



Forum: Historical Security Council (HSC)

Topic: The Vietnam War

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Position: Deputy President

PERSONAL INTRODUCTION

Dear delegates,

My name is Lfteris Revelas, I am sixteen years old and currently attending the 10th grade in Athens College. This will be my first time as a student officer and thus I have the utmost honour and pleasure to serve as one of the Deputy Presidents of the HSC. Overall, I have attended six conferences in Greece with SCMUN being my seventh conference.

The structure of the HSC is that of the Security Council, with the key difference that delegates influence and potentially alter momentous historical events. The purpose of this Study Guide is to introduce you to the topic of the Vietnam War. The most important sections that I would recommend you focus on are the 'Countries and Organizations' and the 'Possible Solutions' which will aid you in resolution-writing.

I am looking forward to collaborating with you all in this year's SCMUN. I would like to advise you to conduct your own personal research before attending the conference so as to be familiar with the topic and be able to support your country's stance on it. I hope we have a fruitful debate, share inspiring ideas and have an amazing time. Should you have any questions or need any clarifications concerning the topic or procedure, do not hesitate to send me an email at revelas.lfteris@gmail.com.

Best Regards,

Lfteris



TOPIC INTRODUCTION

The Vietnam War (1954-1975), was a conflict between the communist government of North Vietnam along with its main supporter in South Vietnam, the Viet Cong, and the administration of South Vietnam and its principal ally, the United States. The Vietnam War was also part of the much broader Cold War separating the United States and the Soviet Union. The core of the conflict was North Vietnam's goal to unify the entire nation under a common dictatorship based on the values of communism, like those of China and the Soviet Union, which had overturned the French colonial administration in Vietnam in 1954. On the other hand, South Vietnam tried to maintain a nation more closely tied to the United States. In 1950, American military advisers were occasionally deployed and in 1961 they started being widely deployed. In the meantime, the Soviet Union gathered weapons and advisers into the North, which in return provided political direction for the campaign in the South. The ongoing casualties grew to be too much for the US to handle.

While conflict between South Vietnam and the Viet Cong proceeded, the US continued to send advisers. On August 2 and 4, 1964, the North Vietnamese fired directly upon two US ships in international waters. America's response was the signing of the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution which gave the opportunity to the President of the United States, Lyndon Johnson, to escalate their involvement. North Vietnamese and Viet Cong troops took US and South Vietnamese forces by surprise, when on January 30, 1968, they coordinated a collective attack on many cities located in South Vietnam. This was a turning point since it was what made President Johnson not escalate the war any further, due to the dissatisfaction of the American people.

Re-evaluating the issue of the Vietnam War should be at the top of the UN's agenda due to its significance and the impact it had on this constantly evolving world. There are still possible ways in which this pressing topic can be resolved in a more efficient way. The Historical Security Council (HSC) must reach a consensus acceptable by both sides in order to ensure international peace.



DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

Viet Cong

The Viet Cong, whose full name was “Viet Nam Cong San” supported North Vietnam’s aspirations which went against the government of South Vietnam. It is the military arm of the National Liberation Front (NFL). The movement’s significant objectives are the overthrow of the South Vietnamese government, the reunification of Vietnam and the establishment of a communist Vietnam. The Viet Cong is fighting a guerrilla war of ambush, terrorism and sabotage. They use small units to uphold the countryside. The majority of the Viet Cong were recruited in the South and received weapons and guidance from the North Vietnamese Army.¹

Guerrilla

Member of an irregular military force fighting small-scale limited actions against conventional military forces. Guerrilla tactics involve constantly shifting attack operations and the inclusion of terrorism.²

Domino Theory

The Domino Theory was adopted in the US’s foreign policy after World War II and stated that the fall of a non-communist state to communism would precipitate the fall of non-communist governments in neighbouring states.³ More specifically for the Vietnam War, the patriot leader of North Vietnam, Ho Chi Minh, stated in September 1945, Vietnam’s independence from France, with a war, in which the conflicting powers are the communist government of North Vietnam (Hanoi) against the French-led regime in South Vietnam (Saigon).⁴

¹ The Editors of Encyclopædia Britannica. “Viet Cong | Definition, Tactics, & History.” *Encyclopædia Britannica*, 22 Nov. 2017, www.britannica.com/topic/Viet-Cong.

