



Theme 3: The Cold War and Southeast Asia, 1945 – 1991
Topic 2: ASEAN and the Cold War

The Second Indochina War (1959 - 1975)

- 1. Background – The Formation of ASEAN**
- 2. ASEAN's responses to Cold War developments in Southeast Asia**
- 3. Factors shaping ASEAN's responses to the development of the Cold War**



1. Background – The Formation of ASEAN

**While the H1 syllabus does not go in-depth into ASEAN's formation, it is still necessary for us to at least have a brief understanding of how/why ASEAN was formed and what it stands for before we can go into analysing ASEAN's responses to the Cold War in Southeast Asia.*

OVERVIEW

- I. The Concept of Regionalism
- II. Pre-ASEAN regional cooperation
- III. Why the need for ASEAN
- IV. Foundational years of ASEAN
- V. Features of ASEAN

I. THE CONCEPT OF REGIONALISM

I. The Concept of Regionalism

- **It primarily refers to:**
 - A group of states banding together
 - It is the ...'behaviour of states to group themselves together or to be identified by an outsider to behave as such, for the common good.'
- **It is a mid-way construct**
 - It is in between the forces of Nationalism and Universalism.
 - It recognizes the limitations of the State (and nationalist forces)
 - It believes that the Universal set-up is too distant and ideal to achieve
- **2 types of regionalism**
 - Informal regionalism
 - Driven by non-state actors e.g. business networks, subregional economic cooperation such as the Singapore-Johore-Riau island growth triangle
 - Formal regionalism
 - Driven by regional groupings like ASEAN



II. PRE-ASEAN REGIONAL COOPERATION

Out of the Region Grouping	In the Region Grouping
(A) Asian initiated cooperation <u>The Asian Relations Conference in New Delhi (1947)</u> • Representatives of 18 Asian and African countries met in New Delhi in 1947. • Positive: - o First ever conference held of this nature - o Agreed on the need for greater cooperation • Limitations: - o Only 3 SEA states were invited (Indonesia, Thailand and Vietnam); the rest were from other Asian countries - o Smaller nations felt threatened by the presence of China and India <u>Asian and Pacific Council (ASPAC, Jun 1966)</u> - o Was initiated by the Korean government to foster cooperation and solidarity among the free Asian and Pacific countries against communist aggression and infiltration and to develop their national economies. It was to form a 'second front' for US military action in Vietnam (B) Involved western powers <u>Southeast Asia Treaty Organisation (SEATO, Sep 1954)</u>	(A) SEAsian country initiated cooperation <u>Asia-Pacific Union (4 July 1949)</u> • Positive: - o First attempt by the Philippines to create an organization for cooperation among states in Asia. • Limitations: - o Wanted to create an Asian Pact: Took anti-communist stance and had in mind preservation of state sovereignty in Asia and the Pacific. But most Asian states didn't want to be involved in the Cold War. <u>Association of Southeast Asia (ASA, July 1961)</u> • Was established in Bangkok. The idea was mooted by the Philippines and Malaya. • Positive: - o Members was entirely SEAsian countries - o Had minimum institutional structure and obligations; pledged economic and cultural cooperation and sought to increase consultation through regular exchanges. This positive trait was later carried on by ASEAN, which was to form the basis of the ASEAN way. • Limitations: - o Limited membership – only covered Malaya, Philippines and Thailand



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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Was conceived as a military organization similar to NATO.• Established by 8 countries: 3 Asian – Philippines, Thailand, Pakistan; 5 Western – US, Britain, France, Australia, New Zealand• Limitations:<ul style="list-style-type: none">o Only 2 members were actually located in SEA!o Was more of a paper tiger i.e. ineffective; ended in 1977 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">o More of an alliance than a regional bloc – Was deemed as pro-West (Cold War); 2 out of 3 members belong to SEATOo Had narrow domestic concerns. E.g. Malaya just ended its 12-year anti-communist 'Emergency'; Philippines had suppressed the Huks; Thailand was still facing insurgency problem.o Had disputes between Philippines and Malaya over North Borneo (Sabah): The Philippines had claimed on British North Borneo (Sabah) in 1962, but it became part of Malaysia together with Sarawak and Singapore when Malaya became independent in 1963. This paralysed ASA cooperation.o ASA was dissolved in the same month after ASEAN was formed |
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MAPHILINDO (Aug 1963)

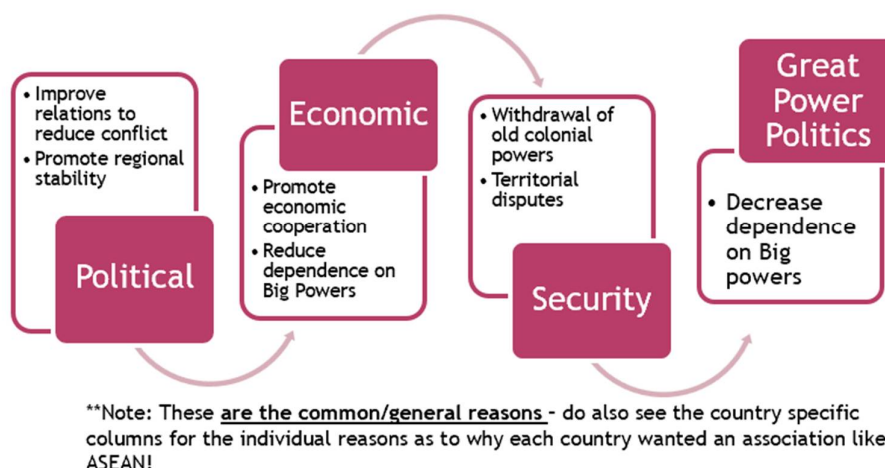
- Philippines initiated the formation of a Greater Malayan Confederation of States called MAPHILINDO in 1962, and was proclaimed in Aug 1963 during the Manila Accords (see inter-state tension chapters for more info)
- Was to include Malaysia, Indonesia and Philippines.
- **Positive:**
 - o Membership was entirely SEAsian countries
 - o Was the first regional organization that Indonesia agreed to join
- **Limitations:**
 - o Failed just a month later when the Federation of Malaya was created. Philippines and Indonesia refused to recognize Malaysia: the former



	because of the Sabah dispute; the latter viewed it as a British creation and thus embarked on a policy of Konfrontasi till 1966
Why did the 'out of the region groupings' failed? • They were often initiated by outside powers • They served the interest of external actors	Why did the 'in the region groupings' fail? • They were exclusive in character, and narrowly based • They were also victims of internal and external conflicts



III. WHY THE NEED FOR ASEAN



1. Economic Reasons for the formation of ASEAN:

Common reasons	Singapore	Malaysia	Philippines	Thailand	Indonesia
-There was a common desire to rid their country from the communist threat by promoting economic growth to reduce its attractiveness. (China had been exporting revolution in the area, through communist groups such as that in the 5 founding nations.)	Barisan Socialis controlled 2/3 of organized labour in early 1960s and had mobilized them to protest merger with Malaysia.	Malaya was busy fighting communists during the Malayan Emergency (1948 to 1960).	The Hukbalahaps (military arm of the Communist Party of the Philippines (<i>Partido Komunista ng Pilipinas</i> <PKP>), which staged an armed conflict in Luzon during the 1950s that almost led to the collapse of the central government.	The Communist party of Thailand (CPT) was a large threat in the nation as it expanded to form the People's Liberation Army in 1969 and was obtaining support from China and later North Vietnam.	Conflict between the Indonesian military and the Indonesian Communist Party in late 1965 with the transition to Suharto's "New Order" that was staunchly anti-communist in contrast to previous president, Sukarno's communist aligned administration.



