Heng Samrin regime.

- Engaging the United Nations

- The Vietnamese government initially believed that their invasion of Cambodia would resemble the Soviet invasion of Hungary and Czechoslovakia in that the international community would eventually forget about the invasion and accept Vietnam's dominance of Cambodia as a fait accompli.
- However, Singapore was determined to keep the Cambodian crisis on the international agenda, particularly in the United Nations.
- The Singapore Foreign Ministry delegates led an ASEAN diplomatic mission to the United Nations to garner international support to promote the notion that the Vietnamese occupation of Cambodia was illegal.
- The Singapore delegates vehemently argued that Vietnam had violated the sacrosanct principles of sovereignty and non-intervention that are found in the UN charter by invading Cambodia.
- In February 1979, ASEAN sponsored a draft Security Council resolution that called on Vietnam to withdraw from Cambodia. Though it received 13 positive votes at the UNSC, the resolution was not adopted because it was vetoed by the USSR.
- Unperturbed, the Singapore delegates for the next few months made use of the UN as a lobbying platform to push ASEAN's case on the Cambodian issue by persuading, convincing and rallying the non-ASEAN delegates to vote in support of ASEAN's position.
- This included the rejection of India's pro-Vietnamese proposal to remove the seat of Democratic Kampuchea and declare it vacant, or to replace it with the People's Republic of Kampuchea.
- Despite the poor reputation of the Khmer Rouge, the ASEAN delegates managed to convince the UNGA to retain Democratic Kampuchea's seat in the UN.
- On 14 November 1979, ASEAN jointly-sponsored a resolution on Kampuchea, calling for an immediate ceasefire and the withdrawal of Vietnamese troops, which was successfully adopted by the UN General Assembly.
- It was a major victory for ASEAN and the Singapore delegates as the UNGA rejected pro-Vietnamese draft resolutions that would have recognised the legitimacy of the Heng Samrin's regime and the Vietnamese occupation.
- To garner Western support, the Singapore delegates joined the invasion of Cambodia, the Soviet military deployment to former US naval and air bases in Vietnam's Cam Ranh Bay and Danang with the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in December 1979, and presented them as a grand insidious design masterminded by the Soviets.

- Thereafter, ASEAN succeeded in increasing the 'Yes' votes every year in the UNGA, which in a sense affirmed the good work conducted by the Singapore delegates from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs at the UN.
- UN-sponsored International Conference on Kampuchea
 - Another major diplomacy victory was the organisation of the UN-sponsored International Conference on Kampuchea (ICK) in July 1981, authorised by the adoption of UNGA resolution 35/6. The declaration of this conference was drafted by Singapore's delegation.
 - The ICK was not attended by USSR, Vietnam Laos, North Korea who boycotted the conference as they opposed Democratic Kampuchea's seat in the UN.
 - here were also disagreements at the ICK between US, China and the ASEAN countries. ASEAN countries wanted to disarm all Khmer Rouge forces while China wanted to continue arming its ally, Khmer Rouge so that it could continue the protracted conflict to 'bleed' Vietnam.
 - Nevertheless, the ICK could be considered a qualified success for ASEAN and Singapore because the conference was attended by 79 countries, 36 were non-aligned.
 - ASEAN further succeeded in keeping the Cambodian issue alive and visible internationally
 - The ICK adopted a declaration which called for a ceasefire all parties to the conflict, the withdrawal of foreign forces, and the arrangement of a UN-supervised election.
 - Despite Vietnam's absence, the declaration became the basis for future negotiation with Vietnam. An ad-hoc UN committee was created to deal with the Cambodian issue.
- **Singapore's efforts at addressing intra-ASEAN differences**

What were the intra-ASEAN differences in their responses to the crisis?

 - ASEAN countries had different views of how the Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia posed a problem.
 - Thailand saw Vietnam's invasion of Cambodia as an expansionistic threat.
 - Indonesia and Malaysia saw Vietnam as a buffer against China. This resulted in a strategic debate of whether a Cambodia under Vietnamese control was preferable to Chinese influence there and the wider region.
 - The dilemma did not paralyse ASEAN. Following an ASEAN statement on 9 January 1979, a Thai initiative led to joint communique on 12 January 1979, deploring the armed intervention and demanding the withdrawal of Vietnamese troops from Cambodia.

