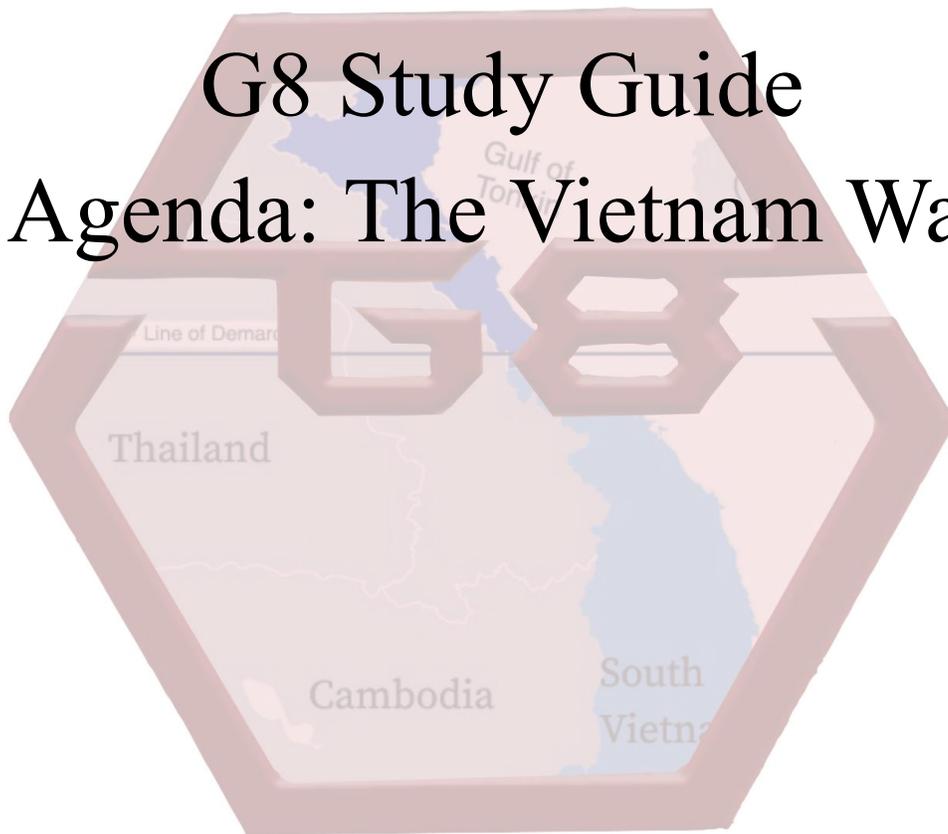


IYC 2022

G8 Study Guide

Agenda: The Vietnam War



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Letter from the Executive Board

Honourable Delegates,

As your executive board, it is our utmost pleasure to welcome you to the 2022 International Youth Conference, Group of Eight. For those of you who are familiar with documents such as this, welcome back. Thank you for joining us once more. For those of you who are new to Model UN, an especially warm welcome to you. We are so excited you are joining us. Regardless of how many times you've participated in Model UN, we feel extremely privileged to watch your willingness to participate in the demanding yet thrilling G8 committee at IYC.

The Group of Eight (G8 for short) is the third committee of the General Assembly of the United Nations. The General Assembly allocates to the Committee agenda items relating to a range of historic conflicts and crises that have affected generations of people all over the world. We distinctly continue to see the effects of historic injustices today because, as David McCullough once said, "History is who we are and why we are the way we are."

Over these two days, you will be taken back in time and discuss one of the longest-standing wars of all time, the Vietnam War. This incident has shaped modern-day bilateral relations and brought about various changes to each country's military structure and overall country dynamic.

Therefore, this very interesting yet critical topic was selected to allow you to experience the real essence of the G8 committee. We are honoured to witness you gain knowledge of the procedure and function of the United Nations, become eloquent public speakers, develop your debate and communication skills, discover efficient ways to extensively research and organise information, form new insights on world issues and see you thrive as you embark on a once in a lifetime journey.