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Common reasons	Singapore	Malaysia	Philippines	Thailand	Indonesia
-There was a desire to be less dependent on the Superpowers economically (Many countries in SEA initially embarked on ISI...Economic Nationalism, in the years after independence). This led to the desire of these countries to create an ASEAN common Market to achieve collective self reliance.	Malaysia and Singapore doubted the trustworthiness of the Western powers due to the withdrawal of British troops from their nations - led them to seek closer relations with their neighbours instead. Singapore saw that trade with countries such as Malaysia and Indonesia were vital for its growth (provided economic hinterland for their production)		Philippines wanted to rid itself of its image as a US puppet and the "little brown brother". It wanted to engage actively in the SEA market to aid its suffering economy President Marcos was also the one to enunciate the ultimate goal of the formation of ASEAN as the creation of a Common Market.	Thailand was disillusioned by its experience with SEATO and decided to break away their ties and commitments with lesser and distant allies. It thus sought closer economic and political ties with its SEA counterparts.	Exception in Indonesia, they were highly dependent on Western Aid as its Economy was in turmoil. However, Indonesia's desire to rid itself of this image and become a leader in the SEA area may have been an impetus to join ASEAN over its economic interests.



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Common reasons	Singapore	Malaysia	Philippines	Thailand	Indonesia
-They were economic competitors however, they saw more benefits in cooperation than in competition. ASEAN could be the enabler for this economic cooperation. <No sense in fighting for same markets.> (The combined market of SEA was larger than the US [280 million in 1967]) In catering to this huge market, they are able to reap Economies of Scale and increased efficiency of production.	This was not the case in Singapore. Singapore was more developed than the other SEA nations and thus, did not produce the same type of goods as the rest of SEA. They were however, interested in both the growing market in the other SEA markets who would soon demand higher end goods from them.	Both Malaysia and Indonesia produced oil for exporting. (PERTAMINA vs. PETRONAS)	Philippines produced Sugar and saw SEA as a possible absorber of its goods. (rest of Southeast Asia did not really produce this.)	Both Thailand and Indonesia concentrated in producing rice for exports in its agricultural production.	See Thailand and Malaysia.





2. Security/Military Reasons for the formation of ASEAN:

Common reasons	Singapore	Malaysia	Indonesia	Philippines	Thailand
Territorial disputes and racial tensions resulted in the risk that there would be full blown conflict that will erupt within the region. ASEAN ensured that a certain level of cooperation was observed and provided a means for nations to diplomatically resolve issues.	Singapore and Malaysia's relationship had been badly affected by separation. SG-Indonesia relations were also badly affected by Konfrontasi. (The MacDonald House bombing on 10 March 1965 etc.) To ensure that positive relations were still maintained, it wanted to encourage regional cooperation through ASEAN.	Malaysia was caught in a vicious relationship with the Philippines and Indonesia over its formation. Indonesia refused to acknowledge Malaysia's formation as it saw Malaysia as a symbol of British imperialism. This resulted in many hostile attacks by Indonesia on Malaysia and the breaking off of diplomatic ties between the two nations. Similarly, Philippines objected the formation of Malaysia as well, as it believed that Sabah belonged to her and had only been owned by the British. Philippines therefore also suspended diplomatic relations with Malaysia though it did not participate in the hostilities. ASEAN was formed to facilitate the reconciliation between these 3 countries to ensure that conflict to the extent of Konfrontasi would not ensue.			Thailand felt a great threat with regards to Communist Vietnam particularly during the Vietnam war period. (proximity of Thailand to Vietnam) Thailand wanted to engage more greatly in regional cooperation to ensure that its borders were safe through cooperation with the rest of the Anti-communist SEA.
Withdrawal of colonial powers from their nations signalled the need to depend more on their neighbours for their security. Cold War context also made SEA states wary of Communist expansion in region.	In Jan 1968, the British announced the intention to withdraw its troops from Singapore and Malaysia despite the fact that both countries have yet to develop a sufficient security force. This prompted both countries to seek alternate security strategies. They saw regional cooperation essential both because their neighbours had relatively more well developed armies than them (from the pre-independence period) and to deter conflicts		N.A.	In 1969, the Nixon Doctrine was issued where President Nixon (US) stated that he expected US allies (Thailand and Philippines and South Vietnam etc.) to take care of their own military defence despite the fact that the Vietnam war was still ongoing. The increasing unwillingness of US to honour its security commitments in SEA made Thailand and Philippines see the necessity of having an organisation like ASEAN as a bulwark against Communism in the SEA context.	



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Common reasons	Singapore	Malaysia	Indonesia	Philippines	Thailand
	where they would be unable to defend themselves.				
Between the Southeast Asia nations as well, there was a growing power struggle that was a cause of concern. ASEAN allowed for a forum where all parties were equal.	Both Singapore and Malaysia were apprehensive about Indonesia's desire for dominance in the area, particularly since she had been so hostile during the period of Konfrontasi and that they both no longer had a security force to stand up to the nation. ASEAN seemed like the perfect framework that allowed them to recognize both the standing of Indonesia in the area but also to contain any propensities for a hegemonic position.		Indonesia believed that their country was to be the dominant power in SEA as it was the largest and the most populous nation in the area.	N.A.	N.A.



3. Great Power Politics as Reason for the Formation of ASEAN:

- From Southeast Asian countries experience with externally initiated organisations like the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization or SEATO, co-operation between them and disparate Western powers located in distant lands was ineffective as the Western powers were often more interested in their own interests. Therefore, Southeast Asian nations decide to strive to build co-operation among those who lived close to one another and shared common interests through ASEAN.
- During the 1961 “Laos crisis”, a proposal by the Thai Government for a SEATO force to intervene was supported by US Secretary of State Dean Rusk but this proposal was shelved due to strong opposition from the French and British. SEATO's impotence during the Laotian crisis had shaken the Thai alliance with the West as the best means of deterring Communist aggression. Thailand thus began to seek cooperation within the SEA countries and saw alliances such as ASEAN necessary.
- It was becoming increasingly clear to the SEA nations by the mid 1960s that the Superpowers were only interested in defending their own Cold War interests (think Vietnam War) and were not overly concerned about the welfare of their allies in Southeast Asia.
 - The SEA countries therefore found more purpose in allying themselves with their direct neighbours, thereby justifying the creation of ASEAN.
- In hindsight, this rationale was indeed somewhat vindicated in subsequent years – as evidenced by:
 - Britain's East of Suez military withdrawal in the late 1960s – whereby Britain declared on 16 January 1968 that it would withdraw most of its military bases and troops in the Far East by 1971. This was a major problem for Singapore and Malaysia who had previously relied heavily upon the British for their defence.
 - The Nixon Doctrine of 1969 which proclaimed that the US “shall look to the nation directly threatened to assume the primary responsibility of providing the manpower for its defense”, implying that the US was not going to undertake the defense of its allies directly all the time (again – think Vietnam war and Nixon's Vietnamisation and the increasing opposition to it from the US public).
- There was also the constant spectre of the Cold War looming over the region, and the fear of great power intervention in the region that would turn the region into a battleground for great power interests. As such, there was again this need for regional cooperation in SEA independent of the great powers, especially given how unstable the region was in the 1960s (Vietnam War, Sabah dispute, SG-Msia separation, Konfrontasi etc.)



