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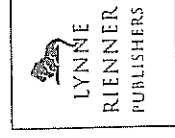
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ENDING CIVIL WARS

The Implementation of Peace Agreements

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Implementing Cambodia's Peace Agreement

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When the United Nations accepted the invitation of Cambodia's four warring parties to implement a peace agreement reached on October 23, 1991, it embarked upon a mission of unprecedented ambition. After fifteen years of civil war and large-scale repressive violence, Cambodia's belligerents had finally reached a comprehensive settlement, but recognized their need for a third party to play a central role in putting it into practice. Due to the intense distrust and hostility among the parties, and given the extent of social and economic damage wrought by the civil war, the United Nations was expected to provide transitional authority during implementation and take the lead in carrying out many of the provisions of the Paris Agreement.

Although much has been written on the broader subject, few scholars have examined systematically the process of implementing the Paris Agreement and the UN's critical responsibility for accurately identifying the key obstacles to implementation and in developing appropriate strategies to overcome them. Many analysts, instead, approach Cambodia's troubled peace process simply with varying degrees of pessimism that yield few practical prescriptions for policy.¹ While useful for their cautionary notes about hasty and overambitious intervention in war-torn states, these pessimistic perspectives fail to thoroughly explore the UN intervention in order to derive lessons for future efforts to help build a more peaceful world.

In contrast to the pessimists, this study argues that the UN's performance in Cambodia between 1992 and 1993 is best seen as a "qualified success." Why the UN's success was only limited thus becomes the most important question. The UN Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) accomplished more than the pessimists had anticipated. Elections took place, and the country has since experienced greater political stability than

in the years preceding the operation. That said, the mission did not accomplish many of its goals. The disarmament process envisioned in the Paris Agreement failed completely, the Khmer Rouge withdrew from the electoral process, and civil war continued after the elections in May 1993. Subsequently, one of the parties, the State of Cambodia (SOC), reasserted hegemonic control in Cambodia and threatened the country's nascent democracy.

Why, then, did UNTAC only succeed to the extent that it did? Several explanations give a partial account for UNTAC's limited effectiveness. To begin with, the mission contended with a challenging political context: lack of democratic tradition, authoritarian habits, and a prevalence of antidemocratic ideologies. At the operational level, UNTAC had to deal with problems not unfamiliar to peacekeeping operations: insufficient resources, lack of qualified personnel, and a mandate that, however robust in some respects, was not strong enough to allow the UN to play an optimal role in a weak state like Cambodia. Most problematic, the parties were fundamentally unwilling or unable to abide by their commitment to the agreement. This unwillingness, in turn, derived significantly from the parties' concerns over security, which were aggravated rather than lessened by choices made during implementation. Understandably perhaps, external actors worried that the Khmer Rouge might return to power and sought ways to marginalize it. This strategy, however, rendered the Khmer Rouge only more insecure and therefore less willing to accept UNTAC authority. Meanwhile, because external actors were preoccupied with the Khmer Rouge, they did little to restrain the SOC. The emerging imbalance of power in favor of the SOC after the agreement was signed limited UNTAC's potential success and put the process of democratization at risk.

Study of the Cambodian conflict has by and large neglected a thorough examination of the motives and interests of the various parties, especially the Khmer Rouge. This chapter offers a course correction in this respect, and turns to the emerging literature on "spoilers" to gain a more accurate understanding of the Cambodian belligerents. The upshot of Stephen Stedman's recent work is that analysts and policymakers need a richer typology of spoilers, their interests, and their consequent behavior in order to develop more effective strategies for "managing" spoilers in the context of peace processes.² According to Stedman, parties can alternatively be driven by insecurity or a lust for power, and have limited or total goals. Custodians of a peace process must adopt varying strategies and tactics to deal with different types of peace spoilers: inducement where spoilers have limited aims, socialization where spoilers are greedy, and coercion where spoilers' aims are total.

