

Galilee Model United Nations Conference 2018



Historical Security Council

Research Report

All events that took place after 1968 are irrelevant in this committee, and debating them will be considered as out of policy.

The Vietnam War (Second Indochina war)

The Vietnam War also known as The Second Indochina War was a long war which took place in 1955 until 1975 that split Vietnam into two parts, the communist government in North Vietnam which fought against South Vietnam and its closest ally The United States. Both North Vietnam and South Vietnam had the same goal which was to achieve a unified Vietnam, but they had opposing political views.

The conflict deepened due to The Cold war between the United States and The Soviet Union, in which The Soviet Union supported North Vietnam and provided it with military advisors and engineers, and The United States supported South Vietnam and sent them troops in 1965 and provided them with financial aid. The withdrawal of the American forces from Vietnam due to the problems that it faced in its army, gave North Vietnam the upper hand in the war, which made the conflict end two years later in 1975 when Communist forces seized control of South Vietnam. The human casualties reached two million people, and many of them were Vietnamese civilians. Some of the casualties were from neighboring countries in Vietnam. As a result of the war, Vietnam was ruined. Its infrastructure was damaged severely and the human casualties reached 3 million people and the farm industry was ruined due to America's chemical Agent Orange.



The first Indochina War

Also known as the Anti-French Resistance War in Vietnam, took place in French Indochina (Myanmar, Thailand, Laos, Cambodia, Vietnam, peninsular Malaysia and Singapore) and began on December 19th 1945 and ended on August 1st 1954. The conflict pitted the French forces that were supported by the Vietnamese National Army, against Viet Minh (League for the independence of Vietnam) and People's Army of Vietnam. Most of the battles took place in Northern Vietnam, and afterwards the conflict spread into the neighboring countries that were colonized by France.

Viet Minh and many others opposed the colonization of the French in Vietnam. And as a result, war erupted between Viet Minh and the French Forces. France reacted to the war by creating a semi independent state of Vietnam in the south as the fourth part of the French Republic whose capital was Saigon, and France appointed Bao Dai as its leader. The war resulted in the victory of Viet Minh and the withdrawal of the French forces from Indochina. Vietnam was divided into two parts, North Vietnam, which was governed by Viet Minh, and South Vietnam, which was governed by the State of Vietnam. The State of Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia became independent countries. A conference was held in Geneva in 1954 which discussed the results of The First Indochina War and came out with a decision that in 1956 elections would be held in Vietnam that would decide who would lead Vietnam.

Timeline (1968)

January

- North Vietnam and Viet Cong violated the 36 hours New Year's truce that was declared by the Pope, and attacked American units in South Vietnam.
- Communist forces attacked 49 South Vietnamese districts and temporarily occupied two of them.
- On January 21, The Battle of Khe Sanh began, taking place in South Vietnam.
- On January 23-24, The Battle of Ban Houei Sane began in Laos between Laotian with US as its ally against North Vietnam forces.
- Operation Coburg began which was an Australian and New Zealand military action against North Vietnam and Viet Cong forces.
- Tet Offensive was launched by North Vietnam and on 2:45 in the morning, the US embassy in Saigon was attacked.
- On January 3, The Battle of Saigon began which was coordinated by The People's Army of Vietnam and the Viet Cong. Also one of the longest and bloodiest battles in the war began that day, The Battle of Huế.

February

- A notable unit from The Army of the Republic of Vietnam that's called 3d Armored Cavalry Squadron fought in a battle near Pleiku with Viet Cong's troop.
- On February 6-7 the Battle of Lang Vei was fought between The People's Army of Vietnam and the US army.

March

- On March 10-11 The Battle of Lima Site 85 was fought between North Vietnam with Pathet Laos as an ally against The United States troops with the Kingdom of Laos as an ally. The battle was fought in order to gain control of the secret radar site in Phou Pha Thi (Laos).
- On March 16, Charlie Company (US army unit) carried out the Mỹ Lai massacre with a death toll that reached 500.

April

- On April 8, Operation Toan Than I was launched by The US and The Army of the Republic of Vietnam and Australia as a reaction to Tet Offensive in order to put pressure on Viet Cong and The People's Army of Vietnam.
- On April 19, Operation Delaware was launched by The US in the A Shau Valley.

May

- On May 5, May Offensive was launched by the People's Army of Vietnam which was basically phase II of the Tet Offensive in which they struck 119 targets including Saigon.