IV. FOUNDATIONAL YEARS OF ASEAN

The Bangkok Declaration of 1967 - The Birth of ASEAN

1. The Source of the Bangkok Declaration

The general principles of the Bangkok Declaration were taken from the following sources:

- The UN Charter: Provided the widely accepted principles of respect for nation-states (its sovereignty and territorial integrity) and the principles governing inter-state relations (the refrain from threat or use of force, peaceful settlement of international disputes, equal rights and self-determination, and non-interference in the affairs of others)
- The Bandung Declaration (1955): Provided the principles of cooperation in nonpolitical fields (economic, cultural and social development) and the principles governing international relations (eg. Over issues like nuclear weapons, disarmament, human rights, non-intervention etc)
- The ASA (1961) and Manila Agreement (1963): Provided ideas on good neighbourliness, active cooperation, friendly consultations and mutual assistance, Asian solution for Asian problems, consensus making through dialogues without the use of vote or veto (*mushawarah*).

2. The Bangkok Declaration

The Declaration states the aims and purposes of the Association which are:

- To accelerate the economic growth, social progress and cultural development in the region
- To promote regional peace and stability through the respect of justice and rule of law
- To promote active collaboration and mutual assistance
- To provide assistance to each other in various spheres
- To collaborate in economic fields
- To promote SEAsian studies

3. What the Bangkok Declaration is/is not and its implications

- It is a relatively modest document that provides little more than the scope for cooperation and assistance.
- It is non-binding in nature.
- In other words, ASEAN is not bounded by strict rules and regulations. It does not have a founding treaty. Neither does it have a charter.



V. Features of ASEAN

1. It is not exclusively an economic organization

- From the wording of the Bangkok Declaration, the aims of ASEAN are primarily to promote cooperation in economic, social and cultural fields.
- But SEAN as an economic organization did not really contribute much to the ASEAN states' economic success especially during the Cold War period. Intra-regional economic cooperation was hindered because member states' economic policies not only did not complement each other, they also had little desire to cooperate and were openly competing against each other.
- Lack of economic complementation is seen especially in the 1960s where Singapore pursued export-oriented policies whereas many of the other states elected import-substitution industrialization strategies (ISI) and protected their economies from external participation.
 - Even when economic policies converged, as in the late 1960s where more member states (e.g. Philippines, Thailand and Malaysia) implemented more export oriented industrialization strategies (EOI), trade barriers between ASEAN states persisted.
- As a result, **intra-ASEAN trade remained limited**.
 - E.g. In 1985, US and Japan accounted for 45% of ASEAN's exports and 35% of its imports; EEC accounted for 11 & 14% respectively and intra-ASEAN trade accounted only 15 and 20% respectively for most of the 1970s and 1980s. If Singapore is removed from the trading picture, intra-ASEAN state stood at around 5%.
- However, ASEAN did **undertake a number of attempts to foster intra-regional trade but often failed to produce significant results**. For example:
 - **Preferential Trading Arrangements (PTA, 1977)**: It was meant to promote regional trade by extending trade preferences between member states but numerous products were not included and non-tariff barriers remained. As a result, even by 1990 PTA products covered less than 1% of intra-ASEAN trade.
 - **ASEAN Industrial Projects (AIP)**: These were large industrial projects jointly owned by ASEAN states which would enjoy preferential access into ASEAN economies but few projects were implemented, and many were abandoned or even scaled down.
 - **ASEAN Industrial Complementation scheme (AIC, 1981)**: This was to develop industrial projects where components/parts would be manufactured or built in different ASEAN states but only 1 project was approved in 1986 and another cancelled because of disagreements.
 - AIC was restored in **1988** and renamed as **Brand-to-Brand Complementation (BBC)**, largely to provide production networks of the automotive industry, mainly Japanese, by providing components between participating ASEAN states at preference rates over competitors. The BBC proved more successful and durable than the AIC.
 - In **1997** BBC was replaced by the **ASEAN Industrial Cooperation scheme (AICO)**, which uses AFTA framework, i.e., when companies operating in at least 2 ASEAN countries enter into a strategic alliance, they will be given full AFTA treatment automatically.
- That being said, ASEAN **did have some limited success as an economic organisation**.



- o **Acted as an economic bloc vis-à-vis external actors:** Again, to a large degree, this was forced upon ASEAN because other economic blocs e.g. EEC preferred to deal with ASEAN states in this manner.
 - o It also enabled ASEAN to gain some leverage particularly in the 1970s when dealing with external parties when their collective interest is affected as a whole.
 - o **Served as an important avenue to resolve disputes:** This contributes to political stability and made the region more attractive to foreign investments. In this way, it is economically important in an indirect way.
- After the Cold War, more efforts to move towards regional integration in the 1990s:
 - o **In 1992, an agreement to create an ASEAN Free Trade Area:** This is to bring down tariffs on intra-ASEAN trade and abolish non-tariff barriers within a certain timeframe.
 - o **In 1997, ASEAN Vision 2020 was adopted,** which among other things envisioned a free trade area or common market by 2020.

2. It is not officially a political or military bloc but made considerable political headway

- Though the Bangkok Declaration stated cooperation in the social, economic, cultural and scientific fields but not in political and security matters, indirect reference was made as in the need to promote 'regional peace and stability'. This was to prevent any form of external interference and to preserve their own national identities.
- This restraint is understandable, as the founders did not want their intentions misunderstood. They did not want to deal directly with security and political matters to avoid being mistaken as another military group among political allies thus alienating itself from other states in the region, or being perceived as a threat to the superpowers.
- However, in reality, ASEAN's formation was clearly political. Regional and international political and security considerations (like the Cold War) certainly formed the basis of its creation. In fact it is a grouping of **anti-communist states** in a volatile region. The perception of a common threat played an important role in ASEAN's creation and became more important as the organization creation. It is also in the sphere of regional and international politics that ASEAN major success lie.
- The first evidence of political cooperation was in 1971, when foreign ministers met in Kuala Lumpur to sign the **Zone of Peace, Freedom and Neutrality (ZOPFAN)** Declaration. It essentially recognized the principle of a nuclear weapon-free zone and the neutralisation of SEA as a desirable objective. However, ZOPFAN remained essentially a broad statement of intent – it was highly ambiguous and was not enforceable, as it did not impose any legal obligations on its signatories.
- The next major development in political cooperation came about in the First ASEAN Summit in Bali in 1976 when ASEAN leaders signed 3 major documents.

- 1. The Declaration of ASEAN Concord:** It was the first time political cooperation was explicitly spelt out:



- o The Concord adopted principles for regional stability and a programme of action for political cooperation. This included the holding of ASEAN summits among Heads of Government, settling of intra-regional disputes. (See original document of the Accord)
 - o It emphasized primarily the economic side as the means to achieve stability although briefly mentioning areas of social and cultural cooperation.
- 2. The Treaty of Amity and Cooperation (TAC):** It spelt out the basic principles for Southeast Asian states to relate with one another and the conduct of ASEAN's programme for cooperation. It also serves as a non-aggression pact between states and obliged signatories to settle disputes peacefully through consultation and cooperation. This treaty was the first legally binding agreement that ASEAN had.
- 3. The Agreement Establishing the ASEAN Secretariat:** The Secretariat with limited functions and a coordinating role was also established in 1976. However it was underfunded and understaffed and the secretary general was accorded a low status. It was only later in 1992 that the office of Secretariat and Secretary General were strengthened and their mandate enlarged.
- The next development of political cooperation was in the ASEAN Summit in Bangkok in 1995 when ASEAN leaders signed the Treaty on the **Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone (SEANWFZ)**. The treaty expressed ASEAN's determination towards nuclear disarmament and the promotion of international peace and security.
 - Another area of political cooperation is the **settlement of regional conflicts** such as the **Third Indochina War** where ASEAN-sponsored resolutions called for a comprehensive political settlement, which finally happened in 1991 at the Paris Conference on Cambodia.
 - ASEAN only sought to enlarge its network of cooperation
 - o In 1994, ASEAN and its dialogue partners created the **ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF)** to include other SEAsian states that were not yet ASEAN members and other dialogue partners like China and Japan and the US.
 - o It also sought to **enlarge ASEAN membership** and thus 1999 will be remembered as the year when the vision of ASEAN's founders to build an association comprising all of SEAsian states was fully realised when it finally achieved the membership of all 10 SEAsian states.