² The Editors of Encyclopædia Britannica. “Guerrilla | Military Force.” *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 10 Mar. 2023, www.britannica.com/topic/guerrilla.

³ Bell, Duncan. “Humanitarian Intervention.” *Encyclopædia Britannica*, 26 Mar. 2019, www.britannica.com/topic/humanitarian-intervention.

⁴ History.com Editors. “Domino Theory.” *HISTORY*, A&E Television Networks, 24 Aug. 2018, www.history.com/topics/cold-war/domino-theory.



Agent Orange

Agent Orange is a herbicide mixture used by the US military during the Vietnam War. Much of it contained a dangerous chemical contaminant called dioxin. The US forces use it by spraying it over the rural landscape in Vietnam to defoliate trees and shrubs and kill food crops that are providing cover and food to the opposing forces. It remains toxic for only a few days but has a toxic contaminant that does not degrade as readily and is still causing health problems.⁵

Détente

Period that has started in 1967 and is the start of a possible era of increased trade and cooperation between the US and the Soviet Union.⁶

People's Army of Vietnam (PAVN)

The People's Army of Vietnam is the main branch of the armed forces of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam. The PAVN is divided into regular, regional and security forces. Additionally, officers, reinforcements and supplies from PAVN forces are often funnelled to the Viet Cong which operates with PAVN troops frequently. The army is well motivated and politically indoctrinated, and often employs a mix of regular and irregular guerrilla operations.⁷

Napalm

Napalm is a weaponized mixture of chemicals designed to create highly flammable and gelatinous liquid. Detonation then occurs by various explosive compounds that ignite phosphorous, which burns at a temperature adequate to ignite the fuel mixture. The consistency of napalm results in its tendency to adhere to exposed surfaces, increasing its lethality and destructive capability.⁸

⁵ Aspen Institute. "What Is Agent Orange?" *The Aspen Institute*, 2016, www.aspeninstitute.org/programs/agent-orange-in-vietnam-program/what-is-agent-orange/

⁶ The Editors of Encyclopedia Britannica. "Détente | United States-Soviet History." *Encyclopædia Britannica*, 1 May 2017, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/d%C3%A9tente>.

⁷ "Armed Forces | Vietnam War | Pritzker Military Museum & Library | Chicago." *Www.pritzkermilitary.org*, www.pritzkermilitary.org/explore/vietnam-war/armed-forces.

⁸ "CE Activity | Napalm Toxicity | NPs." *Www.statpearls.com*, www.statpearls.com/nursepractitioner/ce/activity/94077. Accessed 1 Dec. 2023.



BACKGROUND INFORMATION

French Colonialism

Since the 19th century, the French ruled Vietnam as a colony. Vietnam was invaded by the army of Japan during the Second World War. The Viet Minh, or else the League for the Independence of Vietnam, was established by Ho Chi Minh, a communist political leader, to oppose the administrations of the French and Japanese. After its loss in 1945, Japan removed its troops from Vietnamese soil, thus leaving the French-taught Emperor Bao Dai in charge. With a valuable chance to keep domination Ho's Viet Minh powers immediately acted, taking control of the northern part of Vietnam, with its centre, the city of Hanoi, and declaring the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, with Ho assuming the position of president. France backed Emperor Bao in his attempt to regain control of Vietnam, and in July 1949, it established the State of Vietnam, with Saigon as its capital. The two players had a similar intention of uniting Vietnam; however, Ho wanted it a socialist country, while Bao needed a Vietnam firmly connected to the West.

Battle of Dien Bien Phu

The Battle of Dien Bien Phu, lasting from March 13 to May 7, 1954, was a conclusive Vietnamese military triumph that ended French rule in Vietnam. Vietnam was first visited by French traders in the 17th century. To safeguard them, French troop attacks started in 1858. Until 1884, Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia had become a large French colony, called French Indochina. After the second World War, the French tried to restore their control; however, they had to face the socialist Viet Minh movement.