- On May 10, The Battle of Kham Duc began in the location of Quang Tin Province that was one of the biggest battles of the war in which the United States Army Special Forces struggled. The battle ended on May 12.
- From May 12 till June 6th, The Battle of Coral-Balmoral in north-east Saigon was fought between communist forces and the 1st Australian Task Force.
- The peace talks between the US and North Vietnam took place on May 13 in order to discuss the withdrawal of The US forces from Vietnam.

October

- On October 8, Operation Sealords was launched by The United States and South Vietnam in order to disrupt North Vietnamese supply lines in the area of Mekong Delta.
- On October 3, US president Johnson announced a halt to US bombings.

November

- Operation Rolling Thunder which was conducted by the US against North Vietnam came to an end after three and a half years.

December

- Operation Speedy Express was launched by the US military in order to prevent Viet Cong units from interfering with pacification efforts and to interdict lines of Viet Cong communication and deny them the use of base areas.
- On December 12, Operation Taylor Common was launched by Task Force Yankee (US unit).

Civilian Casualties

The Vietnam War resulted in many civilian casualties. Reports indicate that the number of people killed or injured came close to two million. There were many reports of rape. The number of casualties resulted mainly from:

- Spread of hunger- many of the Vietnamese civilians died of hunger because the war damaged the country's infrastructure and the rice industry, one of the most important sources of food for the civilians in both parts of divided Vietnam, slumped. Civilians in Vietnam, excluding the farmers, received 13 kilos of food per month, which included rice and tapioca, which was not enough for one person.
- The spread of contagious diseases- during the Vietnam War there were cases of plague reported. Also more than 40,000 cases of Malaria were reported in the war, and many died because of it.
- Massacres- Countless massacres were committed against unarmed civilians, and there were many cases of rape which were committed by the soldiers during the massacres. Two examples of the massacres:

- My Lai massacre:
This massacre was committed in March 1968 by the US forces in Son My village in central Vietnam against unarmed civilians. The victims included men that were too old to fight, women and children. The number of people killed is unknown, though it is estimated that it reached 357-504. Even though Charlie Company (an American unit) did not encounter Viet Cong troops, they proceeded to devastate the hamlet, burning houses to the ground and murdering civilians.

- Massacre at Huế:
This massacre was committed in Huế in South Vietnam by Viet Cong and North Vietnam forces in January and February 1968. It took place during one of the longest, bloodiest battles of the Vietnam War. The victims included men, women, children, infants and prisoners of war. It is estimated that the number of victims from the massacre reached 2,800-6,000. Many of these victims were clubbed to death, tortured, or buried alive.
- The use of chemical weapons in the war- The United States developed a group of chemical weapons which were called “Rainbow Herbicides” which contained 10 chemical weapons. The chemical weapon that was used most and caused most damage was Agent Orange. It was sprayed in Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia. The effects of the chemical weapons include cancer, the growth of extra fingers and toes, mental disabilities, etc.

Countries involved

- **North Vietnam**

North Vietnam was one of the two sides in the war that broke in Vietnam in an attempt to unify the country. This side consisted of North Vietnam and the Viet Cong, which was a communist political organization with an army called the People's Liberation Armed Forces of South Vietnam (PLAF).

North Vietnam, with the help of its allies, the USSR and China, fought against South Vietnam and its main ally which was the US, in an attempt to unify Vietnam under a single communist rule.

In 1964, North Vietnamese boats attacked two US navy destroyers, an attack which led to the US direct military involvement in the war. In 1968, an assault called the Tet Offensive was carried out by the Viet Cong and North Vietnamese army on US positions.

During the time, the last US military unit left Vietnam, the north and the south were involved in a “postwar war”, with each side claiming that the other was breaching the Paris Agreement. This led to North Vietnam launching the first phase of a two-year operation to secure South Vietnam in 1975.

In April 1975, less than two months after, the South Vietnamese army collapsed and then officially surrendered, leading to North Vietnam seizing control of the north and the south as a whole.

- **South Vietnam**

South Vietnam, who's main ally was the US, was the other side of the war. Its army was the Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN). South Vietnam was ruled by Ngo Dinh Diem between from 1954 until his assassination in 1963.

In 1955, Diem launched a campaign against the communists in the south, arresting and executing them.

Diem's policy against Buddhists sparked strikes and demonstrations throughout the country which he met with violence and arrests. And in 1963, as a result of this violence against Buddhists, a group of generals approached the US to determine how Washington would respond to a coup against Diem. The reply was that the US would not intervene.

On November 1, 1963, president Diem was overthrown and killed in a coup by the ARVN. This resulted in an instability and after several coups and changes, Nguyen Van Thieu was named the head of state.