3. The 'ASEAN Way'

- ASEAN managed to score some successes in the political and diplomatic arena because of the '**ASEAN Way**' of diplomacy that ASEAN practices, which proponents argue is uniquely suited to Southeast Asian culture and context. It generally consists of a few principles such as:
 - *Musjawarah* and *muafakat*. *Musjawarah* means the use of consultative process while *muaffakat* represents the goal of *musjawarah* which was to achieve consensus. In practice, this translates into the ASEAN use of **informal and personal diplomacy**, focusing on **compromise, consensus and consultation** and prioritising a **non-conflictual way** of addressing problems.
 - **Quiet, cautious diplomacy**. This means to **postpone difficult issues** and **compartmentalize them** so that it doesn't interfere with other areas of cooperation. This allows ASEAN leaders to communicate without bringing the discussions into the public view, avoiding embarrassment that may lead to further conflict.
 - **Maintaining the language of solidarity to cover their differences** even if ASEAN states cannot agree on a common policy and agree to go their separate ways. This helps to maintain an element of goodwill and removes potential friction from spilling over.
 - Maintaining a **policy of non-interference in the domestic affairs of member states** so as not to cause discomfort to member states and raise tensions.

Note: While many of these principles are not unique to SEA, what is unique is the emphasis that ASEAN places on it as the preferred method of diplomatic conduct in SEA.

- The criticisms to this form of diplomacy are as follows:
 - It **may not solve complex problems** as the ASEAN Way's emphasis on consultation, consensus, and non-interference forces the organisation to adopt only those policies which satisfy the lowest common denominator.
 - **Slow decision-making and deadlock** as the need for consensus requires members to somehow align on an issue before they can move forward. As a result, it can sometimes be difficult for ASEAN to find common solutions to problems and take collective action.
 - It **does not build strong institutions**, as most states just want to protect their self-interests at the expense of a common good.
 - The prioritisation of consensus and the **habit of postponing difficult issues hides critical problems under the carpet**. So beneath the veneer of cooperation there's plenty of tension and issues unresolved.

Note: While all these can be seen as a sign of institutional weakness, some argue that it could also be one of ASEAN's genuine strengths! Because it is precisely this kind of approach that keeps ASEAN together and prevents it from breaking up and enables them to cooperate to some extent during the Second and Third Indochina Wars.



2. ASEAN's responses to Cold War developments in Southeast Asia

Regional Cooperation during the Second Indochina War

After 1969 (Nixon Doctrine) and by the early 1970's the Asean states were increasingly concerned with the implications of a reunified Vietnam for ASEAN. Even though ASEAN did not hold an official summit until 1976, meetings were convened to discuss security arrangements.

1. Zone of Peace, Freedom and Neutrality (ZOPFAN) - 1971

The ZOPFAN declaration was ASEAN's **first major regional political initiative** in response to the Cold War in Southeast Asia (particularly the Second Indochina War ongoing then). It was meant to be the **'primary declaratory security policy'** of ASEAN, but in reality, it was a **highly ambiguous** concept as most of the member states had serious reservations and different interpretations of what ZOPFAN meant and implied.

1.1 Malaysia's advocacy of Neutralization

- One of the first responses to the Vietnam problem was the region's stand on neutrality. Malaysia's role in advocating SEA's neutralization started in early 1970 when Tun Razak increasingly came to assume political control during the period of emergency rule following the May 1969 riots in the country. Throughout 1970 – 1971, Malaysia foreign diplomats repeated the call actively in various non-aligned conference, ASEAN meetings and written articles.
 - *"It is Malaysia's hope that non-aligned countries will be able to endorse the neutralization of not only the Indo- China area but of the entire region of SEA, guaranteed by the three major powers, the PRC, USSR and the USA, against any form of external interference, threat or pressure."* (Permanent Secretary of Malaysia's MFA Tan Sri Ghazali at the preparatory Non-Aligned Conference, April 1970).
 - *"It is with Vietnam in mind together with the withdrawal of the US and UK from SEA that my government is advocating a policy of neutralization from SEA to be guaranteed by the big powers, viz the US, USSR and the PRC. The policy is meant to be a proclamation that this region of ours is no longer to be regarded as an area to be divided into spheres of influence (Tun Ismail at the 4th Asean Ministerial Meeting, March 1971).*
- Other than a call for regional autonomy in managing great power intervention, Malaysia's proposal for neutralization lacked a clear concise definition. It mainly consisted of the following broad principles:
 - *Respect for one another's sovereignty and territorial integrity. Acceptance of the principles of non-interference and non-aggression.*
 - *Exclusion of all foreign powers from the region.*
 - *Member states should devise a way of ensuring peace amongst themselves.*
 - *Major powers should agree for SEA to be a region of neutrality.*

1.2 Declaration of ZOPFAN (27th November 1971) amidst different security concerns



- On 27th November 1971, ASEAN foreign minister met at KL and signed a Declaration endorsing the neutralization of SEA and agreeing that “Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand are determined to exert initially necessary effort to secure recognition of and respect for SEA as a zone of peace, freedom and neutrality, free from any form or manner of interference by outside powers.
- But security cooperation was not to be easily realized given the different security concepts of its members. ZOPFAN was essentially a “soft and open-ended” agreement on broad principles previously laid out in the 1967 Bangkok Declaration and not a framework of specific legalistic measure.

ZOPFAN Declaration:

ASEAN states are determined to exert initially necessary efforts to secure the recognition of, respect for, SEA as a Zone of Peace, Freedom and Neutrality, free from any form or manner of interference by outside Powers.

SEA states should make concerted efforts to broaden the areas of cooperation which would contribute to their strength, solidarity and closer relationship.

- Even at the signing of the declaration, “diverging opinions and viewpoints” (Thanat Khoman, 1971) revealed the absence of a common security outlook. Historian Michael Leifer likened the concept of neutralization then to a “political chameleon” that assumes a different hue depending on the state in question. The five-member states differed in perspective over these issues:
 - Aspirations for regional autonomy
 - Dependence on external security guarantees
 - Threat perception of China and Post-war Vietnam.

i. Indonesia

- ✓ Indonesia objected to the neutralization of SEA through the guarantees of external powers as it wanted to exclude the great powers completely from SEA, not legitimize their intervention in regional affairs. (ie. they didn't like the idea of a neutralisation that's well...guaranteed by external powers themselves!). This was due to Indonesia's staunchly anti-west views then, which made them more concerned with the development of “regional resilience’ through “national resilience”, instead of seeking a guarantee from the major powers with regards to the region's neutrality. Indonesia also expressed skepticism that the great powers could cooperate as guarantors of the region's neutrality.
- ✓ Indonesia's military also opposed neutralization because it implied accommodation with China, which it saw as the main external threat to SEA.
- ✓ In the end, in a nod to Indonesia's concerns, the actual ZOPFAN declaration did allocate responsibility for managing regional order to regional states rather than external powers. (Though in reality this was virtually impossible to implement.)



ii. Singapore / Philippines / Thailand

- ✓ Also largely opposed true neutralization as they relied on foreign powers (like the USA) to guarantee their security at this point in time. You will recall from last year that these 3 countries are close allies of the US in Southeast Asia!
- ✓ Philippines and Thailand were primarily concerned with the implications on their alliance relationship with the USA. They saw their existing relationship with US as a better security guarantee than being part of a 'neutralized' area.