In November 1953, a large number of French officers were sent to the Dien Bien Phu Valley in the north-western part of Vietnam. They claimed a small airstrip there and started making a tactical fortification that remembered a chain of sustained posts for a 64 kilometre border around the airfield and runway. France had about 15 thousand soldiers but were seriously outnumbered since the Viet Minh had 50 thousand soldiers.

The French maintained two essential goals in their occupation of the valley. They sought a place that constituted a threat to the stock lines within Laos that upheld the country, and needed to incite the Viet Minh into a wide open, massed attack, certain that the powers of France would win in this sort of warfare. France underrated the Viet Minh's



abilities. The French forces erroneously assumed that the Viet Minh lacked anti-aircraft weapons and would rely on the airstrip to resupply. The Viet Minh forces prepared for four months and spread out across the hills until they had surrounded the Dien Bien Phu valley. On March 13, 1954, the Viet Minh arms started destroying one of the French command posts and the military laid siege of the whole French station. Following the attack, Viet Minh troops disabled the runway, launched an attack, and overran another perimeter stronghold of the French. Due to the lack of a working airfield, the Air Force of the French army was forced to parachute supplies while facing an assault. It lost sixty-two aircrafts in the midst of the conflict. By April 22, Viet Minh powers had captured 90% of the airstrip, leaving the French army in critical and disintegrating conditions. The end came on May 7, when the last slight of French resistance collapsed, and a victorious warrior of Vietnam remained on the vanquished base of France waving the yellow and red Viet Minh banner.

The Geneva Accords

In an effort to resolve a number of issues in the large area of Asia, among other things, the Indochina war, a conflict between nationalists of France and Vietnam, world leaders gathered in the city of Geneva. The United States' involvement in Vietnam came to a head at the conference. Conversations on the Vietnam problem began during the meeting similarly as the French government experienced its most, obviously, atrocious loss of the conflict, since Vietnam captured France's Dien Bien Phu military base. The Geneva Accords were signed in July of 1954 and divided Vietnam at the seventeenth parallel. The northern part of Vietnam would be governed by the communist administration of Ho Chi Minh and the southern part of Vietnam would be managed by Sovereign Bao Dai. Vietnam was to have a national election in two years to unify the country. However, America prevented that from happening out of concern that an election could result in socialist rule. The impermanent division of the country into two ideologically opposed states implied that a clash between them would result. Additionally, France would withdraw its troops from Northern Vietnam in accordance with the Geneva Agreement. No foreign troops were permitted to enter Vietnam for that two-year period.



The Cold War

This committee session is taking place amidst the Cold War, at a point where pressure between the US and the USSR are reaching a never before seen level. Mao Zedong declared the establishment of People's Republic of China in the year 1949, and by January 1950, China joined the USSR in officially recognising the communist Democratic Republic of Vietnam. In the Cold War, the US exercises a strategy of control, in which they have promised that political, military and financial help would be given to democratic countries confronting dangers from communist powers. A short time later, President Eisenhower introduced the Domino Hypothesis, implying that a socialist triumph in the area of Vietnam could result in a ripple effect of communist expansion in Southeast Asia.

Overthrow of Ngo Dinh Diem

Ngo Dinh Diem, was a Catholic nationalist who became Emperor Bao Dai's successor. The Americans, who supported his rise to power approved of his strong anti-communist stance. However, protests took place throughout South Vietnam due to Diem's preferential treatment to the Catholic minority. Eight Buddhist activists seem to have been killed by official authorities in Hue, in May 1963. Accordingly, Buddhist monks started to immolate themselves in what is known as the "Buddhist Crisis." Diem's leadership abilities were challenged by the US, which, that November, supported a coup d'état in which Ngo Dinh Diem and his sibling, were killed. South Vietnam experienced a tumultuous period of 12 distinct governments between 1963 and 1965 following the coup.