Please note that this is only a study guide and not sufficient by itself to prepare you for the gruelling debate. You will have to do your own research. Most importantly, in order to produce a sustainable resolution for this goal, your active involvement in the debate is crucial.

Finally, we want you to know that we are always at your disposal in case you have any questions regarding our committee and/or our topic. We are excited beyond words to work with you and we promise to deliver to the best of our abilities!

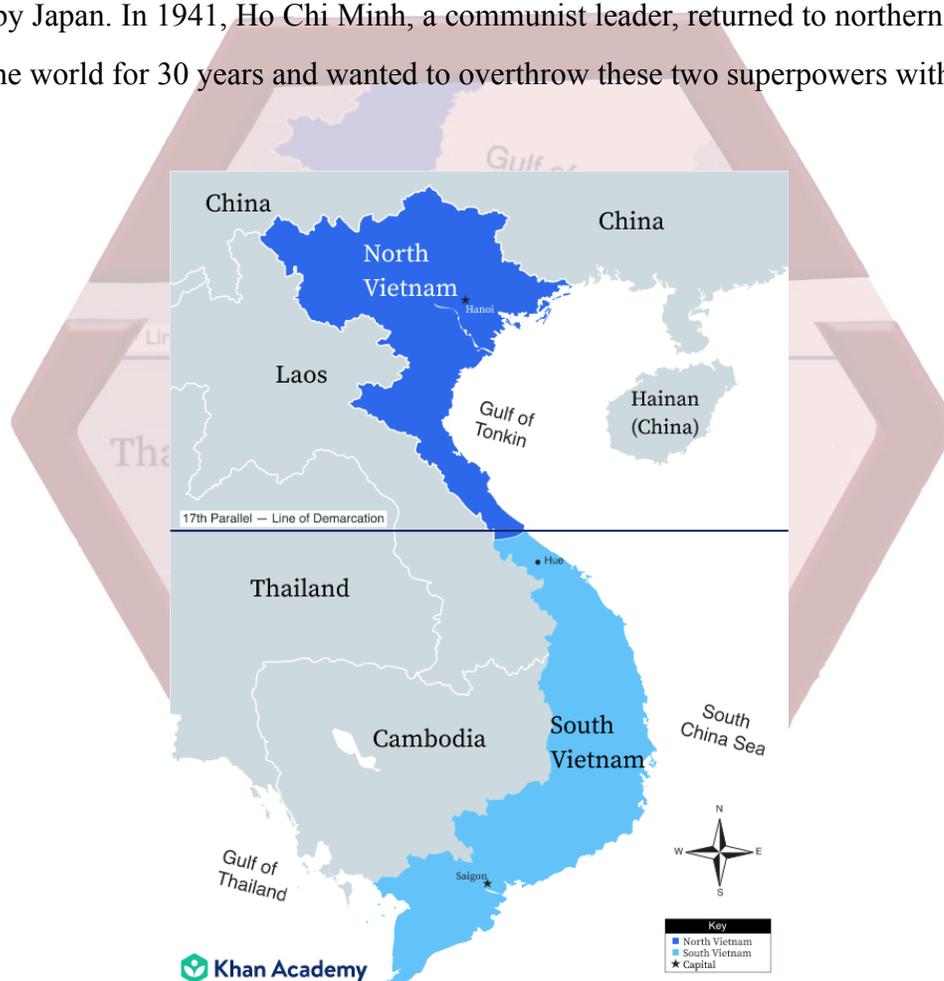
Regards,

Sarah Mukhtiar - Chair of Committee

Aryan Jumani - Vice Chair of Committee

Historical Background

French Indochina was a French colony that mainly consisted of 3 countries: Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam. By 1940, the Vietnamese not only were a French colony but were also invaded by Japan. In 1941, Ho Chi Minh, a communist leader, returned to northern Vietnam after touring the world for 30 years and wanted to overthrow these two superpowers within Vietnam.



After gaining support by 1945, Ho Chi Minh formed an alliance called the Democratic Republic of Vietnam. From 1946, Ho Chi Minh fought a series of battles for 8 years, collectively known as the First Indochina War.