"There are deep-seated attitudes to change and habits to overcome, as well as matters of more practical character. For example, we may have to re-examine traditional alliances, and revise long-standing arrangements. This will require a transitional period, a time of experiment before final commitment is made to ZOPFAN." (Philippine foreign secretary Romulo in March 1972 article, quoted in Broinowski, pages 28-29)

- ✓ Singapore also preferred to trust its security to a balance of great power forces in the region, not some vague declaration. As such, Singapore believed that her interests were best served by maintaining the involvement of all powers in the region
- ✓ Furthermore, Singapore also did not wish to see regional order determined by the resident states of Southeast Asia, because that would mean that they would be at the mercy of the strongest regional powers! (Like Indonesia)

1.3 Analysis of Implementation of 1971 ZOPFAN Declaration

- ✓ It was difficult (maybe impossible) to actually 'implement' ZOPFAN, because it was technically not enforceable! The ASEAN countries did not have the ability to force other nations to respect ZOPFAN, certainly not the great powers. Hence, it was entirely dependent on the goodwill of the great powers in a sense!
- ✓ Thus, while there have been recurrent affirmations by ASEAN of ZOPFAN's desirability, ASEAN has not made much practical steps toward actually implementing the policy. Some historians argue that ZOPFAN was a statement of principles that were **never meant to be taken seriously** and imposed no obligations on its signatories and was meant to be a long-term goal that would not undermine the existing policies and security arrangements of ASEAN states.
- ✓ There is no mention of the great powers having any effective role to play in the region, though the preamble strongly implies that they should respect the sovereignty and independence of ASEAN states. The operative concept was also that of '***political neutrality***'.
- ✓ ASEAN created a **Senior Officials Committee (SOC)** to draw up a ZOPFAN blueprint and develop a common understanding of the interpretation of ZOPFAN. They understood the blueprint to have no practical effect nor to impose any obligations on them so long as ZOPFAN was unrealised.
- ✓ ZOPFAN however still stands out as **ASEAN's most prominent and important diplomatic accomplishment before 1976**, and it is therefore not surprising that many analysts



assessing ASEAN's performance at that time felt that the organization had accomplished very little.

- ✓ In retrospect, however, some other analysts have suggested that ASEAN may have been far more successful during this formative period than is first apparent. Some historians argue that during this period of apparent inactivity, the ASEAN states were still recovering from the trauma of the Konfrontasi, the Sabah dispute etc and also dealing with the Vietnam War, hence any sort of political cooperation was better than none.

2. Other informal meetings

- 13th to 14th of July 1972: first meeting of collective attention on the Vietnam issue was held in Manila. The result of this meeting was a decision to urge parties involved in the conflict to "explore the possibility of making concrete contribution towards the final settlement of the Indo-china issue"
- 15th of February 1973: the second informal meeting in KL considered the implications of the peace agreement of the Paris Peace Conference on the Vietnam War held in 1973 January. "the meeting acknowledge that all nations should follow a policy of peace and friendship with all countries irrespective of each other's ideologies on the basis of mutual respect of each other's sovereignty and territorial integrity. The meeting recognized that the peace and stability of the area and their own well-being are the primary responsibility of all SEA countries. The sense of identity and regional cohesion engendered through ASEAN cooperation and the developing national and regional resilience could be the foundation on which SEA countries could assume this responsibility." (Statement of ASEAN Foreign Ministers meeting in Vietnam. 15th February 1973)
- As the Vietnam War moved toward a close and it seemed increasingly clear that there would be a Communist victory in Vietnam and Indochina, attitudes in ASEAN did start changing toward Vietnam and the Cold War threat in the region. While there generally was ASEAN support for the USA's military bases in the region, there was also the increasing recognition that ASEAN, and the ASEAN countries, could not depend on the US purely for their security. *(As evidenced by the Nixon Doctrine and how they eventually abandoned South Vietnam and scaled down their involvement in the region!)*
- As such, there was also the beginnings of diplomatic engagement of Communist Vietnam by ASEAN from the mid-1970s onward, based on the ASEAN Way and the principle of non-interference, in the hopes building some degree of relations with Communist Vietnam and preventing it from any further expansionist ambitions in Southeast Asia.

Bali Summit, ASEAN Concord and Treaty of Amity and Cooperation (24th Feb 1976)

- ✓ The Bali Summit (on the island of Bali) was the next key example of ASEAN cooperation during the Cold War in Southeast Asia. It is significant as it was the first major meeting of ASEAN heads of state since its formation, and was a display of solidarity and collective nerve in the wake of the victory of Communism in Indochina in 1975. It produced two important agreements, the **Declaration of ASEAN Concord** and the **Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in SEA (TAC)**. These agreements represent two dimensions to ASEAN's thinking on security.



1. Declaration of ASEAN Concord

- ✓ This declaration laid out a political role for ASEAN after nearly a decade of unconvincing claims that ASEAN was interested in only economic and social and cultural cooperation. The objectives and principles were designed to promote political stability within member states and also within Southeast Asia.
- ✓ Cooperation in pursuit of political stability was identified as the preeminent priority, while common threat was defined with reference to 'subversion.' Security and military cooperation was excluded from the official structure of ASEAN but could be undertaken on 'a non-ASEAN basis'.
- ✓ This open acknowledgement and commitment to political cooperation was a direct response to the success of Communism in Indochina in April 1975. The declaration reaffirmed the commitment to ZOPFAN, the Zone of Peace, Freedom and Neutrality agreement in 1971, under the formal aegis of the Association, and also agreed to establish an ASEAN Secretariat in Jakarta to coordinate ASEAN political matters and cooperation.

2. Treaty of Amity and Cooperation

- ✓ In addition, the member governments also concluded a Treaty of Amity and Cooperation. This aimed to '*promote perpetual peace, everlasting unity and cooperation among the people which would contribute to their strength, solidarity and closer relationship.*' Based on respect for the sanctity of national sovereignty, the TAC was ASEAN's code of conduct for regional relations and embodied the most important norms and values governing the international behaviour of ASEAN states. It also served as a non-aggression pact between the states. The TAC emphasized principles such as non-interference in domestic affairs and the non-use of force, as per the ASEAN Way.
- ✓ Importantly, the TAC also included mechanisms for regional dispute settlement and had provisions that could allow for non-member states (like Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia) to accede and utilise it as well.
 - o To that extent, the TAC represented an attempt to reach out to/build bridges with the Communist states of Indochina and to interest them in a common code of conduct as a basis for regional order. The initial response was negative (as the Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia a.k.a the 3rd Indochina War broke out soon after), and it was only after the end of the Cold War and the formal settlement of the Cambodian conflict that Vietnam and Laos indicated a willingness to adhere to the treaty, which occurred at an ASEAN ministerial meeting in Manila in July 1992.
 - o It also made provision for the pacific settlement of disputes with a High Council to facilitate that end among signatories in the event of a failure to resolve matters through direct negotiations. This high council was meant to "recommend to the parties in dispute appropriate means of settlement such as good offices, mediation, inquiry or reconciliation".
 - o However, the high council has never been used. In fact, the rules of procedures were adopted only in 2001. This can perhaps be attributed to member states aversion



against raising any possibly acrimonious issues within the framework of ASEAN, consistent with the avoidance of legal and formal procedures under the ASEAN way.

