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Continued Fighting on Border - Formation of "Cambodian National United Front" - Vietnamese Invasion of Cambodia - Fall of Phnom-Penh - "People's Revolutionary Council" formed by United Front - UN security Council Debate - Resolution vetoed by Soviet Union - Guerrilla Resistance by Khmer Rouge Forces - Treaties with Vietnam and Laos signed by Revolutionary Council

After continued fighting on the Vietnamese-Cambodian border throughout the autumn of 1978, Vietnamese troops invaded Cambodia on Dec. 25. The Cambodian capital, Phnom-Penh, fell on Jan. 7, 1979, and on the following day a "People's Revolutionary Council", with Mr Heng Samrin as President, was established by the "Cambodian National United Front for National Salvation", which had been formed a month earlier by Cambodian opponents of Mr Pol Pot's Khmer Rouge Government. The new Government was recognized by Vietnam and Laos, which subsequently concluded treaties with it, and by the Soviet Union and its allies. Although the Vietnamese and United Front forces held the towns, Khmer Rouge supporters continued to maintain a guerrilla resistance in the countryside, and were believed to be receiving aid from China through Thailand.

Prince Norodom Sihanouk, the former head of state, left for New York via Peking on Jan. 6 to present the Cambodian Government's case at the UN security Council. A resolution calling for the withdrawal of all foreign forces from Cambodia was adopted by the Council on Jan. 15 by 13 votes to two, but was vetoed by the Soviet Union. Prince Sihanouk, although returning to Peking, subsequently dissociated himself from the Khmer Rouge regime, and proposed that a new Geneva conference should be held to provide for free elections and the neutralization of Cambodia.

Details of these and related developments are given under cross-headings below.

Military Operations, September to December 1978

Fighting continued along the border during the autumn of 1978, although apparently on a smaller scale than in the summer, military operations being hampered by an unusually heavy rainy season which caused widespread floods in both countries. Western analysts suggested that Vietnamese troops had held the area around Krek, Memot and Snoul since the fighting in June; that Cambodian dissidents who had infiltrated Cambodian Army lines had penetrated into Kompong Cham province, possibly as far as the Mekong; and that the Cambodian forces continued to make periodic raids into Vietnam.

According to Cambodian sources, Vietnamese troops suffered heavy casualties in fighting around Krek between Aug. 27 and Sept. 3, and lost 422 killed in fighting in the Svay Rieng border area in the second half of September. Vietnamese reports said that Cambodian forces had made a series of raids into Tay Ninh, Long An and An Giang provinces in the first half of September.

Cambodian reports in October stated that Vietnamese attacks along Highway 1 in Svay Rieng province had been repelled on Oct. 7 and 21; that in fighting along Highway 7 (in Kompong Cham and Kratie provinces) the Vietnamese had lost 950 killed between Sept. 1 and Oct. 20 and 30 more on Oct. 24; and that three Vietnamese attacks in Ratanakiri province had been repelled between Oct. 19 and 24. Cambodian allegations

that the Vietnamese forces had used poison gas on several occasions between Oct. 28 and Nov. 11 in engagements in Ratanakiri, Kompong Cham and Takeo provinces and had carried out bombing raids in Kratie province on Nov. 18 were denied by Vietnamese official sources. Vietnamese reports in October continued to refer to Cambodian raids into Tay Ninh, Long An and Dong Thap provinces, in the largest of which over 100 Cambodian troops were said to have been killed in Tay Ninh on Oct 1

Mr Son Sen, the Cambodian Defence Minister, said on Dec. 21 that the Vietnamese had launched an operation at Snoul in November, advancing six to seven kilometres, but had fallen back after suffering heavy losses. According to Western intelligence reports, however, Vietnamese troops killed or captured over half a Cambodian division in a battle near Snoul on Nov. 18–19. Mr Son Sen also stated that the Vietnamese had attacked Memot, launched unsuccessful attacks along Highway lin Svay Rieng and intruded a number of times into Ratanakiri. These operations were apparently followed by a lull in the fighting in the first three weeks of December.

Hanoi radio reported numerous Cambodian intrusions into Tay Ninh, Dong Thap, An Giang and Kien Giang provinces in December, and claimed that 150 Cambodian troops had been killed in a battle in Dong Thap on Dec. 15–16, over 100 in Kien Giang on Dec. 23 and about 300 in Tay Ninh on Dec. 24.

Mr Nguyen Duy Trinh, the Vietnamese Foreign Minister, said at a meeting in Bangkok with Dr Uppadit Panchariyangkhun, the Thai Foreign Minister, on Dec. 13 that Cambodian troops had intruded into Vietnamese territory in more than 10 places, whereas Vietnamese troops were engaged only in the defence of their country. Although in all conflicts it was normal for one country's troops to enter the other's territory, it was not Vietnam's intention to seize Cambodian territory, but only to protect its own.