- Meanwhile, besides securing ASEAN diplomatic support, Thailand's Prime Minister Kriangsak Chomanan also concluded a de facto alliance with China during a secret meeting – there is no indication that ASEAN partners were consulted or even informed of the alliance.
- 1979, ASEAN members closed ranks behind Thailand, as manifested in the strongly worded communique of the 28-30 June Annual Ministerial Meeting (AMM) and the ability to act with one voice in international for a, such as the United Nations and Non-Aligned Movement.
- This picture of apparent unity changed in 1980. 27 Mar 1980, President Suharto of Indonesia and Malaysian Prime Minister Tun Hussein Onn announced the Kuantan Principle
 - Called for the Soviet Union and China to stay out of the Indochina conflict, and thus accommodated Vietnam's view of the conflict that made Vietnam's withdrawal contingent on China's non-involvement in the region.
 - The Kuantan declaration owed its significance to the fact that two ASEAN members launched a bilateral initiative that ran counter to the previous ASEAN position
- However, after Vietnam's incursion into Thailand in June 1980, the ASEAN members rallied behind Thailand without reservations.
- 1984, following controversial statements by Indonesian Defence Minister General Benny Murdani that Vietnam was not a threat to the region, Suharto suggested a compromise to Vietnam that would have excluded the Khmer Rouge from any settlement. – this did not turn into a divisive issue for ASEAN, as an uncompromising Vietnamese position doomed any efforts to reach accommodation.
- By 1987, tentative steps towards peace were taken when Indonesia, with Thailand's approval, used its interlocutor role to initiate the so-called "cocktail talks" involving all parties to the conflict.
- Given the background, a serious challenge to ASEAN's unity came from an unexpected source.
- When Chatichai Choonhaven succeeded General Prem Tinsulanonda as Prime Minister of Thailand in July 1988 he and his advisory team devised a radically altered policy towards Vietnam.
- Touted as part of his vision of *Suwannaphume* (Golden Peninsula), he advocated turning Indochina "from a battlefield into a marketplace" Theory was pu into practice quickly and a large Thai delegation visited Hanoi in January 1989, followed by a visit to Cambodia at the invitation of Cambodian Premier Hun Sen, whose government had formerly been depicted as illegitimate and Hanoi's proxy.
- Chatichai's policy was based upon the premise that ASEAN's diplomatic strategy had fulfilled its purpose and tat the military efforts of the Cambodian

- coalition had weakened Vietnam sufficiently for it to be regarded as a lesser threat to Thai security.
- Those assumptions were reasonable and they were seemingly confirmed when Vietnam announced the withdrawal of all troops from Cambodia by the end of 1989
 - However, Chatichhai had made no efforts to consult his ASEAN partners and seek consensus for a new ASEAN policy on Indochina. Instead, he pursued unilaterally an initiative that represented a volte-face from the previous ASEAN position, agreed upon with the special needs of Thailand as a front-line state in mind.

What was Singapore's response to these differences?

- Singapore played a crucial managerial role in coordinating ASEAN diplomacy regionally and internationally in challenging Vietnam's occupation of Cambodia.
- In spite of intra-regional disagreements, Singapore's effort allowed ASEAN to appear as a unitary international actor, which became ASEAN's defining period between December 1978 to October 1991.
- However, ASEAN's effort was hampered by the diplomatic deadlocks between ASEAN members, the Indochina states, Vietnam, Laos and the PRK.
- Additionally, intra-ASEAN differences also hamstrung diplomatic progress.
- According to Lee Kuan Yew in mid-1982, Singapore shared 90% of Thailand's objectives. Singapore managed to persuade Malaysia to share about 80% of the objectives. Indonesia gave just about 50% support and Philippines about 55-50%.
- Singapore and Thailand strongly supported the CGDK, consisting of the KPNLF, FUNCINPEC and the Khmer Rouge.
- Thailand, in particular, was directly threatened by presence of Vietnamese troops in Kampuchea, refused to work with Vietnam and adopted a strident anti-Vietnam position.
- Both Indonesia and Malaysia were on the other hand greatly suspicious of China and the Chinese-backed Khmer Rouge
- Throughout the 1980s, Indonesia and Malaysia became increasingly impatient with Thailand's rigid position and was fearful that China might become a regional hegemon if the Khmer Rouge returned to power.
- Therefore, Indonesia and Malaysia were more willing to negotiate informally with Vietnam while maintaining a common ASEAN front with regards to Vietnam's 'illegal' occupation.

- Philippines was generally supportive of ASEAN strategy but was rather indifferent as it was physically most separate from Vietnam and had the presence of US bases.