To enrich this theory, one needs to ask more about where adversaries' behavior comes from and the relative shaping influence of intentions, beliefs, and ideologies, on the one hand, in contrast with desire for security,

on the other. The argument here is that the international community misread the Khmer Rouge and treated them as "total spoilers," leaving marginalization or coercion as their only policy options. Instead, evidence indicates that the Khmer Rouge were not total spoilers and that greater attention to their minimal security and power requirements (including the concomitant advantage of a measure of international legitimacy) had the capacity to induce more cooperative behavior.

Prelude to UNTAC: From Civil War to the Paris Agreement

What has been termed the "Third Indochina War" broke out in 1975 following the communist takeover of three Indochinese states (Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam) and the ensuing border conflict between two of them: Vietnam and the new Cambodian regime of the communist Khmer Rouge and its leader Pol Pot. The Khmer Rouge began a systematic and brutal "revolution" of Cambodian society, whose toll over their three years in power was over 1 million dead.

The regional war that developed has been explained in several ways, including Pol Pot's "irredentist ambitions," irrationalism,³ and ideological competition between rival communist regimes whose models of socialist society-building differed. The most compelling explanation, however, begins with Cambodia's domestic vulnerabilities, Khmer Rouge perception of domestic and foreign enemies, and its leadership's willingness—especially within the army—to respond to threats preemptively. There is evidence indicating that Pol Pot did not fully control his army even after his movement took power in 1975, and his military commanders often showed more enthusiasm about taking military action against Vietnam than he did.³

The border conflict also rapidly became internationalized. The Soviet Union lent support to Vietnam with technical personnel and military hardware; China similarly assisted Cambodia as an instrument against Vietnam, which it saw as a Soviet client. China's position moved closer to that of the United States, which shared an interest in containing expansion of the Soviet Union into Southeast Asia. Foreign intervention demonstrably escalated the war, prompting the massive Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia in late December 1978. Vietnam quickly installed a friendly Cambodian government, ending the Khmer Rouge reign of terror. In early 1979, the People's Republic of Kampuchea (PRK, later changed to SOC in 1989) was thus established, led first by Heng Samrin and later by Hun Sen. Vietnamese occupation lasted until 1989.⁴

The Vietnamese occupation of Cambodia did not end the war, however, as regional powers condemned Vietnam's violation of international law and aggression against a sovereign state. China and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) were especially vocal. China launched a

military incursion into Vietnam in February 1979, with the aim of teaching the latter a "lesson." ASEAN also mobilized international support at the UN to isolate Vietnam diplomatically. The regional grouping also mobilized support for Cambodian resistance groups, particularly the National United Front for a Cooperative, Independent, Neutral, and Peaceful Cambodia (FUNCINPEC), founded by Prince Norodom Sihanouk; the antiroyalist Khmer People's National Liberation Front (KPNLF); and the Khmer Rouge. Although ASEAN disliked the Khmer Rouge's past, it made good use of the faction's military expertise to counterattack Vietnamese offensives on the Thai-Cambodian border.

Under pressure from China and some ASEAN states, a Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea (CGDK) was formed, allying the Khmer Rouge with the other two resistance forces. In the CGDK, FUNCINPEC's Sihanouk acted as president, KPNLF leader Son Sann as prime minister, and Khmer Rouge leader Khieu Samphan as foreign minister. Beijing believed that such a coalition would help the factions gain international recognition, as did ASEAN, which supported the CGDK at the United Nations. The coalition government was also seen as a way to improve military coordination against PRK/Vietnamese troops. The United States provided direct financial assistance to the noncommunist resistance forces, and Thailand helped China channel military aid to the resistance, particularly to the Khmer Rouge. The PRK, meanwhile, enjoyed steady backing of the Soviet bloc.⁵

The battlefield favored the PRK/Vietnam alliance through the mid-1980s, despite external support for the CGDK. In 1984-1985, some Vietnamese and PRK troops (at 60,000 and 10,000 strong, respectively) launched an extensive, dry-season offensive against major resistance encampments and at refugee camps, which harbored 30,000 resistance troops.⁶ By 1986, the PRK had consolidated its strategic position.⁷ Politically, it had outlasted the previous two regimes of Pol Pot (1975-1978) and President Lon Nol (1970-1975) put together.