The Gulf of Tonkin Incident

The Incident in the Gulf of Tonkin, also known as the USS Maddox episode, denoted the official entrance of the United States into the Vietnam War. The United States had previously supported South Vietnam in raiding Viet Cong strongholds in provincial regions of the nation and carried out bombing operations on the Vietnam-Laos border.



In the summer of 1964, with US maritime help, South Vietnam started an organised array of guerrilla strikes on the shoreline of North Vietnam. In July, at the advice of Lieutenant General William Westmoreland, authority of the US Military Help Order, the focal point of these assaults moved from commando strikes ashore to coastline shelling utilising missiles. These activities on the coasts of the gulf were directed with US maritime bombers positioned close by, along with Maddox and Turner Happiness, which were there on insight collecting assignments.



Figure 1: Gulf of Tonkin Incident⁹

The Maddox crew received an intelligence report on August 2, 1964, indicating that three North Vietnamese patrol boats had been sent to intrude. John Herrick, the boat's chief, at first arranged Maddox to go to the open ocean, wanting to stay away from a showdown. In any case, a couple of hours after the fact, Herrick switched his request and the boat got once again to the Bay. Herrick instructed the ship's weapons to be equipped properly when three North Vietnamese boats came close to the destroyer within a few hours. Maddox and the contender jets had the option to battle off the North Vietnamese assault, 3 boats withdrew, 1 was ravaged and the other 2 were vigorously ruined.

Turner Joy was instructed to join Maddox in the Gulf of Tonkin the following day by President Johnson as a demonstration of American strength. On the 4th of August, Maddox and Turner Joy got insight implying that an additional North Vietnamese assault was fast approaching. With unfortunate visibility and storms drawing nearer, John Herrick requested the destroyers to go to lengths to keep away from a conflict, by moving farther to the ocean. That evening, Maddox reports spotting unidentified vessels nearby. Over the course of the following hours, Maddox and Turner Joy took part in moves intended to avoid the assault, despite the fact that it was hazy whether North Vietnamese boats were really in pursuit. In any case, Maddox recorded various torpedo

⁹ Paterson, Pat. "The Truth about Tonkin." *U.S. Naval Institute*, Feb. 2008, www.usni.org/magazines/naval-history-magazine/2008/february/truth-about-tonkin.



assaults and automated equipment discharge. Nonetheless, Naval force Administrator James Stockdale, who had administered the air safeguard of the Maddox ship two days prior, soaring the bay, cast uncertainty on whether there was to be sure an assault. Additionally, Captain Herrick questioned the version offered by his crew.

William Westmoreland

As opposed to the air assaults on North Vietnam, the work of South Vietnam and the US in the south was battled basically on the ground, under the order of General William Westmoreland. Westmoreland sought after a strategy of whittling down, intending to kill however many foe troops as would be prudent as opposed to attempting to get an area. By 1966, large portions of South Vietnam had been designated as “free fire zones,” from which all uninvolved civilians were expected to flee. Refugees poured into camps in designated safe areas near Saigon as a result of heavy B-52 bombing that rendered these areas uninhabitable. The fact that the Democratic Republic of Vietnam and Viet Cong troops could easily reoccupy lost territory with manpower and supplies delivered via the Ho Chi Minh Trails through Cambodia and Laos encouraged them to continue fighting even as the death toll grew steadily. Additionally, North Vietnam improved its air defences with assistance from China and the Soviet Union.

Ho Chi Minh Trail

The Ho Chi Minh Trail is a tactical stock route starting from North Vietnam and going into Laos and Cambodia until the region of South Vietnam. The trail sends equipment, manpower and stockpiles from socialist North Vietnam to their allies which are settled in South Vietnam. The Ho Chi Minh Trail moves a few tons of provisions through mountain ranges and thick wilderness. The trail is in the sights of US military forces because of the quantity of weapons it supplies to the Viet Cong, its enemies in South Vietnam. In 1965, more than 30 US Aviation based armed forces jets struck along the path in Laos. This was one of several American strikes against Ho Chi Minh Trail villages and roads.