- **Singapore's and Indonesia's differing views of ASEAN's position on Cambodia**

- Indonesia's responses to Cambodia**

- Indonesia opened what came to be called "dual-track" diplomacy, in which it pursued bilateral political communication with Vietnam while maintaining its commitment to the ASEAN formula.
 - By 1986 ASEAN had accepted Indonesia its official "interlocutor" with Vietnam.
 - The breakthrough came in July 1987, in the Mochtar-Nguyen Co Thach (Vietnam's minister of foreign affairs) communiqué in which Vietnam accepted the idea of an informal meeting between the Khmer parties, to which other concerned countries would be invited. This was the so-called "cocktail party" formula.
 - This eventually led to the first Jakarta Informal Meeting in July 1988, at which the issue of the Vietnamese invasion and occupation of Cambodia--the external question--was decoupled from the Khmer "civil war"--the **internal** question. The second Jakarta Informal Meeting took place in February 1989 after a change of government in Thailand had radically shifted Bangkok's policy toward a quick negotiated settlement.
 - The second Jakarta meeting, chaired by Alatas, at which Vietnam accepted the notion of an "international control mechanism" for Cambodia, was followed by escalating diplomatic activity--efforts that led to the July 1990 Paris International Conference on Cambodia cochaired by Indonesia and France. The conference adjourned without making great progress, but by then international events influencing great power relations had outpaced ASEAN's and Indonesia's ability to coordinate. The five permanent members of the UN Security Council--working through Paris International Conference on Cambodia channels--took up the challenge of negotiating a peace settlement in Cambodia and, with Indonesia assuming a burdensome diplomatic role, fashioned a peace agreement that led to the deployment of forces of the UN Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC).
 - Indonesia's gradually assertive role in the Cambodian peace effort demonstrated that Jakarta was not entirely willing to place its commitment to ASEAN solidarity above its own national interests.
 - The *Jakarta Post*, often reflective of official positions, thundered in an editorial, "It is high time to spell out clearly to our ASEAN partners, as the largest archipelagic state in Southeast Asia with a growing national interest to

- protect, that we simply cannot afford the endless prolonging of the Kampuchean conflict."
- A caption in the *Far Eastern Economic Review* caught the mood more succinctly: "Indonesia in ASEAN: fed up being led by the nose." Less colloquially, Indonesian analyst Dewi Fortuna Anwar wrote in the *Review*: "The challenge for Indonesian foreign policy in the future is how to maintain a balance between an ASEAN policy which requires goodwill and trust of the other members, and satisfying some of the internationalist aspirations of a growing number of the Indonesian political elite."
 - Indonesia resisted the urging of some ASEAN members that ASEAN formally adopt a more explicit common political-security identity.
 - Indonesia successfully opposed Singapore's proposal at the ASEAN Fourth Summit that would have invited the UN Security Council's five permanent members to accede to ASEAN's 1976 Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia.

Singapore's Responses to Cambodia

- Supporting the formation of a coalition government as an alternative non-communist leadership to Pol Pot's Khmer Rouge or the Heng Samrin's regime
 - ☐ Singapore also played a key role in helping to establish the Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea (CGDK), which was officially founded on 22 June 1982.
 - ☐ The Singapore government believed that establishing a coalition government-in-exile would make the Cambodian resistance forces more acceptable to the international community than the Khmer Rouge.
 - ☐ This was because the credential of Khmer Rouge's Democratic Kampuchea was already eroded by its past reputation and Vietnam's attempt to portray its military campaign in Kampuchea as a 'humanitarian intervention' to end the genocide.
 - ☐ The establishment of the CGDK was thus critical to Singapore-ASEAN's strategy of forcing Vietnam to come to the negotiating table and to preserve the seat of the DK in the UN.
 - ☐ The coalition was made up of two non-communist groups and the Khmer Rouge:

- Prince Norodom Sihanouk's FUNCINPEC party [United National Front for an Independent, Neutral, Peaceful, and Co-operative Cambodia]
 - Former Cambodian Prime Minister Son Sann's KPNLF [Khmer People's National Liberation Front]
 - Pol Pot's Party of Democratic Kampuchea (generally called the Khmer Rouge)
 - In essence, the Singapore government supported the non-communist FUNCINPEC and the KPNLF but not the Khmer Rouge.
 - To Lee Kuan Yew, the inclusion of the Khmer Rouge was a matter of convenience since the Khmer Rouge was militarily stronger and had the support of China but Singapore would certainly not want Pol Pot back in power if the Vietnamese withdrew.
 - To boost the fighting capabilities of the KPNLF and the FUNCINPEC, Singapore began sending military consignments, amounting to US\$60 million by 1989, which included assault rifles, anti-tank weapons and some surface-to-air missiles.
 - Singapore also built the radio station, the Voice of Khmer, and began training the Cambodian resistance in radio broadcasting in 1983.
 - Singapore ran a clandestine operation to support the non-communist elements in the CGDK and even facilitated the CIA's funding of US\$4 million food and medicine to CGDK.
 - Throughout the 1980s, the Singapore government was committed to supporting CGDK and its cause.
 - In February 1985 for instance, after several weeks of Vietnamese attack on CGDK resistance fighters' positions along the Thai-Cambodian border, Singapore proposed in a discussion paper for the Special ASEAN Foreign Minister Meeting that ASEAN countries should concentrate less on the UN effort and more on improving the military and political fortunes of the CGDK.
 - This could be achieved by improving liaison with the CGDK, obtaining additional arms and assistance from third countries, and lobbying efforts in the US.
- Encouraging the US government to remain committed to the region despite the 'Vietnam syndrome'
 - The Singapore government believed that the United States was the only big power that could provide aid and support to the non-communist groups and match that of USSR to Vietnam or China to the Khmer Rouge.
 - However, the government was realistic that the US had yet to overcome the 'Vietnam syndrome' and was reluctant to be militarily drawn into the region again.