The PRK regime was unable to eliminate resistance, however. The Khmer Rouge army, in particular, recuperated from its defeats. By 1981, Khmer Rouge troops numbered roughly 50,000. Although this number may have declined to 30,000 by the mid-1980s, they continued to fight alongside the KPNLF and FUNCINPEC, each of which had approximately 5,000 troops. While the larger PRK army had managed to destroy several key resistance bases and retained the backing of 100,000 Vietnamese troops until the mid-1980s, it failed to conquer the guerrilla forces.

By the end of 1986, neither Vietnamese nor resistance forces were in a military position to dictate terms.⁸ Faced with military stalemate, a weakened political and diplomatic position, and domestic economic problems, the Vietnamese army withdrew in 1989. The PRK—now known as the State of Cambodia—could no longer hope for victory, despite its continuing numerical military dominance.⁹ The SOC outnumbered all its enemies

combined, with around 150,000 troops.¹⁰ The SOC's police force was also larger than the combined strength of the resistance, with over 47,000 police personnel (at the provincial level and below, the number is estimated at 40,000). By comparison, the Khmer Rouge's police totaled 9,000, FUNCINPEC's 1,700, and the KPNLF's 1,000.¹¹

Numbers do not tell the whole story, however. Despite numerical superiority, the SOC force could not keep the resistance at bay without the Vietnamese army. Many reports indicated numerous SOC army defections (especially on the border with Thailand), desertions, and mutinies, as well as draft-dodging, poor-quality conscripts, lack of discipline, low morale, and corruption. Pay was poor. Some units also acquired a reputation for raping and looting their way through remote villages. Meanwhile, the Khmer Rouge army was "disciplined and widely feared," leading some to see it as the strongest armed faction.¹² The result was an effective stalemate by the end of the 1980s, with the opposing armies focused "on holding on to what they had captured."¹³

The human toll was also costly to both sides. Casualties were enormous among Cambodians. The estimate of lives lost between 1975, when the Khmer Rouge began their short reign of terror, and the Paris Agreement varies between 1.5 and 2 million.

Beginning in 1987, several attempts were made to get the Cambodian factions to negotiate, including a promising 1988 meeting in Jakarta that brought together for the first time not only the four Cambodian factions but also their allies in the region.¹⁴ Until June 1991, the negotiation process was marred by a series of contentious issues, however. The First Paris Conference (August 1989) brought all of the Cambodian factions to the table, along with a number of foreign powers, but produced no breakthrough. The main obstacle to settlement appeared to be disagreement among the Cambodian factions about a viable power-sharing formula. The stalemate continued: at meetings in Jakarta (February 26-28, 1990) and Tokyo (June 4, 1990), the factions continued to disagree over the role of a proposed Supreme National Council (SNC). Other stumbling blocks included differences over disarmament provisions and the formation of a transitional civilian authority to be accompanied by a UN peacekeeping force during the transition to a new government.¹⁵

An initial breakthrough came in September 1990 with an agreement among the parties on the establishment of an SNC. On October 23, 1991, the Cambodian factions and nineteen other states signed "The Agreements on a Comprehensive Political Settlement of the Cambodian Conflict," known commonly as the Paris Agreement for the city in which it was signed. The Paris Agreement was divided into nine parts.¹⁶ Part 1 defined the transitional period and the role of UNTAC and the SNC, along with military provisions related to cease-fire, withdrawal of foreign forces and their verification, and cessation of outside military assistance. Any "foreign

force advisors and equipment remaining in Cambodia shall be withdrawn

from Cambodia, not to be returned [and their] withdrawal and non-return will be subject to UNTAC verification."