He wanted the support of the United States of America to fight the French. However, USA was involved in the Cold War and was actively trying to stop the spread of communism. Therefore, in 1950 the USA helped the French to fight the Democratic Republic of Vietnam. However, Viet Minh (also known as the Democratic Republic of Vietnam.) kept fighting France.

By 1953, France had poor success in fending off Viet Minh. It tried to stop the supply of weapons to the Viet Minh: from March 13, 1954 to May 7, 1954, the battle of Dien Bien Phu was fought to cut supply lines of Viet Minh from Laos. To cut ties, the French built a fortified base in northwest Vietnam, at Dien Bien Phu, in the hopes of fighting Viet Minh with superior French firepower. However, due to a geographical disadvantage, the base was built poorly. Viet Minh then blocked all access to roads and the only way for supplies or evacuation was through the air. They then besieged the base and fought the battle of Dien Bien Phu for 2 months which they eventually won due to fighting mainly with artillery, infantry, and anti-aircraft guns. This war marked the end of the First Indochina War. After this war, the 1954 Geneva Accords were signed which divided Vietnam into North and South Vietnam. This division then sparked the Vietnam War.

The Vietnam War is a war fought between the communist government of North Vietnam and its allies in South Vietnam (Viet Cong) against the South Vietnam government plus its primary allies, the United States of America. This lasted for a period of 2 decades, 1954 – 1975. Viet Minh still wanted to unite the entire nation into a communist regime like the Soviet Union and China. In contrast, the South Vietnam government wanted a democracy.

The prolonged conflict had a severe human cost for all parties. In January 1973, the United States and North Vietnam concluded a final peace agreement, ending open hostilities between the two nations. Yet, war between North and South Vietnam continued, however, on April 30, 1975, the South Vietnamese capital of Saigon fell to the North Vietnamese, who reunited the country under Communist rule as the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, ending the Vietnam War.

Timeline

➤ 1945

On September 2nd, World War 2 ends. Japan surrenders to the Allied Forces. France gains control of entire Vietnam.

➤ 1946

The First Indochina War begins which was fought between Viet Minh and the French.

1950

China starts supporting Viet Minh to assert a communist regime in Vietnam by providing them with weapons and advisors. In response, the USA pledges \$15 million to France in order to combat Viet Minh.

➤ 1954

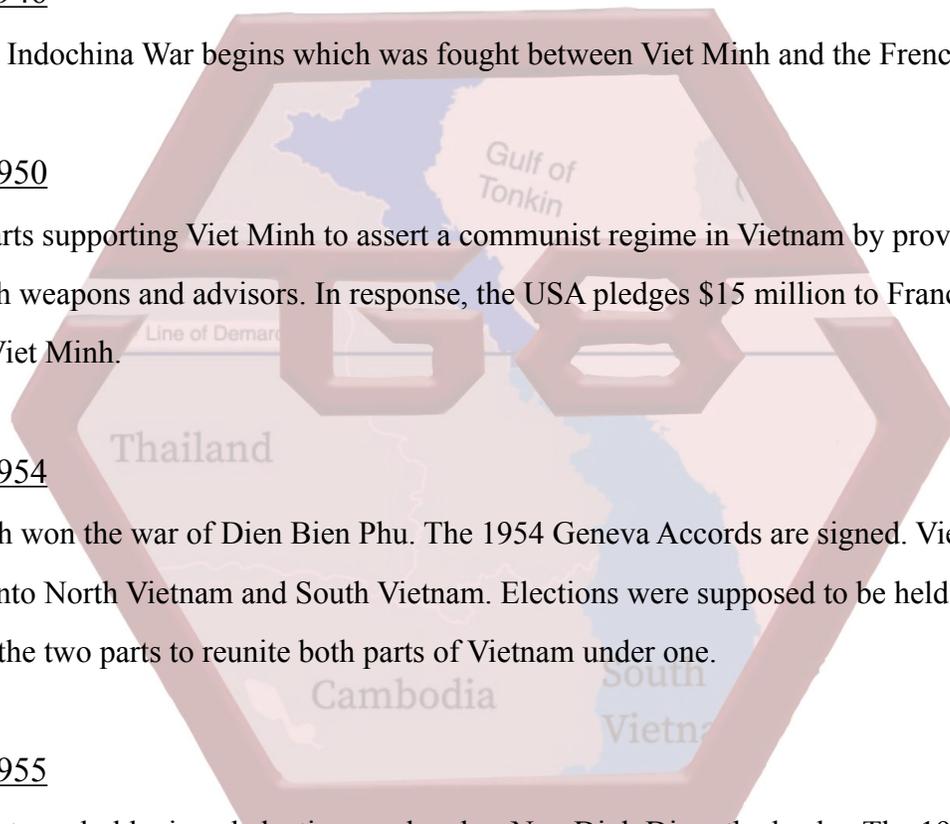
Viet Minh won the war of Dien Bien Phu. The 1954 Geneva Accords are signed. Vietnam is divided into North Vietnam and South Vietnam. Elections were supposed to be held in 1956 between the two parts to reunite both parts of Vietnam under one.