- US officials were also doubtful of the capabilities of the non-communist forces and did not hope to complicate US-China relations by supporting the FUNCINPEC and KPNLF while China supported the Khmer Rouge.
 - Therefore, the US government welcomed the formation of CGDK but did not formally recognise it.
 - To persuade the US officials otherwise, both Singapore's foreign minister Rajaratnam and his successor S. Dhanabalan, during their visits to Washington, stressed to US leaders and officials the vital role of the United States in building up a credible non-communist force in Cambodia in the facing of growing Soviet-Vietnam encroachment.
 - After much persuasion, the Reagan administration agreed to fund US\$ 4million of food and medicine, funnelled by the Singapore government to the CGDK, which was insignificant compared to US aid to other parts of the world.
 - In sum, Washington generally adopted a rather lukewarm attitude towards the Cambodian issue.
 - The US Officials preferred a passive, minimal involvement, and a low-risk US policy towards Cambodia.
- Convincing China to support the peaceful resolution of the conflict.
 - After China's brief war with Vietnam in 1979, China pursued a different a strategy from Singapore and ASEAN.
 - Singapore and ASEAN desired to end the conflict but the Chinese strategy was to get the Soviets committed further in the bottomless pit of supporting Vietnam just like the US found itself once in Vietnam.
 - Simultaneously, China sought to isolate Vietnam and weaken Vietnam by assisting the Khmer Rouge's arms resistance.
 - When Lee Kuan Yew met Chinese leader Deng Xiaoping in November 1980, he told Deng that for ASEAN efforts to be credible, it would be better to let the Sihanouk or Son Sann form a non-communist front against the Vietnamese.
 - Deng agreed to a possible alliance between the Khmer Rouge and the non-communists but would not withdraw support for its principal ally, the Khmer Rouge as it was the strong military force that contain Vietnam.
 - Deng added that he was willing to contemplate a neutral non-communist Kampuchea government after Vietnam's withdrawal if it was the wish of the Kampuchean people but qualified that ASEAN must accept a communist government for the Kampuchea if the people so desire.
 - Deng was in principle supportive of a coalition of between the Khmer Rouge and the non-communists, and that paved the way for the formation of the CGDK in June 1982.

Singapore and Indonesia's differing views on the ASEAN position on Cambodia

Indonesia's View	Singapore's View
<p>Indonesia and to a slightly lesser extent, Malaysia thought China was a more serious threat than Vietnam.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Indonesia sympathetic towards Vietnamese plight – both Indonesia and Vietnam had to fight for their independence. - Indonesia too had attempted to take over East Timor. - Suspicious of China – growing ties between China and Thailand were a matter of concern to Indonesia and M'sia. Understood Vietnam security fears of China. 	<p>Thailand and Singapore saw Vietnam as a menace.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Singapore anti-communist rhetoric - Objected against practice of a stronger power imposing government by force on a weaker neighbour - Its prosperity depended on regional stability
<p>Malaysia and Indonesia, increasing concerned that the Cambodian conflict would further threaten regional security, proposed at a bilateral summit in Kuantan (1980) a peaceful Thai-Cambodia border by accepting a Vietnamese sphere of interest in Cambodia if Vietnam were to reduce its strategic links with and dependence on the USSR. This was known as the Kuantan Principles.</p>	<p>Singapore was for a coalition government.</p>

- ASEAN's effort was hampered by the diplomatic deadlocks between ASEAN members, the Indochina states, Vietnam, Laos and the People's Republic of Kampuchea (PRK – Cambodia)
- According to Lee Kuan Yew in mid-1982, Singapore shared 90% of Thailand's objectives. Singapore managed to persuade Malaysia to share about 80% of the objectives. Indonesia gave just about 50% support and Philippines about 55-50%.