Figure 2: Ho Chi Minh Trail¹⁰

¹⁰ Olsen, K. R. “Long-Term Fate of Agent Orange and Dioxin TCDD Contaminated Soils and Sediments in Vietnam Hotspots.” *ResearchGate*, Jan. 2019, <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/331255616> Long-



Vietnam War protests

By November 1967, there were close to 500,000 US troops in both parts of Vietnam, with 15,058 Americans being killed and 109,527 seriously injured. Some officers have grown to doubt the justifications given to them by the government for keeping them there and the White House's repeated assertions that the war is over. This year has seen increased mental and physical decline among American soldiers, including the use of drugs, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and assaults by warriors against officials and non-commissioned officers. Increasingly more military faculty have begun abandoning and a vigorous anti-war movement among American powers has produced vicious fights, killings and mass imprisonments of work force positioned in Vietnam. Assaulted by appalling pictures of the conflict on their television, US citizens on the home front have opposed to the conflict. In October 1967, about 35 thousand demonstrators organized protest against the war outside of the American Pentagon. The argument made by those opposed to the war is that the primary casualties are civilians and that the United States has been supporting a corrupt dictatorship in Saigon.

TIMELINE OF EVENTS

Date of the Event	Event
May 19 th 1941	Establishment of the League for Independence of Vietnam by Ho Chi Minh, a coalition created to serve as a national united front to achieve the independence of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam
July 5 th 1949	State of Vietnam is formed with Saigon

[Term Fate of Agent Orange and Dioxin TCDD Contaminated Soils and Sediments in Vietnam Hot spots.](#)



	<p>serving as its capital city</p>
<p>January 1950</p>	<p>Recognition of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam by The Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China</p>
<p>May 7th 1954</p>	<p>The Battle of Dien Bien Phu in which the French-held stronghold at the Dien Bien Phu valley in Vietnam fell after a four-month battle between France and Vietnamese communist Ho Chi Minh</p>
<p>April 26th to July 20th of 1954</p>	<p>The Geneva Conference is held, attempting to negotiate a settlement to end the conflict in Indochina and reunify Vietnam</p>
<p>July of 1954</p>	<p>The Geneva Accords are the final agreement of the Geneva Conference, which established a ceasefire in Laos, Cambodia and Vietnam, officially ending the First Indochina War</p>
<p>December 20th of 1960</p>	<p>The National Liberation Front (NLF) is formed to affect the overthrow of the South Vietnamese government and the reunification of North and South Vietnam</p>



<p>December of 1961</p>	<p>The “December 1961 White Paper” report is published, which argued for an increase in military, technical, and economic aid and a sharp increase in American advisers to help stabilize Diem’s government</p>
<p>January 2nd of 1963</p>	<p>Battle of Ap Bac, in which South Vietnamese troops engaged a small Viet Cong unit</p>
<p>November 2nd of 1963</p>	<p>Ngo Dinh Diem is assassinated in a successful CIA-backed coup, which is the culmination of nine years of autocratic family rule in the country</p>
<p>August 4th of 1964</p>	<p>Gulf of Tonkin Incident (see background information)</p>
<p>August 7th of 1964</p>	<p>Gulf of Tonkin Resolution (see background information)</p>
<p>March 1st of 1966</p>	<p>A Program for the Pacification and Long-Term Development of Vietnam (PROVN), a study commissioned by the US Army Chief of Staff, is published</p>



MAJOR COUNTRIES AND ORGANISATIONS INVOLVED

North Vietnam Allies

North Vietnam, officially the Democratic Republic of Vietnam (DRV), is a socialist state in Southeast Asia. At the core of the Vietnam War is the ambition of North Vietnam to unify the whole country under a communist government according to the model of the USSR and China. One of the most significant allies of North Vietnam through the war has been the Soviet Union. Being the first communist state, the Soviet Union supported North Vietnam with a large contribution in weaponry. The Soviet Union supplies North Vietnam with medical supplies, arms, tanks, planes, helicopters, artillery, anti-aircraft missiles and other equipment. In 1965, after Khrushchev's was removed from power, the Soviet Union signed a defence treaty providing North Vietnam with financial aid, military equipment and advisers. Recently, communist China strongly backed Ho Chi Minh amid the conflict with the French and has kept on doing during the conflict with the US, providing equipment, competence and labour force. China claims to have deployed 320,000 free-of-charge military personnel and spent over \$20 billion supporting North Vietnam despite its poor economic condition. The Chinese have mostly remained in the background, reconstructing areas that were destroyed by US bombings. But when they made it clear that China would also invade North Vietnam if US troops did, they played the most significant role.