➤ 1955

South Vietnam holds rigged elections and makes Ngo Dinh Diem the leader. The 1956 elections were cancelled by Diem due to the fact that South Vietnam was not recognized as a party by the Geneva Accords. This was done since the USA thought that the communists would win the elections.

➤ 1956

South Vietnamese forces are trained under the US military.



➤ 1960

Viet Minh forms a government in South Vietnam known as the National Liberation Front(NLF). Diem called this party the Vietcong.

➤ 1963

Due to incompetency, Diem was overthrown and executed by the South Vietnamese. The US supported this decision. He was succeeded by Duong Van Minh.

➤ 1964

General Nguyen Khanh overthrows the group in charge of South Vietnam and takes control through a coup. South Korea also starts sending military aid to South Vietnam.

➤ 1965

The US began bombing North Vietnam, called Operation Rolling Thunder. This lasted for three years. By the end of 1965, more than 200,000 US troops are stationed in Vietnam.

➤ 1967

Operation Rolling Thunder was called ineffective. USA launches Operation Cedar Falls, a military campaign to ally with South Vietnamese forces to destroy the operations of Vietcong. Through this operation, the USA discovered the headquarters of Vietcong.

➤ 1968

On Tet (Vietnamese new year), the North Vietnamese and Vietcong launch an attack on 100 South Vietnamese cities and towns. The USA manages to recapture most areas. The “Tet Offensive” was known as one of the biggest defeats of the communists. On March 16, US soldiers killed hundreds of North Vietnamese civilians in My Lai. This resulted in the popularity of President Johnson plummeting and forced him not to stand for re-elections. Richard Nixon

was elected as the President in November. By December, the number of US troops in Vietnam reached 540,000.

➤ 1969

The covert bombing of the communist's supply routes to Cambodia was planned by the US calling it Operation Breakfast. A policy called "Vietnamization" was also announced by USA which planned to shift the war burden on South Vietnam. Ho Chi Minh dies on November 3rd.

➤ 1970

Nationwide protests, especially on college campuses, arise due to President Nixon's announcement of US troops attacking enemy locations in Cambodia. In May, student protesters at Kent State University killed 4 students and wounded 8.

➤ 1973

USA signs peace accords for a cease-fire in Vietnam due to increased pressure from the media, growing protests against the war, and the completion of the Vietnamization policy. By May 29th, The last military unit leaves Vietnam

➤ 1974

The country is still divided into 2 parts. North Vietnam declares war against South Vietnam again.

➤ 1975

On April 29, North Vietnam attacked South Vietnam. The next day, the southern part surrendered to the communists. US reported a total of 58,220 US military troops being fatally injured or dead. An approximation of 220,000 deaths of the Allied Forces excluding USA's troops. 660,000 communist military deaths. And an estimation of 405,000 – 627,000 civilian deaths in North Vietnam and South Vietnam.