Part 2 recognized the Cambodian people's political right to determine their own political future via the free and fair election of a Constituent Assembly. The assembly was to draft a new constitution, transform itself into a legislative assembly, and create a new democratic government. Part 3 covered human rights, stipulating that "[all] persons in Cambodia and all Cambodian refugees and displaced persons shall enjoy the rights and freedoms embodied in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other relevant international human rights instruments" (Article 15). Signatories also agreed to undertake the following tasks: (1) to ensure respect for and observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms in Cambodia; (2) to support the right of all Cambodian citizens to undertake activities that would promote and protect human rights and fundamental freedoms; (3) to take effective measures to ensure that the policies and practices of the past shall never be returned; (4) to adhere to relevant international human rights instruments. During the transitional period, UNTAC "shall be responsible . . . for fostering an environment in which respect for human rights shall be ensured" (Article 16). The UN Commission on Human Rights "shall continue to monitor closely the human rights situation in Cambodia" (Article 17).

Part 4 provided for international guarantees, and Part 5 was designed to ensure that Cambodian refugees and displaced persons had "the rights to return to the country, to live in safety, security, and dignity, free from intimidation and coercion of any kind." Release of all prisoners of war and civilian internees, under the direction of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), was covered under Part 6. Part 7 focused on the postelection constitution, which was to include basic principles, including those concerning human rights, fundamental freedoms, and Cambodia's status of neutrality. Part 8 dealt with long-term development. According to Annex 5, the constitution was to contain fundamental rights, including the rights to life, personal liberty, security, freedom of movement, and freedom of religion, assembly, and association; due process and equality before the law; protection from arbitrary deprivation of property or deprivation of private property without just compensation; and freedom from racial, ethnic, religious, and sexual discrimination. The constitution would confirm that Cambodia would adopt a "system of liberal democracy, on the basis of pluralism."

The Paris Agreement was deliberately pragmatic. The retroactive application of criminal law was prohibited. The agreement also omitted any discussion of accountability mechanisms for atrocities, war crimes, and human-rights violations. Instead, the Khmer Rouge, despite a reign of terror that caused more than 1 million deaths, was recognized as a legitimate party; no provisions in the agreement suggested that its leaders be tried for crimes against humanity.

UNTAC's Mandate

The chief challenge for implementation was to ensure that the factions abided by their agreement to compete peacefully through elections and accept any result without returning to the battlefield. In anticipation of the seriousness of this challenge, the Paris Agreement provided the UN with an unprecedented set of powers to rebuild the war-torn state through its intervention. True to its name, the UNTAC mission was given "transitional authority" essentially to govern Cambodia in the absence of a legitimate national regime. For the first time in UN history, a sovereign state's administrative agencies, bodies, and offices in the ministries of foreign affairs, national defense, public security, and information were to be placed under the direct control of the United Nations.¹⁷

UNTAC was also assigned a series of functional tasks following specific provisions of the peace agreement. UNTAC had a major peacekeeping role, which included responsibility for cantoning, disarming, and demobilizing 70 percent of the factional forces. UNTAC was also to supervise, monitor, and verify the withdrawal of foreign forces, adherence to the cease-fire, and related measures. In addition, UNTAC would have a police component to help promote public security by supervising, controlling, and training factional police personnel.

Moreover, UNTAC was to play an ambitious role in peacebuilding. It was asked to organize and conduct postwar national elections, and was also mandated to ensure respect for human rights and to help prepare Cambodia for economic reconstruction, with Part 8 of the agreement specifically urging the wider international community to provide support for the process of rehabilitation and reconstruction.¹⁸ UNTAC would be headed by a special representative of the Secretary-General, Japanese diplomat Yasushi Akashi; its military component would be led by General John Sanderson of Australia as force commander.

Several key items were not in UNTAC's mandate, however. UNTAC was not invited to develop any long-term plan for economic reconstruction; here, Cambodia was to take responsibility for determining and adopting its own priorities. The mission also was not authorized to take any action that would bring Khmer Rouge leaders to justice for the crimes against humanity they had committed in the past. After all, these now were recognized as legitimate players in Cambodia's postwar politics.

The source of legitimacy for this comprehensive and unprecedented mission was twofold. Consent from the factions provided the first and most critical source of UNTAC's legitimacy, which derived from the UN's commitment to create a neutral political environment for free and fair elections and to exercise its authority without favor toward any specific Cambodian party. The agreement made this very clear: "UNTAC will make every effort to ensure that the system and procedures adopted are absolutely impartial"

(Annex 1, Section D, 6). Any recommendation from the SNC would thus only be accepted by UNTAC if SNC members had reached consensus and only if that consensus was consistent with the objectives of the agreement. UNTAC itself would "determine whether advice or action of the SNC is consistent with the present Agreement" (Annex 1, Section A, 2E).