South Vietnam Allies

South Vietnam is formally allied with the United States, Australia, New Zealand, France and the United Kingdom. In order to stop South Vietnam from falling into communist hands, the United States got involved. In the beginning, the US worked in the background; however, after 1964, it sent troops and ended up deeply involved in the conflict. The US supplied Diem Bien Phu with billions of dollars' worth of help, as well as expanding the quantity of army counsels. In 1964, the supposed Gulf of Tonkin Incident provoked President Johnson to enter combat and commence a large bombarding effort. South Korea is a main ally of South Vietnam and the US, supplying over 300,000 soldiers. South Korea is somewhat inspired by a feeling of responsibility and compassion. They have additionally been paid off by the US in the form of financial help.



France

Before 1954, France had occupied Vietnam for a long time; however, it was against the new conflict. As part of its efforts to reclaim its pre-war empire following World War II, France occupied Vietnam once more. Generally, Vietnamese were against pilgrim rule and a minor revolution broke out, driven by communist and independence-advocate Ho Chi Minh. At Dien Bien Phu in 1954, Ho's forces won decisively and were successful in expelling France.

Laos

Laos was initially neutral in the conflict, but North Vietnam moved troops through the nation and led a communist mutiny. In 1962, the United States, North and South Vietnam and several other nations consented to respect the neutrality of Laos and not interfere with its undertakings. By moving troops and supplies through Laos rather than the heavily guarded demilitarized zone that separated it from South Vietnam, North Vietnam immediately violated the agreement. The Ho Chi Minh Trail is a network of roads developed by the North Vietnamese that connected North and South Vietnam through neighbouring Laos. This trail has been the main supply route used by North Vietnam to supply troops in the South who were preparing for the intense military conflict.

Cambodia

Cambodia, while formally neutral, has endured communist intrusions and has been bombarded by the US for those intrusions. The North Vietnamese in like manner move troops and supplies through neighbouring Cambodia. Prince Norodom Sihanouk could not bear to outrage the North Vietnam in spite of being anti-communist in his domestic policies.

Thailand

Thailand has benefited significantly from American aid during the Vietnam War. Its military government has been an ally of the US from the first days of the Cold War and has committed its territory, people and resources to the American-led campaign against North Vietnam. Thailand has hosted several air bases that launched American military aircraft daily on missions to strike strategic targets in Laos and North Vietnam. The United States supported the rapid expansion of a naval base and port facilities that



brought war-related supplies into the region by providing funds. As a result of the war, about 50 thousand US military personnel have been stationed throughout Thailand.

Alliances Summary Table

North Vietnam	South Vietnam	Neutral
Soviet Union	United States of America	Cambodia
China	South Korea	Laos
	Thailand	

RELEVANT UN TREATIES CONVENTIONS AND RESOLUTIONS

Treaty of Saigon

The Treaty of Saigon, signed in June 1862, was the treaty that gave France achieved its first foothold in Indochina. The treaty was signed by the last precolonial emperor of Vietnam, Tu Due, and was ratified by him in April 1863. Under the terms of the agreement, France accepted Saigon and three of the southern provinces of Cochinchina, the opening of three ports to trade, freedom of missionary work and a generous cash compensation.

United Nations Security Council Resolution 189

United Nations Security Council Resolution 189 was adopted unanimously on June 4, 1964, and condemned an incident caused by the units of the Republic of Vietnam into Cambodia. It requested compensation for the Cambodians. The resolution thereafter urged that all Member States and authorities acknowledge and uphold Cambodia's neutrality and territorial integrity. Cambodia had previously complained of acts of



aggression by South Vietnamese and American troops into its territory. The July 1964, report from the Council's mission at the frontier indicated that tensions were still present.