Main Countries Involved and Their Stance

➤ United States of America

After fighting the Cold War with Russia, the United States of America developed a no communism policy. In 1949, when China became a communist regime, USA feared that communism would eventually spread to Southeast Asia causing a domino effect and then gradually the whole of Asia would be under a communist regime. To prevent this, USA fed supplies, money and military to help prevent this. They started with Vietnam, a place where communism was gaining power. In 1964, a US Navy Destroyer was attacked by the North Vietnamese boats which gave USA the reason to escalate the war. By the end of the war, an estimated 58,000 militants had suffered fatal wounds.

➤ South Korea

South Korea started supplying aid to South Vietnam due to several reasons. One of the most important reasons was making USA an ally of South Korea, allowing USA to become interested in South Korea's security in regard to North Korea. Another factor was that sending troops would help South Korea revitalize their economy since most of their aid is from the US. The costs of the war for South Korea were indirectly paid by the US as well.

➤ Soviet Union (USSR)

The Soviet Union was the primary supporter of North Vietnam and its vision of a communist Vietnam. This was due to their own country being communist. Another factor in why USSR supported North Vietnam was because USA was supporting South Vietnam. USSR was also the primary supplier of economic and military aid for North Vietnam. They also provided propaganda against the Americans and their actions. USSR publicly refused to act as a mediator to end the war as well.

➤ China

After World War II, Japan gave back Guangzhouwan (a leased territory) back to China. Right from 1950, China has been an active supporter of Viet Minh or North Vietnam but did not provide Vietnam with much support other than weapons and advisors until 1956. After 1956, China provided Vietnam with several arms such as 270,000 guns, over 10,000 pieces of artillery, 200 million bullets of different types, 2.02 million artillery shells, 15,000 wire transmitters, 5,000 radio transmitters, over 1,000 trucks, 15 planes, 28 naval vessels, and 1.18 million sets of military uniforms. However, at the end of 1960, USSR overtook China as its primary supplier.

➤ Cambodia

During the Vietnam War, the United States bombed much of the countryside of Cambodia like Northern Vietnam and manipulated Cambodian politics to support the rise of pro-West Lon Nol as the leader of Cambodia. Khmer Rouges, radical communist movement that ruled Cambodia had anger towards Vietnam and its intentions. In 1978, this feud escalated into open warfare. The Cambodians were no match for the Vietnamese forces, despite continuing infusions of Chinese aid. In December 1978, a large Vietnamese army moved into Cambodia, brushing aside the Democratic Kampuchean forces. Within two weeks the government had fled Phnom Penh for Thailand. Cambodia was officially a neutral country in the Vietnam War, though North Vietnamese troops moved supplies and arms through the northern part of the country.

➤ Laos

For almost nine years Laos was a battlefield in the armed conflict between neighbouring North Vietnam and the United States. By the late 1950s, a large area of eastern Laos was controlled by the Pathet Lao, along with North Vietnamese forces who had crossed the border to lend support. In 1964 US Air Force planes began flying reconnaissance missions over Laotian territory. In December of that year, the aerial bombardment of Laos was intensified as part of the implementation of Operation Barrel Roll in north-eastern Laos. The operation involved US planes flying weekly bombing runs over north-eastern Laos, targeting Pathet Lao and North

Vietnamese bases. It was a three-year campaign that involved around 100,000 bombing runs. The U.S. bombing of Laos was part of a covert attempt by the CIA to wrest power from the communist Pathet Lao, a group allied with North Vietnam and the Soviet Union during the Vietnam War.



Actions taken by the UNHCR

A few weeks after the war ended in 1975, the UNHCR opened an office in Hanoi where it assisted in establishing milk factories and repairing schools, wells, clinics, roads and bridges. Additionally in May, the UNHCR and Vietnam established an “orderly departure programme” to tackle the uncontrolled departure of the ‘boat people’. The agency then handed over programmes to the International Organization of Migration (IOM) which oversaw family reunification and other humanitarian cases. By 1991, more than 330,000 were assisted by the IOM with safe and legal emigration out of Vietnam.