The second source of legitimacy derived from international commitments to the peace plan, especially from the nineteen foreign signatories to the agreement. In the text, representatives of these states "invite[d] the United Nations Security Council to establish a United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia . . . with civilian and military components under the direct responsibility of the UN Secretary General" (Article 2). They also pledged "to recognize and respect in every way the sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity and inviolability, neutrality and national unity of Cambodia" (Annex 5).

The extent to which UNTAC could effectively exercise its authority was another question and difficult to measure, especially in relation to the Supreme National Council. On the one hand, the SNC was not the new government of Cambodia, did not enjoy executive powers, and had delegated "to the United Nations all powers necessary to ensure the implementation of this Agreement." On the other hand, the SNC was declared "the unique legitimate body and source of authority in which, throughout the transitional period, the sovereignty, independence and unity of Cambodia are enshrined" (Article 3); and it was internationally recognized as the representative of Cambodia externally, including occupying the country's seat at the United Nations, in UN specialized agencies, and in other international institutions and international conferences (Article 5).

Overall, the Paris Agreement provided no clear guidance as to how UNTAC could effectively carry out its mandate, beyond the fact of Cambodian consent and international recognition of the mission's legal and political legitimacy. Instead, the agreement legalistically assumed that the signatories would fulfill their obligations. The agreement assumed that the adversaries would compete at the ballot box in a free and fair manner simply because they had initially agreed to it, and failed to provide for any sanctions against the signatories should they undermine the process.

Perhaps the greatest weakness of the agreement was that it contributed to a breakdown of the rough balance of power among the four Cambodian factions that had made a peace settlement possible in the first place. It recognized the SOC, but delegitimized the CGDK as a coalition government. The SOC, which had failed to restore the Cambodian seat at the United Nations throughout the 1980s, now gained international recognition as a legitimate player in Cambodian politics. Meanwhile, the agreement did not recognize the CGDK as a single entity: the three resistance coalition partners signed the agreement as separate parties who would therefore compete in elections individually *vis-à-vis* the SOC. The Paris Peace Agreement, in

effect, gave the SOC a competitive advantage by dividing the SOC's enemies.

Successes and Setbacks During Implementation

UNTAC can claim a number of significant accomplishments, especially in the context of Cambodian history, the devastating effects of the war, and the framework of the Paris Agreement itself. These include the repatriation of close to 400,000 refugees, the reasonably effective management of the electoral process, and the commencement of a measure of civil political life.¹⁹ Each achievement had its limitations, however, and was counterbalanced by significant failings. In the end, UNTAC succeeded only in reducing the scale of the Cambodian conflict rather than fully resolving it, because the mission could not disarm the factions or manage to prevent the Khmer Rouge faction from withdrawing from electoral contest. Before addressing these larger issues, it is worth reviewing the implementation of other provisions.

Refugees and Repatriation

The war had generated a large number of Cambodian refugees. At least half a million Cambodians fled their homes, most to Thailand and the area near the Thai-Cambodian border. By the early 1990s, the number of refugees in Thailand was estimated to be 370,000 and the number of internally displaced persons in Cambodia was thought to be 180,000.