Gulf of Tonkin Resolution

In the first months of 1964, two US destroyers positioned in the Gulf of Tonkin, Vietnam indicated that they had been attacked by North Vietnamese powers. In response to these recorded events, President Johnson asked for permission from the US Congress to increase the US military existence in Indochina. On August 7, 1964, US Congress passed the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution, which authorised President Johnson to take any action he accepted were vital to reciprocate and to advance the upkeep of world-wide peace and safety in southeast Asia. The resolution was the essential enactment for the Johnson and Nixon administrations indictments of the Vietnam War.

PREVIOUS ATTEMPTS TO SOLVE THE ISSUE

Geneva Accords and division of Vietnam

On July 21st 1954, this pivotal conference led to the temporary division of Vietnam at the 17th parallel with Ho Chi Minh's communist-led administration in the North and Ngo Dinh Diem's regime in the South, backed by the United States. The accords created two zones separated by a demilitarized zone and limited foreign military operations in Southeast Asia. French troops must withdraw to the south of the demilitarized zone and communist troops to the north. Refugees were allowed to move from one zone to another for a limited time.

Failed unification efforts

The Geneva Accords also called for a general election (the Final Declaration) within two years, in both the North and South to establish a single national government and regime. The International Control Commission (ICC) comprising of Canada, Poland and India supervised the implementation of this agreement. This agreement left the Democratic Republic of Vietnam in control of only the northern half of the country. Viet Minh leaders appeared certain to win these elections. This provision was never agreed to by South Vietnam or the United States, and the reunification election was not held.



POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

Negotiations

To begin with, diplomatic solutions could play an important role in ending the Vietnam War. The United States of America, along with the Soviet Union, and North and South Vietnam, should be urged to pursue diplomatic ways of conflict resolution. Negotiations between the above stakeholders are essential to the resolution of the issue at hand. Negotiations would allow all main parties to engage in dialogue and express their points of view on the war. Additionally, they would provide an opportunity to identify common goals and establish a relationship of cooperation. The negotiations should aim to find common ground or a peace agreement.

Furthermore, a result of these discussions should be the decision to begin a series of actions and measures in order to build trust and reduce tension between the clashing parties; for example, implementing ceasefires could result in a friendlier environment for negotiations. Thus, a mutually accepted solution could be proposed.

Moreover, a third party involvement and mediation is suggested. Including a neutral mediator or international organization could facilitate the negotiation. These mediators can aid in promoting productive and fruitful discussions.

An assembly

The call for an assembly with all member states besides the involved parties should be discussed. The assembly would deliberate upon the political, economic, social and military aspects of the war. This could lead to the imposition of economic sanctions on the parties involved or the establishment of mechanisms to check that no human rights violations take place.

Additionally, an international peacekeeping force could be deployed to monitor and reinforce ceasefires between the two parties. The assembly could also focus on providing humanitarian aid and assistance to those affected. This could aid in mitigating the anguish of civilians. For instance, the assembly should assist medically, meaning providing aid, healthcare services, medicines, medical supplies and equipment, as well as delivering food supplies and addressing the issue of malnutrition among the population affected. A significant part of this aid should entail constructing shelters,



schools and hospitals, and providing homes to those who have lost theirs. Ensuring access to clean water is of utmost importance. Last but not least, psychological support to address the needs of children and education should be provided.

Raising awareness

Another possibility is raising awareness through anti-war movements and protests throughout all member states. In that way, the general public will be mobilized and strongly support the end of war. All governments should support these movements with supplies and funds in order for them to operate. To begin with, these protests could focus on the reasons why this war is not beneficial for any member state, make known the consequences the Vietnam War has on everyone's day-to-day life, and advocate for different ways that could be used to face the problem of these clashing ideologies. By raising awareness, attitudes and behaviors can be altered, due to wider knowledge of their detrimental impact. Furthermore, these movements would create a sense of unity among all nations and start building solidarity. Finally, efforts from other nations and international organizations could influence the outcome of the war. That will lead to pressure for the policymakers and politicians to find a solution that is accepted by everyone.



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