On April 21st 1975, after the north had launched an offensive, president Nguyen resigned and fled to Taiwan. A last attempt to defend the country was made by the ARVN, only to fail and eventually surrender 9 days later.

- **People's Republic of China**

People's Republic of China was the first country to recognize Democratic Republic of Vietnam in 1950 during the first Indochina war due to the victory of the communist in the Chinese Civil War in 1949, and then started to send military advisors to Viet Minh during the war. In 1954, after the Geneva Accords which stated that Vietnam will have a temporary partition, People's Republic of China continued to send aid to Viet Minh which by then took control over North Vietnam. After the Gulf of Tonkin incident, China threatened to intervene in the war militarily if American forces stepped foot in the Korean Demilitarized Zone. In December 1965, an economic pact was signed between China and North Vietnam during the delegation of North Vietnam's visit to China which granted North Vietnam a huge sum of loaned money. In 1965, China also began to send Vietnam anti aircraft artillery and engineering units in order to help North Vietnam with American airstrikes during Operation Rolling Thunder which lasted three and a half years, and also to help North Vietnam rebuild its streets because of the airstrikes. During the years 1965 to 1971, China sent 320,000 troops to Vietnam in order to help its communist ally defeat the capitalists in the country.

- **The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR)**

After World War II, the USSR did not pay attention to the communist movement in Vietnam but started to do so after the victory of the communist forces in the Chinese Civil War in 1949. Even though Moscow recognized Viet Minh as the government of Vietnam in January 1950, they refused to assist North Vietnam in their movement against the French in the first Indochina war. Instead Joseph Stalin encouraged Mao Zedong to assist Viet Minh in the war. The Soviet Union remained indifferent in the Vietnam war in the early 1960's under the rule of Nikita Khrushchev. After Khrushchev was succeeded by Leonid Brezhnev, things changed because Brezhnev was in favour of aiding North Vietnam. After the US increased involvement in the war and sent its first unit to Vietnam, the Soviet interest in the war increased as expected. A defense treaty was signed with the Soviet Union and North Vietnam in 1965 and afterwards the Soviet Union started to send aid to North Vietnam. One of the main contributions of the Soviet Union to North Vietnam was providing them with the early warning B-52 bomber raids, in which Soviet ships would detect B-52 from their bases in the surrounding areas and warn North Vietnam, and because of their warnings not a single North Vietnam soldier or civilian was killed from the B-52 in 1968. Soviet forces also shot down a US plane over Thanh Hoa in 1965. Hanoi

sided more closely with Moscow rather than Beijing during the war. And in 1968 a new agreement was signed by the Soviet Union and North Vietnam, whereby the Soviet Union would provide North Vietnam with planes, tanks, small arms, helicopters, artillery, anti-aircraft missiles, medical supplies and other military equipment. Yet no Soviet soldier entered the combat since 1966 because of all the training that North Vietnam received from the Soviet Union.

- **The United States of America (USA)**

Up until 1964, the USA's main role in the war was sending military advisors to South Vietnam.

But after the Gulf of Tonkin incident, the congress approved a resolution which gave the president the power to wage war in Vietnam. The US later carried out operations and strategies like "operation rolling thunder" and "search and destroy" which involved aerial and land attacks against the north.

In 1968, the south carried out the Tet Offensive, in which the USA and the north were able to hold off the attacks while suffering casualties. This incident shocked the American people and support for the war efforts started decreasing. All of this caused the president to limit the bombings against the north and to call for peace talks instead. This decision by president Johnson was a crucial turning point in the USA's involvement in the war.

- **South Korea**

Because of South Korea's alliance with the United States, South Korea played an active role in the war. From 1964 till 1973, South Korea sent a total of 313,000 to Vietnam. South Korea was committed in this war due to the US's involvement in the Korean war. At first, South Korea sent non-military personnel which included 10 Taekwondo instructors and 130 Korean Army hospital unit. The combat troops "Blue Dragon" of South Korea were sent to Vietnam to aid South Vietnam in September 1965.

Questions to consider:

- Is your country involved in the conflict? If yes, how is it involved?
- How do we decrease the amount of civilian casualties in the Vietnam war?
- How can the UN help bring the Vietnam War to an end?
- Are any of the countries involved in violating the rights of civilians in neighbouring countries?

Useful links:

<http://www.history.com/topics/vietnam-war/vietnam-war-history>

<https://www.britannica.com/event/Vietnam-War>

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