- Singapore and Thailand strongly supported the CGDK, consisting of the KPNLF, FUNCINPEC and the Khmer Rouge.
 - Thailand in particular was directly threatened by presence of Vietnamese troops in Kampuchea, refused to work with Vietnam and adopted a strident anti-Vietnam position.
 - Both Indonesia and Malaysia were on the other hand greatly suspicious of China and the Chinese-backed Khmer Rouge
 - Throughout the 1980s, Indonesia and Malaysia became increasingly impatient with Thailand's rigid position and was fearful that China might become a regional hegemon if the Khmer Rouge returned to power.
 - Therefore, Indonesia and Malaysia were more willing to negotiate informally with Vietnam while maintaining a common ASEAN front with regards to Vietnam's 'illegal' occupation.
 - Philippines was generally supportive of ASEAN strategy but was rather indifferent as it was physically most separate from Vietnam and had the presence of US bases.
- **Singapore's disengagement from the Third Indochina War**
 - United Nations Transitional Authority of Cambodia (UNTAC) took over administering Cambodia following the 1991 Paris peace Accords
 - Singapore had played a great part in diplomatic negotiations that led to the Peace Accords and would step back from the Third Indochina War upon UNTAC's establishment.

Learning Outcome: Evaluate the response of Singapore to the Development of the Cold War.

- What were Singapore's foreign policy goals?

- Were its responses to the Third Indochina War aligned with these goals?

- What were Singapore's priorities here? List some of Singapore's actions which demonstrate this.

Supplementary Notes on Singapore's relations with other countries during the Third Indochina War

1. Difficulty in achieving a resolution to the Cambodian conflict through ASEAN diplomacy

- Singapore played a crucial managerial role in coordinating ASEAN diplomacy regionally and internationally in challenging Vietnam's occupation of Cambodia.
- In spite of intra-regional disagreements, Singapore's effort allowed ASEAN to appear as a unitary international actor, which became ASEAN's defining period between December 1978 to October 1991.
- However, ASEAN's effort was hampered by the diplomatic deadlocks between ASEAN members, the Indochina states, Vietnam, Laos and the PRK.
- Additionally, intra-ASEAN differences also hamstrung diplomatic progress.
- According to Lee Kuan Yew in mid-1982, Singapore shared 90% of Thailand's objectives. Singapore managed to persuade Malaysia to share about 80% of the objectives. Indonesia gave just about 50% support and Philippines about 55-50%.
- Singapore and Thailand strongly supported the CGDK, consisting of the KPNLF, FUNCINPEC and the Khmer Rouge.
- Thailand in particular was directly threatened by presence of Vietnamese troops in Kampuchea, refused to work with Vietnam and adopted a strident anti-Vietnam position.
- Both Indonesia and Malaysia were on the other hand greatly suspicious of China and the Chinese-backed Khmer Rouge
- Throughout the 1980s, Indonesia and Malaysia became increasingly impatient with Thailand's rigid position and was fearful that China might become a regional hegemon if the Khmer Rouge returned to power.
- Therefore, Indonesia and Malaysia were more willing to negotiate informally with Vietnam while maintaining a common ASEAN front with regards to Vietnam's 'illegal' occupation.

- Philippines was generally supportive of ASEAN strategy but was rather indifferent as it was physically most separate from Vietnam and had the presence of US bases.

1.1 Rejection of the Kuantan Principles (1980)

- Malaysia and Indonesia, increasing concerned that the Cambodian conflict would further
- threaten regional security, proposed at a bilateral summit in Kuantan (1980) a peaceful Thai-Cambodia border by accepting a Vietnamese sphere of interest in Cambodia if Vietnam
- were to reduce its strategic links with and dependence on the USSR.
- This was known as the Kuantan Principles. However, Thailand and Singapore objected to the
- Kuantan Principles since there was no consensus amongst ASEAN countries.
- The preference was to stick to the terms declared during the International Conference of Kampuchea.

1.2 Rejection of the 5+2 formula (March 1983)

- In March 1983, the Malaysian Foreign Minister proposed the five-plus-two formula which included discussion between ASEAN states, Vietnam and Laos.
- Vietnam was willing to accept the proposal but it was opposed by Thailand and Philippines who refused to negotiate until Vietnam withdrew from Cambodia.

1.3 Rejection of the ASEAN Appeal (September 1983)

- At the 16th ASEAN Minister Meeting in September 1983, ASEAN members issued a joint communique to appeal for Vietnam's withdrawal that, as a compromise to Vietnam, could be completed in a few phases, followed by a ceasefire and setting up of safe areas by the UN (officially known as 'An Appeal for Kampuchean Independence').
- The Appeal was rejected by Vietnam which interpreted it as a unilateral withdrawal. Vietnam was afraid that the Chinese-backed Khmer Rouge could counterattack and threaten Vietnam's security.

1.4 Rejection of the CGDK's Eight-Point Proposal (March 1986)

- With no end in sight, the CGDK issued an Eight-point proposal for the settlement of the Cambodian conflict, which was backed by ASEAN and Singapore.
- The eight-point plan calls for: negotiations with Hanoi on the two-stage withdrawal from Cambodia of an estimated 160,000 to 180,000 Vietnamese troops; a cease-fire ; U.N. recognition of the truce and withdrawal; negotiations after the first stage of the pullout between the resistance coalition and the Heng Samrin government on establishing a four-party government with Sihanouk as president and Son Sann as prime minister; free elections supervised by U.N. observers; restoration of an

independent, and nonaligned Cambodia; foreign aid for reconstruction, and a nonaggression pact with Vietnam.