3. ASEAN's Norms of Response in building regional peace and stability (1971 – 1976)

- As such, by 1976, given the Bangkok Declaration of 1967, ZOPFAN Declaration in 1971, Declaration of ASEAN Concord 1976 and the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation 1976, the following norms were established with regards to regional security cooperation and the Cold War in Southeast Asia:
 - Non-use of force and the peaceful settlement of disputes
 - Regional autonomy
 - Non-interference in domestic affairs
 - No military pacts; reliance on bilateral defense cooperation outside the aegis of ASEAN (under security of the Declaration of ASEAN Concord 1976, ASEAN *agreed to a continuation of military cooperation on a non-ASEAN basis between the member states in security matters in accordance with their mutual needs and interests*).



Regional Cooperation during the Third Indochina War

**Note: Much of this has already been covered during the 3rd Indochina War portion. Hence this is mainly a rehash together with some further analysis of ASEAN's role during the Cambodian Conflict.*

1. Overview of ASEAN's Diplomatic Efforts

- 3 days after the Vietnamese incursion, ASEAN's official collective stand deplored the “armed intervention against ... Kampuchea” and called for the “immediate and total withdrawal of foreign forces from Kampuchean territory.” (Joint statement from special foreign minister's meeting, 12th January 1979). This was followed by the tabling of an ASEAN draft resolution on the conflict in the UNSC in March 1979. In fact, the call for Vietnamese withdrawal was repeated constantly in ASEAN Joint Communiques since the 14th Minister Meeting in 1981.
- ASEAN's official stand was in support of the Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea (CGDK) which comprised the royalist FUNCINPEC under Prince Norodom Sihanouk, Son Sann's KPNLF (*Kampuchean People's National Liberation Front*) and the Khmer Rouge, which was formed through ASEAN efforts in 1982.
- ASEAN internationalized the conflict and lobbied for international diplomatic opposition to Vietnam by supporting the CGDK at international forums. These included the tabled UN resolution (as mentioned), official support of the CGDK in the UN general Assembly as well as annual receptions for the leaders of CGDK.
- Outside the UN, ASEAN lobbied for diplomatic support from its official dialogue partners like Australia, Canada, the EC, Japan and USA. The first call was made by SG PM LKY on the 23rd of November in 1979, when he urged them to use economic sanctions against the Socialist Republic of Vietnam (SRV). There were also continue consultations with the five permanent members of the UNSC and the Paris conference.
- ASEAN never closed its doors to constructive relations with Hanoi and its allies in Cambodia, and hence possibility of a peaceful settlement of the Cambodian issue by engaging in active collective diplomacy for a political settlement throughout the 1980's. For example, proposals for “cocktail meetings” were discussed from 1986 through 1988, the Jakarta Informal Meetings (*JIM I on 25h July 1988 and JIM II in February 1989*), and other exchange visits and discussions, especially with Indonesia from 1984. The occasion of JIM I was particularly significant in that it brought together the various Cambodian factions for discussions towards a political solution.

2. Initial Response

- The Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia was a major crisis for the region, arguably the biggest since the end of the Vietnam War, and very much a worst-case scenario for ASEAN.
- It was also a huge test of ASEAN's credibility as a regional organisation, as Vietnam had violated two of ASEAN's fundamental security norms: (1) non-interference in domestic affairs of other states and (2) non-aggression / non-force used to resolve political disputes.
- As such, despite Vietnam not being a member of ASEAN at that point in time, ASEAN could not ignore the blatant violation of its principles that Vietnam's invasion of Cambodia



represented, and also the very real threat of Southeast Asia turning into a proxy battleground for great powers once again.

- The foreign ministers of the ASEAN countries (then consisting of Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, Singapore, Philippines) met quickly after the invasion in January 1979 in Bangkok, and called for the 'immediate and total withdrawal of the foreign forces from Kampuchean territory.' When China conducted its punitive invasion into Vietnam, ASEAN also immediately called for the withdrawal of all foreign forces from both Vietnam and Kampuchea.
- From 1979 to 1980, ASEAN applied political and diplomatic pressure on Vietnam and its client government of Kampuchea – the People's Republic of Kampuchea (PRK). ASEAN focused its diplomatic efforts on international forums such as the United Nations (UN) and the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) to deny the new People's Republic of Kampuchea (PRK) international recognition and access to international aid from the West and Japan.

3. United Nations International Conference on Kampuchea (UN-ICK) (1981)

- One of ASEAN's signature achievements in response to the invasion was to get the UN General Assembly to hold a special conference on Cambodia in July 1981, against the vehement objections of the Communist bloc.
- The UN-ICK's final declaration internationally legitimised ASEAN's position and formula for resolving the Cambodian crisis. It called for a ceasefire and withdrawal of Vietnamese forces under the supervision of a UN peacekeeping force. This would be followed by UN supervised elections to allow Cambodians to exercise their right to self-determination. This ICK declaration became the basis of later ASEAN and UN terms for a settlement of the crisis.
- However, although 92 countries attended the meeting and it seemed a remarkable success for ASEAN diplomacy and enhanced ASEAN's international standing on the surface, it is also questionable what the conference actually achieved.
- Vietnam, the USSR and most of the Communist bloc boycotted the meeting as the UN continued to recognize the old DK (ie. the Khmer Rouge) as the legitimate Kampuchean government (instead of the puppet PRK government Vietnam installed).
- China, US and ASEAN on the other hand refused to recognise the puppet PRK and blocked representation from the PRK government at the conference.
- As such, while outwardly successful, it did also show that without the cooperation of great powers, ASEAN could not really steer events in the direction it wanted either.

4. Support for Resistance Forces – the Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea (CGDK) (1982)

- On the ground, ASEAN, together with the US and China, sponsored anti-Vietnamese Khmer resistance forces operating in western Cambodia.
- One of the biggest problems however, was that the main resistance force and the legitimate government of Kampuchea that they were recognising and backing, Democratic Kampuchea, was basically the Khmer Rouge! And if you recall, this was Pol Pot and Khieu Samphan and gang – ie. the bunch of dudes that literally just conducted a genocide!
- As such, even though the Khmer Rouge was the largest and most combat effective resistance group, in an attempt to make the government that they were backing more palatable, ASEAN, China and the US also brought on board two other resistance factions



– the royalist forces of Norodom Sihanouk's FUNCINPEC and the Khmer People's National Liberation Front (KPNLF) led by Sihanouk's longtime foe Son Sann.

- Together, these 3 resistance factions formed the Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea (CGDK). As you might imagine however, this was an uneasy alliance at best.
- Furthermore, this was a very thorny issue for ASEAN too. It needed the Khmer Rouge as it was the most effective resistance to the Vietnamese occupation, but at the same time, ASEAN certainly did not want the Khmer Rouge to return to power in any form!