The UN's plans to reintegrate returnees into mainstream society faced a number of complications but were ultimately considered a success. Initially, each refugee family was to receive two hectares of land and was allowed to settle where they liked; single women were also promised assistance for house-building, grants to buy housing materials, food supplies, and other forms of short-term aid. The UN had to change tack, however, when faced with the lack of adequate quantities of mine-free, fertile, and available land. As a result, the vast majority of returnees ended up receiving a cash grant of \$50 per adult and \$25 per child under twelve, food for 400 days, and some assistance with transport, housing materials, and agricultural implements. As of April 1993, more than 339,000 refugees had been repatriated.²⁰

Land Mines

The record of mine clearance during the transitional period was mixed. The de-mining process was slowed down in part by the factions' refusal to disarm and demobilize their troops, and by ongoing military clashes. At the

time of UNTAC's departure, more than 4 million square meters of land had been de-mined, but with only about 37,000 of the estimated 6-10 million mines removed. Yet 2,000 Cambodians had been trained by the UN in mine-clearance techniques, which was a considerable accomplishment.²¹

Economic Revival

The war and occupation had left the Cambodian economy in tatters. Just one year before the Vietnamese pullout in 1989, the SOC seemed economically desperate. It quickly moved to introduce the Cambodian version of Soviet perestroika, a decision allowing the Cambodian people for the first time to run private enterprises.²² Despite some progress, the economy remained one of the world's poorest: stagnant, rife with corruption, and suffering from cutbacks in Soviet aid. Average life expectancy was 49.7 years. Infant mortality was high: 123 out of 1,000 children died in their first year and 70 more died before the age of five. From 1988 to 1991, the currency's official value depreciated from 142 to 711 per U.S. dollar and dropped to 1,100 to the dollar in May 1992. According to a 1992 report by the UN Development Programme (UNDP), the country ranked 140th among 160 countries in UNDP's human development index.²³ The dilapidated economy was also hurt by the widespread presence of land mines, estimated to number between 6 and 10 million.

Given this context, UNTAC's few accomplishments are worth noting. It managed to control inflation, facilitate a ban on logging, and create new jobs for unemployed Cambodians, including returnees. Sadly, the UN did not contribute to Cambodian infrastructure or general productive capacity beyond putting in place capacity needed for its own operational requirements.²⁴

Human Rights

The Cambodian factions continued to infringe on human rights, and UNTAC was largely unable to prevent such abuse. Although all factions violated human rights, especially in the lead-up to the elections, the KPNLF and FUNCINPEC were typically victims rather than perpetrators, with the SOC and the Khmer Rouge in a race for chief violator. Throughout the transitional process, the SOC was accused of election violations, arbitrary violence, and political intimidation against its opponents and the population at large. From November 1992 to January 1993, the SOC force in Battambang Province repeatedly attacked opposition-party offices belonging to FUNCINPEC and the KPNLF. According to David Ashley: "In these typically night-time attacks, grenades or rockets were fired indiscriminately into newly established party offices."²⁵ The SOC launched a highly orchestrated propaganda campaign and violence against opposition parties, which

subsequently intensified.²⁶ Its violence peaked in December 1992 and continued unabated throughout the election campaign, causing more than 200 deaths between January and May 1993 alone.²⁷ In its tally of casualties, the SOC was second only to the Khmer Rouge, whose abuses inside its own territory were little known but whose army was known to attack ethnic Vietnamese and UNTAC personnel. More than 100 Vietnamese were massacred, and a large number of those who survived fled for Vietnam in fear of further violence. Overall the Khmer Rouge was deemed responsible for the bulk of the violence and for the largest number of deaths.²⁸

This violence did not mean that the UN was unable to maintain the peace. Importantly, levels of violence and political intimidation were lower than at any other time in recent Cambodian history.

Disarmament and Demobilization

The greatest failure was UNTAC's inability to disarm the four factional forces as agreed at the Paris conference. The United Nations had deployed a large number of military and police personnel in anticipation of factional disarmament: 15,500 armed infantry and engineering troops in 270 locations across the country, 480 unarmed military observers, and 3,600 civilian police. The Khmer Rouge initially accepted some UNTAC military observers, though it limited their activities in its zones. When cantonment, disarmament, and demobilization began on June 13, 1992, however, the Khmer Rouge stalled, insisting that the withdrawal of Vietnamese troops be verified by UNTAC, that the SOC's administrative structures be dismantled, and that the SNC be given the power to run the country. For their part, the SOC, FUNCINPEC, and the KPNLF were partially willing to comply with the agreement. Together, they cantoned almost 55,000 soldiers. Yet they refused to participate fully. The Khmer Rouge's refusal to disarm and demobilize in good faith was undoubtedly the main rationale. The disarmament process eventually failed after UNTAC rejected the Khmer Rouge's demands and agreed to return surrendered weapons to the other three factions for self-defense.²⁹