In a letter of Nov. 30, 1978, to the president of the UN security Council the Vietnamese representative at the UN accused China of having "used the Cambodian ruling clique to cause the border war against Vietnam", and of having made allegations of aggression against Vietnam to cover up its "expansionist plots" in South-East Asia. The Chinese representative contended in a letter of Dec. 11 that the conflict had been caused by "the Vietnamese authorities' attempts to annex Cambodia, control the whole of Indo-China and establish an 'Indo-Chinese federation' with Vietnam at its head", and accused the Soviet Union of abetting Vietnam in its "acts of regional hegemonism".

A Cambodian letter of Dec. 11 alleged that since the beginning of the dry season several Vietnamese divisions had "intensified their acts of aggression" all along the frontier; that Vietnam was "sending more agents to infiltrate into Cambodia to incite revolt"; and that "the Soviet Union is sending to Vietnam more and more military advisers and increasingly large quantities of military equipment".

It was announced on Dec. 3, 1978, that over 200 representatives of all sections of the Cambodian people, meeting in the "liberated zone" of Cambodia, had formed a "Cambodian National United Front for National Salvation", and had elected a central committee of 14 members, with Mr Heng Samrin as president, Mr Chea Sim as vice-president and Mr Ros Samay as general secretary.

Mr Heng Samrin (44), a former political commissar in the Cambodian Army and Communist Party official, and Mr Chea Sim (46), a member of the People's Representative Assembly elected in 1976 had both joined the resistance movement against the Khmer Rouge regime at the time of the revolt in May 1978. Other members of the committee included representatives of the Buddhist clergy, ethnic minorities and women's, youth, peasants' and intellectuals' organizations.

The congress decided to found the United Front's official news agency, the Saporamean Kampuchea (SPK), and its radio, the "Voice of the Cambodian People", and adopted as its flag a red flag with five golden towers in the middle. (This flag had been used by the Khmers Issarak, who co-operated with the Vietminh in the war against the French.) The congress also adopted the following 11-point programme:

To overthrow "the reactionary Pol Pot-Ieng Sary clique", hold general elections to a National Assembly and adopt a new constitution guaranteeing the people's rights.

To build mass organizations affiliated to the United Front.

To build and develop the "Cambodian Revolutionary Army".

To realize the people's rights to work, recreation, education and family life and to freedom of residence, movement, association and religion, and the right of all ethnic groups to freedom and equality.

To carry out an economic policy "tending towards genuine socialism"; to establish "a planned economy with markets"; to assist and encourage "mutual aid and co-operative forms on the basis of the peasants' own volition"; to establish banks, issue currency and restore and develop the circulation of goods; to abolish forced labour; and to introduce an eight-hour working day and payment according to work.

To abolish compulsory marriage, encourage free choice in marriage, restore family life and realize sexual equality.

To eradicate illiteracy and build schools and universities.

To punish those guilty of crimes against the people and practise leniency towards those who sincerely repented.

To carry out a foreign policy of peace, friendship and nonalignment.

(10) To settle all disputes with neighbouring countries through peaceful negotiations.

(11) To strengthen solidarity with "all revolutionary and progressive forces throughout the world".

A communiqué issued by the Cambodian Foreign Ministry on Dec. 9 denounced the United Front as "a Vietnamese political organization with a Khmer name", which the Vietnamese Government had been forced to set up by "the Soviet international expansionists".

In a foreign policy statement issued on Dec. 26 the United Front central committee declared that it would not enter into any military alliances or allow any country to set up bases on its territory, bring military equipment into Cambodia or use Cambodian territory for intervention or aggression against other countries. It would be prepared to establish normal relations with China on the basis of mutual respect for national rights, but would oppose Chinese intervention in Cambodian internal affairs.

The United Front's SPK agency claimed on Dec. 9 that an uprising had taken place in Prey Veng province; on Dec. 15 that fighting had occurred since Nov. 25 in Ratanakiri, Mondolkiri, Kratie, Kompong Cham and Svay Rieng provinces, and that the resistance movement was spreading in Kandal, Kompong Chhnang and Kompong Thom provinces; and on Dec. 28 that an attack on the "liberated region" of Kratie had been repelled.