5. The Kuantan Declaration (1980) and Internal Disagreements

- On the surface, the various ASEAN countries were excellent at presenting a united front to the world on the Vietnamese invasion and occupation of Cambodia, as seen from their unity of purpose at international forums like the UN-ICK, and the diplomatic and political pressure they exerted on Vietnam.
- However, the face of ASEAN's external solidarity concealed divisions and internal disagreements beneath. This could be seen through the Kuantan Declaration of March 1980.
- Malaysia (PM Hussein Onn) and Indonesia (President Suharto) signed the Declaration, which was rooted in ZOPFAN (you will hear more about this in the ASEAN sections later on) and the idea of the neutralisation of Southeast Asia. To Malaysia and Indonesia, the priority was to keep the great powers (especially the Chinese and Soviets) out of Southeast Asia as they were the bigger threat, not Vietnam.
- As such, Malaysia and Indonesia were willing to hear Vietnam out and recognise that it has legitimate security interests and a sphere of influence over Cambodia, provided that it kept itself free from Soviet and Chinese influence. (Basically, this means that they were willing to tolerate and negotiate with Vietnam and its PRK puppet government in Cambodia as long as they kept the great powers out of the equation.)
- The Kuantan Declaration did not become an ASEAN position as ASEAN operates on the basis of consensus decision making, and there was no consensus here as Thailand and Singapore strenuously objected to Malaysia and Indonesia's position and took a much more hardline stance against Vietnam.
- Thailand because of its proximity to Vietnam and Cambodia, which made them at the frontlines of any threat from Communist Vietnam.
- Singapore's because of its own small size and vulnerability, which made them particularly sensitive to unilateral invasions of other states, especially by Communist powers.
- As such, to Thailand and Singapore, Vietnam's invasion and occupation of Cambodia was not to be tolerated at all regardless of the reason, and ASEAN should not recognise the PRK and should stick strictly to the UN-ICK declaration.
- Thus, the Kuantan Declaration revealed that the political cohesion of ASEAN was perhaps just on the surface.

6. Stalemate (mid-1980s)

- The Vietnamese occupation of Cambodia dragged on in a stalemate throughout most of the mid-1980s. As long as the Sino-Soviet rivalry persisted, it was difficult to see a solution to the conflict.
 - Vietnam and the Soviets backed the puppet PRK regime and did not recognise the CGDK factions as legitimate.



- o ASEAN, China and the US, on the other hand, refused to recognise the puppet PRK regime and continued to back the CGDK as the legitimate government of Cambodia.
- Vietnam, despite Soviet aid, was getting bled dry by political isolation and economic sanctions and wanted out of Cambodia. However, it wanted to do so in a way that would protect its interests in Cambodia and the region and ensure its security against China.
 - o ASEAN desperately wanted a solution to the crisis and certainly did try, but lacked consensus on how to achieve it, especially when their formal stance was that the PRK was Vietnam's puppet, and ASEAN would negotiate only with Vietnam and not the PRK. Vietnam, on the other hand, wanted ASEAN to negotiate with the PRK as that to them was the government of Cambodia.
- On the other hand – all 3 great powers benefited from the continuation of conflict in their own way!
 - o China was more than happy to see Vietnam 'bled dry.' Supporting the CGDK and the Khmer Rouge in a guerilla war helped to drain the Vietnamese and USSR. Furthermore, the conflict also provided China with an opportunity to improve relations with ASEAN states, especially Thailand, by engaging with them against Vietnam and acting as a guarantor of peace and stability in the region.
 - o The Soviets desired to exploit declining US power in SEA and gain inter-communist primacy. Supporting Vietnam allowed it to secure a strategic foothold in SEA, extending USSR military power into the Indian Ocean and Persian Gulf and formed the cornerstone of the Soviet-Vietnamese alliance against their mutual enemies, China and US.
 - o The US had lesser interests than China and the USSR in this conflict, but were more than happy to watch the Chinese and the Soviets at loggerheads with each other. It also saw this as an opportunity to cement its relationship with China against USSR.
- Given all this, it's no surprise that the conflict dragged on until something major changed in the international geopolitical climate...

7. Improving International and Regional Climate (late 1980s)

- The conflict only started to move toward a resolution in the late 1980s, when the international and regional political climates were experiencing a major shift with the ending of the Cold War.
- In 1988, the USSR (Mikhail Gorbachev) and China (Deng Xiaoping) held direct talks on Kampuchea to mend Sino-Soviet ties and resolve this huge stumbling block in their relations with each other. This comes as Gorbachev was trying to reform the Soviet economy and improves ties with the West and China. (Recall Gorbachev's 'New Thinking' in foreign policy!) Next, in 1989, at a Sino-Soviet summit meeting in May, Gorbachev and Deng agreed to a basis for national reconciliation in Cambodia, with internationally supervised elections and the convening of an international conference. It was this removal of the Sino-Soviet rivalry from the Cambodian conflict that arguably had the greatest significance in bringing it to an end – given that one of the most major stumbling blocks to its resolution was the Sino-Soviet rivalry.



- Also by 1988, Vietnam was increasing its pace of withdrawal of Vietnamese troops from Kampuchea. This was because it was getting pressured by the Soviets to do so, but also because it was struggling economically at home and was embarking on its Doi Moi reforms to restructure its economy in the late 1980s. To do so effectively, it needed outside help – especially for Japan, US and the West to stop their economic sanctions. And the only way to get them to do that was to resolve the Cambodian issue.
- Thailand's foreign policy stance toward Vietnam also shifted dramatically, as they embarked on a 'New Look Policy' towards Vietnam in 1988, with the new PM Chatichai Choonhavan (representing the emerging business interests and intellectual elites) declaring that Indochina should be turned from a 'battlefield to a trading market'. He viewed that as USSR power declined, Vietnam was no longer a real threat to the region. He even shocked his ASEAN counterparts by inviting the PRK premier Hun Sen to Bangkok – in effect a recognition of the PRK regime.

8. 'Dual Track' Diplomacy and the Jakarta Informal Meetings (JIMs) (1988 & 1989)

- Indonesia was always the one who did not view Vietnam as a big threat and was more willing to talk with them. From 1984 onwards, Indonesia opened a separate dialogue with Hanoi that supplemented the ASEAN approach in a kind of 'dual track' diplomacy to find a solution to the conflict, performing an interlocutor role between ASEAN and Vietnam.
- This 'dual track' approach basically means that while ASEAN officially takes a hardline approach toward Vietnam and its puppet PRK regime in Cambodia (ie. it refuses to negotiate with the PRK, only Vietnam, as they view the PRK as Vietnam's puppet), Indonesia unofficially tried to bring all the parties together.
- After years of trying, Indonesia finally stumbled on a breakthrough in 1987 where their foreign minister Mochtar and his Vietnamese counterpart Nguyen Co Thach proposed having "informal" meetings between the different Cambodian factions. In these "informal" meetings, the various factions could negotiate to end the conflict without ASEAN having to recognise the PRK or Vietnam having to recognise the CGDK.
- The other ASEAN countries reluctantly agreed to this, and the first Jakarta Informal Meetings was held in July 1988, followed by the second one in February 1989. While they failed to reach agreement on the fate of the Khmer Rouge, postwar governance and power-sharing among the Kampuchean factions, they did however contribute to the diplomatic process by bringing the different factions – such as Prince Sihanouk (CGDK) and Premier Hun Sen (PRK) closer together.