- Vietnam however refused to deal with the CGDK on grounds it included the "genocidal" Khmer Rouge.

1.5 Diplomatic progress at the Jakarta Informal Meetings (JIM 1 and 2, July 1988 and February 1989)

- Frustrated by the slow progress towards reconciliation, Indonesia, which had closer ties with Vietnam, tried again in during the mid-1980s to mediate the conflict as it leveraged its diplomatic ties with Vietnam to find a solution to the Cambodian crisis.
- Indonesia set up the Jakarta Informal Meetings (JIM 1 and 2) in July 1988 and February 1989.
- This was a series informal negotiation between the different warring factions in Cambodia, the Vietnamese-backed government in Phnom Penh, Vietnam and Laos.
- The Jakarta Informal Meetings (JIM) which became the blueprint upon which the solution to the Cambodian conflict was built.
- ASEAN's diplomatic initiatives, particularly that of Indonesia, was noteworthy in evolving the JIM process.
- The meetings aimed at establishing an "independent, sovereign, peaceful, neutral and non-aligned Cambodia on the basis of self-determination and national reconciliation", which was to be achieved under effective supervision by the United Nations
- Jim I & II were significant diplomatic initiatives taken by ASEAN. The achievements of these two meetings resulted in the Paris International Conference on Cambodia (PICC) in July/August 1989.
- The PICC however did not result in a comprehensive settlement as it lacked consensus between the different Cambodian factions.

2. Changing international and regional context

- The progress made at JIM 1 and 2 also coincided with the changing international climate.
- By 1989, the geopolitical context of the Cold War had drastically changed. Soviet leader,
- Mikhail Gorbachev started restructuring the Soviet economy and allowed the breakaway of Eastern Europe. He also stopped giving aid to Vietnam.
- As economic difficulties mount in Vietnam, its government began to conduct meetings with China to reduce border tensions and improve relations, with the first Sino-Vietnamese meeting at the Vice-Ministerial level taking place in January 1989.
- Separately, it announced that it would withdraw its troops unilaterally from Cambodia by September 1989.

- Then in 1990, the US agreed to recognise Vietnamese role in the Cambodian problem and engage in direct talks with Vietnam to prevent the return of the Khmer Rouge.
- China also agreed to stop supporting the Khmer Rouge and would not seek a dominate role for Khmer Rouge in any political settlement.

3. Paris Peace Accords (October 1991)

- By 1990, the Permanent 5 (P5) members of the UN Security Council decided to involve themselves directly in the issue while Singapore and ASEAN took a step back.
- A second Peace Conference was held in Paris in October 1991 between the different Cambodian factions, which was joined by the Permanent 5 (P5) members of the UN Security Council.
- The P5 members also adopted UN Security Council resolution 717 that produced a framework agreement for the comprehensive settlement of the Cambodian conflict on 16 October 1991.
- On October 23, 1991, marked the official end of the Cambodian–Vietnamese War. The agreement led to the deployment of the first post-Cold War peacekeeping mission (UNTAC) and the first ever occasion in which the UN took over as the government of a state. The agreement was signed by nineteen countries.

4. Overall assessment of Singapore's response to the Third Indochina War

- Despite the multiplicity of challenges, Singapore foreign policy could be considered a success as it managed to employ its diplomatic resources, networks and goodwill from ASEAN to reserve the Vietnamese invasion and occupation of Cambodia.
- Despite intra-ASEAN differences, Singapore played a crucial role in ASEAN's efforts to keep the Cambodian crisis on the international agenda.
- It also worked hard to prevent the central issue – the occupation of Cambodia – from being hijacked by international revulsion of the Khmer Rouge, whom the Vietnamese had replaced with a puppet regime

4.1. Singapore's relations with the United States

- Singapore's relationship with the US was the most important among the major powers during the Cold War.
- Regarded as a benign presence in Southeast Asia, the US accorded Singapore with the most protection.