The UN opposes American participation in the conflict. Given the American veto power, their influence is limited. The following resolution was adopted by the UNSC:

- Complaint concerning acts of aggression against territory and civilian population of Cambodia, 4 June 1964 (S/RES/189)

The primary objective of this resolution was to draw attention to the humanitarian situation brought on by the Vietnam War. It demands that the neutrality and territorial integrity of Cambodia be acknowledged by all States and agencies. The government of Cambodia had previously voiced complaints about hostility and incursions into their land by American and South Vietnamese forces.

Conclusion

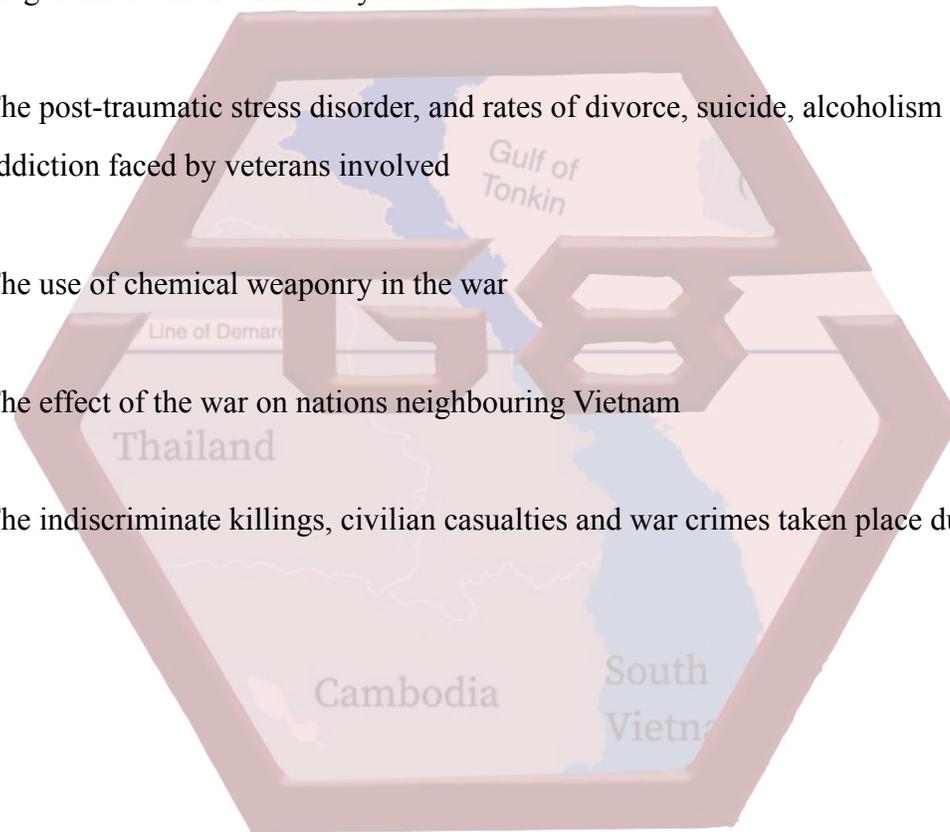
The costs and casualties of the growing war proved too much for the United States to bear, and U.S. combat units were withdrawn by 1973. In 1975 South Vietnam fell to a full-scale invasion by the North. The most immediate effect of the Vietnam War was the staggering death toll. The war killed an estimated 2 million Vietnamese civilians, 1.1 million North Vietnamese troops, 200,000 South Vietnamese troops, and 58,000 U.S. troops. Those wounded in combat numbered tens of thousands more. The massive U.S. bombing of both North and South Vietnam left the country in ruins, and the U.S. Army's use of herbicides such as Agent Orange not only devastated Vietnam's natural environment but also caused widespread health problems that have persisted for decades.

In July 1976, the new unified Vietnam was officially reunited as the Socialist Republic Of Vietnam (SRV), with its capital at Hanoi.