In a telegram sent to the president of the security Council on Dec. 31, 1978, Mr Ieng Sary, the Cambodian Foreign Minister, stated that since Dec. 25 two Vietnamese divisions supported by aircraft had attacked along Highway 19 (leading from Pleiku through Ratanakiri province to Stung Treng) and penetrated deeply into Cambodian territory; that two more divisions had penetrated deeply into Kratie province along Highway 7; and that Vietnamese troops had launched other attacks on Mondolkiri province. He also alleged that Vietnamese aircraft had carried out air raids over Ratanakiri, Stung Treng and Mondolkiri provinces, east of Kompong Cham, and particularly between Snoul and Kratie. Phnom-Penh Radio stated on Jan. 4, 1979, that in addition to Ratanakiri, Mondolkiri and Kratie provinces the Vietnamese forces had attacked since Dec. 25

in Kompong Cham, Svay Rieng, Takeo and Kampot provinces.

The "Voice of the Cambodian People" radio announced on Dec. 30 that the "revolutionary armed forces" had "liberated" sectors of Ratanakiri south and north of Highway 19 during Dec. 25–28, and on Dec. 31 that Cambodian aircraft had carried out indiscriminate bombing raids on the "liberated zone" of Kratie province. On Jan. 1, 1979, it further announced that "the revolutionary armed forces, in concert with the local inhabitants," had "liberated" the town of Kratie on Dec. 30, that hundreds of Khmer Rouge troops had been killed or captured, and that many others had defected to the "revolutionary army". The fall of Lomphat (the capital of Ratanakiri) and Stung Treng was announced on Jan. 3, and that of Takeo on Jan. 5. The Agence France-Presse reported on Jan. 4 that the entire area east of the Mekong and north of Highway 7 was controlled by the United Front.

The United Front announced on Jan. 1 the policies which it proposed to apply in the "liberated zone". These included abolition of the division of the population into three categories; freedom of movement; freedom of former city-dwellers to return to their former homes; formation of elected "self-management committees" in all localities; election of management committees at factories and farms; reintroduction of primary education; and freedom of religion. Officials and soldiers of the Khmer Rouge regime who surrendered would be allowed to return home, or given work if their homes were not in the "liberated zone".

The Vietnamese Foreign Ministry on Jan. 6 denounced the report that Vietnamese troops had invaded Cambodia as an "odious slander". Describing the United Front as "the sole authentic representative of the Cambodian people", it declared that "the Cambodian people's struggle to overthrow the Pol Pot-Ieng Sary clique is completely their internal affair, and nobody has the right to interfere".

Western military analysts suggested that the Vietnamese forces, totalling about 100,000 men, had advanced into Cambodia in several directions simultaneously, supported by about 20,000 United Front troops. One force had apparently driven through Ratanakiri along Highway 19 towards Stung Treng, although some sources suggested that Stung Treng had been taken by troops advancing south from Laos along Highway 13. Another force had driven north from the Snoul area to take Kratie, while a third advanced west from the same point towards Kompong Cham. In the south other troops had advanced towards Takeo and Kampot, in order to capture the port of Kompong Som and encircle Phnom-Penh in a pincer movement. About half the Cambodian Army, totalling about 50,000 men, was believed to have been concentrated in the salients known as the "Parrot's Beak" or Bec de Canard (in Svay Rieng province) and the "Fish Hook" or L'Hamecon (in Kompong Cham province). The Vietnamese, however, attacked to the north and the south of the two salients, encircling the Cambodian forces, which were heavily bombed from the air. The Vietnamese forces advanced so rapidly that they had no time to occupy the territory which they had overrun, but left the administration of it to the United Front.

The encirclement of Phnom-Penh was virtually completed by Jan. 6, when it was reported that road and rail links between the capital and Kompong Som had been cut, and that Highway 5 (running north-west to Battambang and the Thai border) was the only road out of Phnom-Penh still uncut. The United Front announced on Jan. 7 that Phnom-Penh and Kompong Som had been occupied; that Kampot, Takeo, Prey Veng, Kompong Cham and Kandal provinces had been "completely liberated"; and that the revolutionary forces controlled "vast regions" of Kompong Thom, Preah Vihear, Siem Reap, Battambang, Koh Kong, Kompong Speu and Kompong Chhnang provinces. The Vietnamese and United Front forces apparently entered Phnom-Penh unopposed, the city having been evacuated by the Government and the garrison.

The United Front's broadcast of Jan. 7 suggested that only two of the 19 provinces—Oddor Meanchey in the north-west and Pursat in the west—were completely controlled by Mr Pol Pot's Government. A broadcast on the following day, however, stated that popular uprisings had occurred along the Mekong in Stung Treng, Kratie and Kompong Cham provinces, and that in western Svay Rieng more than 10,000 people were "helping the revolutionary combatants to encircle and attack the Phnom-Penh troops in the region",

suggesting that resistance still continued in the eastern provinces.

A party of 686 foreign diplomats and military and civilian advisers evacuated from Phnom-Penh entered Thailand on Jan. 8. The party included 625 Chinese and 49 North Koreans.