4.2. Singapore-US relations from 1967-1975

- After the withdrawal of the British, Singapore's difficult relations with Malaysia and Singapore upon independence, and the growing threat of Indochinese communists, Singapore began to align itself unofficially with the US after 1967.
- The Singapore leaders understood the strategic importance of US in maintaining regional peace and stability.
- Regional instability could undermine socioeconomic development that was necessary to banish the threat of communist subversion in Singapore.
- To ensure that the US remained militarily involved in Indochina, the Singapore government permitted South Vietnamese officers to Singapore for training in the Johore Jungle Warfare School in August 1965.
- Since 1967, Lee Kuan Yew openly supported US military intervention in Vietnam, describing it as a great American contribution aimed at providing valuable breathing space to the non-communist Southeast Asian countries.
- Lee was also highly supportive of the US retaining its military presence in the Philippines. Through its military bases, the Philippines offered the Americans an ability to better intervene to support the defence of Singapore should the occasion arise.
- The Singapore government allowed the US forces to utilise former British naval and air bases in Singapore for the maintenance and repair of US military vessels deployed in Vietnam from the late 1960s.
- In return, revenues from the ship and aircraft repair facilities, as well as the supply of petroleum, oil and lubricants to the US military, contributed greatly to Singapore's economic development.
- The US navy for example used the Sembawang's ship-repair facilities from April to June 1968 and provided \$4 to \$5 million of business.
- The US soldiers' Relax and Recreation visits, which the Singapore government permitted, also spurred Singapore's hospitality and tourism.

4.3. Joining the General Agreement of Tariffs and Trade (1973)

- The General Agreement of Tariffs and Trade was an institution created by the United States to facilitate trade and cooperation among capitalist countries.
- With the support of the US, Singapore joined the GATT in 1973, which became a valuable means of market access for Singapore in the international markets.

4.4. Singapore-US relations after the fall of Indochina to Communism (1975)

- After the withdrawal of the US military force from Indochina and the fall of Saigon in 1975, the Singapore government persuaded the US government to continue provide Thailand with economic and military assistance to defend it from the communists in

the scenario of a South Vietnam's defeat, failing which Communist Vietnam could threaten the rest of the Southeast Asian countries

- Lee stressed that a continued American naval presence and increased economic relations “will help the rest of Southeast Asia to adjust less abruptly and to make the task of learning with a communist Indochina less painful.”

4.5. Singapore-US relations after Vietnam's occupation of Cambodia (1978)

- The Singapore government believed that the United States was the only big power that could provide aid and support to the non-communist groups and match that of USSR to Vietnam or China to the Khmer Rouge.
- However, the government was realistic that the US had yet to overcome the 'Vietnam syndrome' and was reluctant to be militarily drawn into the region again.
- US officials were also doubtful of the capabilities of the non-communist forces and did not hope to complicate US-China relations by supporting the FUNCINPEC and KPNLF while China supported the Khmer Rouge.
- Therefore, the US government welcomed the formation of CGDK but did not formally recognise it.
- The Singapore leaders persuaded the reluctant US officials to support the non-communist forces within the CGDK against growing Sino-Vietnam encroachment.
- After much persuasion, the Reagan administration agreed to fund US\$ 4million of food and medicine, funnelled by the Singapore government to the CGDK, which was insignificant compared to US aid to other parts of the world.

4.6. Attracting US investments and MNCs into Singapore

- Since independence, Singapore was keen to attract US Multinational Corporations (MNCs) to locate their factories and regional headquarters in Singapore.
- By the mid-1970s, US MNC General Electric had set up six different facilities and became the large single employer of labour. Other prominent US MNCs that invested in Singapore included Texas Instrument and Hewlett-Packard.
- The contributions of US MNCs played a decisive part in the industrial transformation of the country.

5.1. Singapore's relations with the Soviet Union

- Despite Singapore's support for US involvement in Vietnam, it was able to officially maintain its non-aligned position.
- As a result, USSR did not object to Singapore's entry into the United Nations.
- In June 1968, Singapore and the USSR established diplomatic relations and the Soviets were permitted to establish an embassy in Singapore in January 1969.

- Soviet allies in Eastern Europe and Outer Mongolia followed suit by establishing diplomatic ties with Singapore.
- Soviet leaders however remained wary of Beijing's influence on the Chinese educated Singaporeans and Singapore's non-alignment with the US, as demonstrated by the use of military repair facilities by US aircraft and ship and the rest and recreation visits of US servicemen in Singapore.
- In a visit to Krelim in 1970, Lee Kuan Yew personally assured Premier Alexei Kosygin that the repair facilities were also opened to Soviet vessels.
- Cognisant of the deepening Sino-Soviet split, the Singapore leaders sought better ties with the Soviet Union so as to strategically counter China's influence while keeping the US interested in the region.
- Singapore also established trade ties with USSR and allowed Soviet merchant ships to use the ship repair facilities in Singapore.
- Henceforth, Soviet fishing and whaling vessels were regularly dry-docked at Keppel's shipyards.