9. Paris Peace Settlement (1991)

- With the failure of the JIMs, the resolution of the conflict once again shifted from ASEAN to the international level and into the hands of external powers. The first Paris Peace Conference on Cambodia in August 1989 failed to make much headway, but the second one in 1991 did, producing the Paris Peace Settlement of October 1991.
- All the various factions signed the Paris agreement in October 1991, bringing an end to 13 years of war and occupation in Cambodia.
- The reason for this eventual success was again largely down to the changes in international climate in the late 1980s and early 1990s previously mentioned. With the ending of the Cold War and the mending of the Sino-Soviet split, there was great power consensus between the Soviets, Chinese and the US in seeking a solution to the conflict. Absent great power rivalry, the permanent 5 members of the UN Security Council



produced a framework agreement for a settlement of the Cambodian issue and to let the Cambodian people decide their own future.

10. Analysis of ASEAN's Efforts during the 3rd Indochina War

- **Enhancement of its institutions, processes and reputation**
 - ASEAN's institutional and political development was enhanced by its experience with the Cambodian conflict. Initially, the individual interests of member states and the need to defend institutional principles and coordinate policy forced ASEAN to present a united front on the issue (at least on the surface) and promote the 'ASEAN way' of conflict resolution.
 - ASEAN's increased international profile encouraged intra-ASEAN unity and the ASEAN states enjoyed the taste of real international influence that their role in the conflict attracted and realized that they could only maintain this influence if they continued to act united.
- **Continuities of intra-ASEAN disagreements and reliance on external powers**
 - However, it is easy to over-state ASEAN's accomplishments in the 2nd decade as while it did demonstrate a high degree of institutional coherence and unity, significant disagreements continued to exist to create internal tensions. (I.e. the Kuantan Declaration, different opinions on how to deal with Vietnam and China etc.)
 - Furthermore, ASEAN was only at the tip of the iceberg created to oppose Vietnam's actions and by extension, USSR's ambitions in SEA. Without the support of US and China diplomatically and militarily, ASEAN would not have been able to oppose Vietnam effectively. Thus the great powers were essential to ASEAN's ability to become engaged in the conflict. (E.g. UN-ICK in 1981 was backed by US & China, ASEAN and US and China backing the CGDK, resolution of conflict largely due to USSR undergoing radical reform & mending relations with China, etc)
 - In addition, ASEAN's actions had also undermined ZOPFAN and the principles of neutrality it posited, as ASEAN took sides in a conflict between great powers, allying itself with US and China to deal effectively with Vietnam and the USSR. ZOPFAN had pushed ASEAN's vision of a regional order free from outside interference and managed by ASEAN states, but ASEAN in this case could not manage its regional security environment on its own terms.



3. Factors shaping ASEAN's responses to the development of the Cold War in Southeast Asia

**Note: This final segment provides an overall evaluation of the different factors that shaped ASEAN's responses to the development of the Cold War in Southeast Asia. As it's an overall summary, you will need to refer to the previous sections for the details on the specific events/policies that are cited as examples.*

1. ASEAN's objectives

- ASEAN's own objectives obviously played a key role in shaping how ASEAN responded to the Cold War in Southeast Asia. While the Bangkok declaration mainly stated cooperation in the social, economic, cultural and scientific fields but not in political and security matters, indirect reference was made to the need to promote 'regional peace and stability' and to create a prosperous and peaceful community of Southeast Asian nations.
- Furthermore, subsequent developments such as ZOPFAN in 1971 and the Bali Summit and the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in 1976 also clearly revealed that ASEAN very clearly had political and security objectives, even if this was not explicitly mentioned initially in the Bangkok Declaration.
- As such, while on the surface ASEAN was formed for economic and social objectives, in reality it was very much a response to the Cold War and political/security needs of its member states.
- A big part of this was the desire to have some kind of **collective clout in engaging external powers**. The individual ASEAN countries by themselves are far weaker than the great powers in the Cold War and have little influence on their own, but banded together as a whole, it was thought that ASEAN could wield more influence and power in shaping regional events.
- This was especially shown during the Third Indochina War, where ASEAN brought significant international pressure to bear upon Vietnam and its puppet PRK regime in Cambodia precisely because they acted collectively (at least on the surface) on the issue on the world stage, despite internal disagreements that persisted.
- However, the limits of ASEAN's collective clout was also shown during the Third Indochina War, as the extent to which they actually influenced events (vs the great powers) is debatable, given that eventually the resolution of the whole matter was very much down to the changing international climate and improvements in great power relations.

2. Cold War developments

- Beyond ASEAN's own objectives, **superpower competition for influence in Southeast Asia** was another key factor that constantly shaped ASEAN's response to the Cold War in the region.
- Firstly, the USA's declining commitment to the region with the Nixon Doctrine of 1969 and the 'Vietnamisation' of the Vietnam War showed the ASEAN member states then that they could not entirely rely on the US for their security needs. This was a big impetus toward greater political cooperation in ASEAN against the threat of Communism in the Cold War context, as evidenced by the ZOPFAN declaration of 1971, and later on the Bali Summit, Declaration of ASEAN Concord and Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in 1976. All these increased efforts at regional political cooperation by ASEAN in the 1970s were all a



result of the realisation that the US could not be fully relied upon with its declining commitment to the region as it pulled out of the Vietnam War.

- Next, the Sino-Soviet competition for influence in the region was yet another key development that shaped how ASEAN responded to the Cold War. This development was something that greatly concerned ASEAN, as they did not want to be dragged into the Sino-Soviet rivalry and did not want Southeast Asia to be a battleground for this rivalry. This was the thinking behind the ZOPFAN declaration, and was also why ASEAN responded so strongly to the 3rd Indochina War – precisely because they saw it as the Sino-Soviet rivalry spilling over into Southeast Asia.
- Furthermore, these developments amongst the great powers in the Cold War was also why ASEAN banded together with the US and China against Vietnam and the USSR in the 3rd Indochina War. Even though many of them feared China too (and were alarmed when China invaded Vietnam), the ASEAN member states mostly saw the Soviet Union and its backing of Vietnam as the bigger threat to the region.
- Finally, the changing dynamics among the great powers with the ending of the Cold War also significantly changed ASEAN's and the member states outlook toward the Cold War. The thawing of the Cold War by the late 1980s and Sino-Soviet and Soviet-US rapprochement under Gorbachev's New Thinking also marked a significant shift in ASEAN's attitude toward the Communist countries in Southeast Asia. This could be seen in Thailand's 'New Look' Policy toward Vietnam in 1988, and Indonesia's diplomatic efforts to bring an end to the 3rd Indochina War through the Jakarta Informal Meetings in the late 1980s.

3. Member states' National Interests

- Lastly, we must also not forget that even though ASEAN sometimes acted collectively, each of its own member states had **their own national interests** and their own foreign policies, and this did not always match with those of their neighbours!
- Clear examples of this include ZOPFAN (1971) and how each ASEAN state had their own idea/take on what it means and involves, and also in the Kuantan Declaration (1981) during the 3rd Indochina War where it was very evident that Indonesia and Malaysia on one hand and Thailand and Singapore on the other did not see eye to eye on how to manage the Vietnamese occupation of Cambodia.
- As a result, ASEAN, when responding to the Cold War in Southeast Asia, often had to seek compromise – positions that could accommodate the differing views of its member states and be acceptable to them. This is why ASEAN's resolutions and policies can often seem 'watered-down' or weak, because as per the ASEAN Way, they need consensus from all members, but in order to get consensus, compromises have to be made and this often results in middle-ground positions that please no one!