In his telegram of Dec. 31, 1978, to the president of the security Council Mr Ieng Sary called on the UN to condemn Vietnam, to demand that it should cease its "aggression" and to stop all aid and assistance to Vietnam. He requested an urgent meeting of the security Council in a second telegram on the following day, and stated that a Cambodian delegation would arrive in New York "next week".

A statement issued by the United Front on Jan. 5, 1979, said that the struggle for the overthrow of the Khmer Rouge regime was "an internal affair of Cambodia to be settled by the Cambodian people themselves", in which foreign countries had no right to intervene. As "the only genuine representative of the Cambodian people", it added, the United Front "must have its voice heard at any UN discussion on the Cambodian question", since the "Pol Pot-Ieng Sary clique", which had "betrayed the interests of the people and the nation", could "not represent anyone". This statement was supported by the Vietnamese Foreign Ministry, which said on Jan. 6 that the Cambodian Government's request for a security Council meeting was inconsistent with the principle that Cambodia's internal affairs must be settled by the Cambodian people, and with the UN Charter.

A US State Department spokesman said on Jan. 3 that although "the United States takes great exception to the human rights record" of the Cambodian Government, "as a matter of principle, we do not feel that a unilateral intervention against that regime by a third power is justified". The United States would therefore support the request for a security Council meeting. A Chinese Government statement of Jan. 7 also expressed support for Cambodia's "reasonable demand for an emergency meeting of the security Council and for UN intervention

The establishment of a "People's Revolutionary Council" to act as a provisional government was announced in PhnomPenh on Jan. 8, its membership being as follows:

Mr Meng Samrin	President of the Council
Mr Pen Sovan	Vice-President and Defence
Mr Hun Sen	Foreign Affairs
Mr Chea Sim	Interior
Mr Keo Chanda	Information, the Press and Culture
Professor Chan Ven	Education
Mr Nu Beng	Health and Social Affairs
Mr Mok Sakun	Economy and Welfare

*For whose subsequent death, see below.

Four members of the Council were also members of the United Front's central committee-President Heng Samrin, Mr Chea Sim, Mr Mun Sen (28), a former unit commander in the Khmer Rouge forces, and Professor Chan Ven, a physicist. According to the SPK agency, Mr Pen Sovan (42) served in the war against the French while very young and in the war against the Americans after 1970, but in 1973 "left the organization of the Pol Pot-Ieng Sary clique to follow the true revolutionary road". (This statement apparently referred to the split in the Khmers Rouges in 1973, when pro-Vietnamese elements were eliminated age 29269.) Nothing was known in the West of the other members of the Council, although Mr Mok Sakun, who subsequently died on

April 9, was then described as having participated in "revolutionary activities" since 1951.

The new Government was recognized by Vietnam, Laos, the Soviet Union, Poland, Hungary, Bulgaria, East Germany and Czechoslovakia on Jan. 9, by Afghanistan, Mongolia and Ethiopia on Jan. 10, by Cuba on Jan. 11, by Angola on Feb. 1, by Mozambique on Feb. 13, by Congo on March 10 and by Libya on March 12. It was announced on Jan. 12 that Vietnam and Cambodia had exchanged ambassadors (diplomatic relations between these two countries having been broken off in December 1977-72).

The Revolutionary Council announced on Jan. 10 "the complete abolition of the dictatorial, fascist and genocidal regime of the reactionary Pol Pot-Ieng Sary clique and the founding of the People's Republic of Kampuchea". (Cambodia had been officially known under the constitution adopted in 1975 as "Democratic Kampuchea" age 27757.) The Council reaffirmed "its right to be the sole legitimate and legal representative in international relations, in the UN, in the nonaligned movement and in all international organizations which Kampuchea has joined, and to reject any activities carried out in Kampuchea's name".

In an interview with an Agence France-Presse correspondent in Hanoi Mr Ros Samay, general secretary of the United Front, claimed on Jan. 14 that the Revolutionary Council "runs the whole country". He stated that there had been "no resistance whatsoever" before Phnom-Penh fell, and that casualties on both sides had not been substantial, as "the enemy forces disbanded rapidly in the face of the powerful uprising of the population everywhere in co-ordination with the general offensive

President Heng Samrin informed the president of the security Council on Jan. 8 that Mr Pol Pot's Government had ceased to exist, and claimed that the Revolutionary Council controlled the whole of Cambodian territory, adding: "A meeting of the security Council to listen to the representative of the Pol Pot clique-that is, a non-existent Government-would constitute a flagrant intervention in the Cambodian people's internal affairs and a violation of the principles of the UN Charter." The Vietnamese representative at the UN on the same day sent the president of the security Council a note requesting that the United Front should be heard in any discussion at the UN on the Cambodian question.

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