By 1975, Vietnam was off the Gallup Poll list of top issues in the United States. Aside from concern for remaining U.S. prisoners Of War (POWs) still in Vietnam, Americans became less and less concerned with events within the country. Nonetheless, the war had lasting effects. Combined with the Watergate scandal, it inspired widespread public distrust of the U.S. government and made the military less popular, at least in the short term. The draft has not been used since.

Suggested Caucus Topics

1. The human rights violations taken place during the war
2. The health and security issues faced by women and children
3. Illegal enforcement of military recruitment
4. The post-traumatic stress disorder, and rates of divorce, suicide, alcoholism and drug addiction faced by veterans involved
5. The use of chemical weaponry in the war
6. The effect of the war on nations neighbouring Vietnam
7. The indiscriminate killings, civilian casualties and war crimes taken place during the war



Further Research

[A guide to Vietnam War resources: Government documents, oral histories, antiwar movements | Kershner](#)

[The Vietnam War \(article\) | 1960s America | Khan Academy](#)

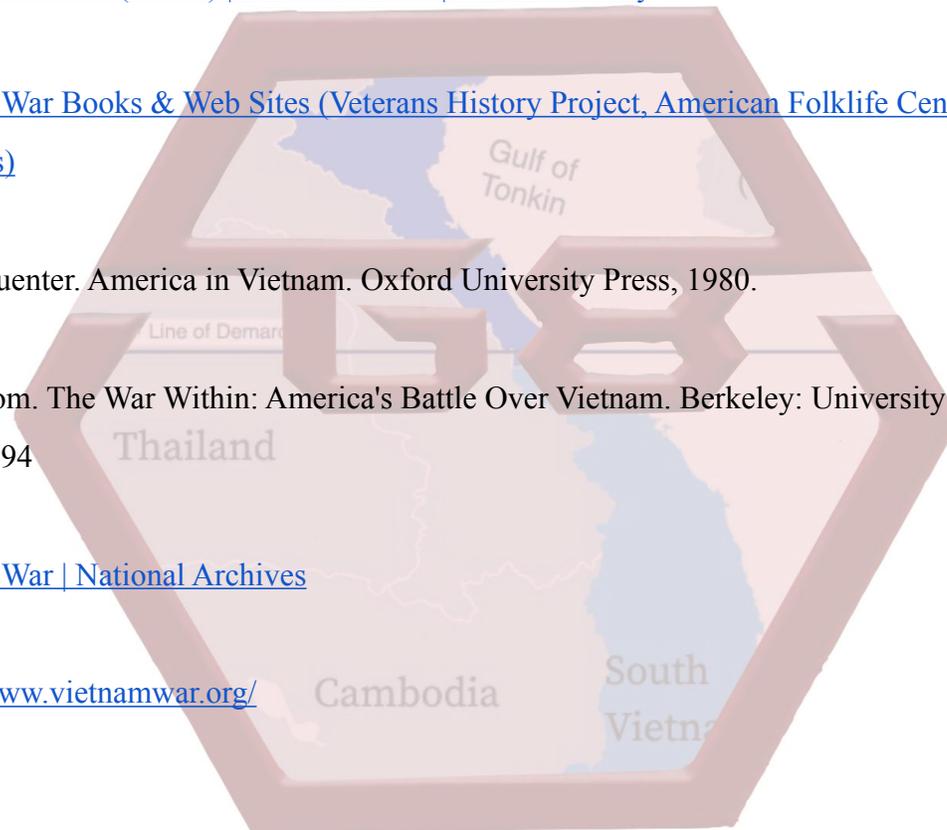
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[Vietnam War | National Archives](#)

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Questions a Resolution Must Answer

1. How can the committee ensure well-designed conflict prevention and resolution Mechanisms?
2. How can the committee ensure the enforcement and implementation of humanitarian law from all parties?
3. How can the committee ensure the administration and delivery of humanitarian, medical and financial aid from all countries?
4. How can the committee ensure the accountability of all factions regarding this conflict and place appropriate sanctions for war crimes and violations of humanitarian rights?



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