5.2. Singapore-Soviet tensions in the 1970s and 1980s

- In 1970-71 Soviet navy was in the midst of building up its naval presence in the Asia-Pacific region. Soviet naval ships sailed through the Singapore Straits on two occasions, which caused a diplomatic row between the Singapore and the USSR.
- Henceforth, though initially considered allowing the Soviet navy to use Singapore's naval shipping facilities in Singapore, it chose to disallow this arrangement from 1972.
- In fact, relations began to cool after the mid-1970s when Singapore identified the Soviet Union as the principal external threat to regional order, particularly after Vietnam's invasion of Cambodia.
- For diplomatic and strategic reasons, the Singapore government chose to portray the invasion as part of Soviet grand design for Asia, linking it to Soviet military deployment to former US naval and air bases in Cam Ranh Bay and Danang, South Vietnam, as well as the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan.
- Lee Kuan Yew cancelled a planned visit to Moscow and on short notice and supported the US in boycotting the Olympics Games that was held in Moscow in 1980 over the issue of Afghanistan and Cambodia.
- Cultural exchange programmes were frozen and all visits by Soviet economic delegations were deferred.
- Singapore also denied repair facilities and bunker to the Soviet naval and auxiliary vessels in civilian dockyards, and overflight and technical stop facilities for Soviet aircraft flying to Indonesia.

- Because of the Sino-Soviet rivalry, the Soviets propaganda machine criticised Singapore for its close informal ties with China, and depicted Singapore as a vehicle for China's interests.
- Relations remained frosty for almost a decade until Mikhail Gorbachev introduced glasnost and perestroika.

6.1. Sino-Singapore relations in the 1960s

- When Singapore became independent in 1965, China just launched its Cultural Revolution.
- Singapore had no diplomatic relations with China because of China's support for communist insurgency in Southeast Asia.
- Singapore also did not want to incur the suspicion of Malaysia and Indonesia whose governments felt that Singapore's ethnic affinity with China would make Singapore susceptible to Chinese influence.

6.2. Sino-Singapore relations from 1971 to 1978

- When the Singapore government became aware of the Sino-US rapprochement, Singapore adopted a practical policy towards the PRC, most notably by holding to the one-China policy, even while Singapore was developing informal economic and military dealings with Taiwan.
- Singapore voiced support for PRC's admission to the UN in 1971 and voted for the PRC government to assume the Chinese seat in the UN.
- Nevertheless, Unlike Malaysia, Thailand and the Philippines who chose to formalised ties with the PRC from 1974 to 1975, Singapore approached relations with the PRC cautiously.
- Singapore forged closer informal economic and other non-official ties with China but chose not to formally recognise China for fear of offending Indonesia.
- This was clearly evident when Singapore sent a table tennis team and some reporters to the PRC in 1972.
- To enhance informal economic ties, the Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce sent a trade mission, which was followed by a special mission dealing with shipping.
- It also kept open a branch of the Bank of China though the Singapore authorities insisted that the bank be staffed by local citizens not regarded as security risks and that it should not be directed by representatives from Beijing.

6.3. Sino-Singapore relations after 1978

- With the success of Vietnam in Indochina, China feared that Vietnam could establish a dominant position in mainland Southeast Asia to the advantage of USSR.

- Singapore attempted to exploit the Sino-Vietnam rivalry by engaging China to serve the dual purposes of improving economic relations while persuading China to terminate its support for communist insurgencies in Southeast Asia.
- In March 1975, Foreign Minister S Rajaratnam visited Beijing and met Premier Zhou Enlai to deepen trade relations where he admitted to the Chinese leaders that Singapore was sending military personnel to Taiwan for training because of Singapore's land scarcity (China did not react strongly because of improving Sino-US relations).
- This was followed by Lee's visit in May 1976 where he met the ailing Mao Zedong.
- China was keen to purchase machinery and oil rigs as well as in sending tankers and cargo vessels to Singapore for repair.
- After Deng took power and launched his Four Modernisation in 1978, trade relations with Singapore visibly strengthened.
- Deng visited Singapore in November 1978, driven in important part by his concern to counter the regional influence of the Soviet-Vietnam nexus.
- This was a response to the recently concluded Treat of Friendship and Cooperation signed between Vietnam and the USSR.

6.4. Strategic cooperation with China during the Third Indochina War

- When Lee Kuan Yew met Chinese leader Deng Xiaoping in November 1980, he told Deng that for ASEAN efforts to be credible, it would be better to let the Sihanouk or Son Sann form a non-communist front against the Vietnamese.
- Deng agreed to a possible alliance between the Khmer rouge and the non-communists but would not withdraw support for its principal ally, the Khmer Rouge as it was the strong military force that contain Vietnam.
- Deng added that he was willing to contemplate a neutral non-communist Kampuchea government after Vietnam's withdrawal if it was the wish of the Kampuchean people but qualified that ASEAN must accept a communist government for the Kampuchea if the people so desire.
- Deng was in principle supportive of a coalition of between the Khmer Rouge and the non-communists, and that paved the way for the formation of the CGDK in June 1982.