Elections

Many observers view UNTAC's Electoral Component as the greatest success of the mission. Several new political parties sprang to life; altogether, twenty parties were registered, including those of the four former warring factions. In spite of threats from the SOC and its political party, the Cambodian People's Party (CPP), opposition parties were able to establish their party offices across the country. Although KPNLF leader Son Sann threatened to pull out of the electoral process, citing SOC/CPP violence and political intimidation, the KPNLF stayed. In the end, the Khmer Rouge,

which had refused to disarm, was the only Cambodian signatory of the Paris Agreement to withdraw from the electoral arena.³⁰

Most dramatic was voter registration and turnout, which surprised most observers. More than 4.6 of 5.2 million eligible voters had registered to cast their ballots by January 1993. On the days of actual election in May 1993, more than 4 million people turned out at the polls, representing close to 90 percent of registered voters.³¹ After the elections, FUNCINPEC and the CPP emerged as the dominant parties, receiving 58 and 51 seats respectively in a 120-member Constituent Assembly.³² A coalition government of four elected parties was formed: the CPP, FUNCINPEC, the KPNLF (renamed the Buddhist Liberal Democratic Party, or BLDP), and Moulinaka (another resistance army loyal to Sihanouk, which had fought the SOC in the 1980s but had not been a party to the Paris Agreement). FUNCINPEC president Norodom Ranariddh became first prime minister; CPP leader Hun Sen emerged as second prime minister.

The electoral process can be viewed more critically, however. It was deeply marred by the Khmer Rouge's refusal to disarm and demobilize. Along with continuing cease-fire violations, human rights abuses by all sides (especially the Khmer Rouge and the SOC), and the Khmer Rouge's withdrawal from the electoral process, the failure of disarmament and demobilization made it impossible for UNTAC to establish the "neutral political environment" deemed necessary for UNTAC to establish the "Tensions between the Khmer Rouge and the SOC escalated after disarmament failed. As the election date drew near, violence further "escalated to a level unprecedented during UNTAC's presence."³³ Of the Cambodian signatories to the agreement, the Khmer Rouge was the most belligerent and most destructive, followed closely by the SOC. Their behavior shifted from reluctant cooperation to defiance, resistance, and ultimately violence against both political opponents and UN personnel. UNTAC's electoral mission was, at best, half-accomplished.

Explaining Factional Noncompliance

There are two broad sets of explanations for the unwillingness of Cambodia's factions to comply with their commitments: one set focuses on the nature and aims of the factions themselves; the other focuses on UNTAC's strategy for trying to manage the factions. Elements of both are needed for a full account of Cambodia's experience with peace implementation.

Factional Nature, Aims, and Behavior

To understand the range of noncompliance by Cambodian factions, one can look at three basic influences on their behavior: culture, ideology, and *sen-*

ity. Each factor played a demonstrable role. Ultimately, however, an interest and security-based explanation is the most persuasive when one examines closely the progressive breakdown of the power equilibrium among the armed factions during implementation.

Culture. Cambodian culture provides one explanation of the Cambodian factions' inability to compromise. According to some scholars of Southeast Asia, Indochinese societies in general have no tradition of genuine compromise. Power sharing among adversaries has no legitimate place because power is seen as a possession that can only be enjoyed exclusively.³⁴

Cambodian behavior, in particular, is often characterized as egoistic, arrogant, uninterested in consultation, deceptive, and vengeful.³⁵ Importantly, culturalist accounts of Cambodia also point to an unwillingness to accept either defeat or a partial victory, meaning that combat only ends when an opponent is totally destroyed. As former Cambodian politician Bunchan Mol writes in *Charret Khmer* (Khmer Practice, or Khmer Conduct), perhaps the most widely read book among Cambodians: "We Khmers . . . [i]f one knocks down another person, one will not stop there; one will rush to finish him off by beating him until he either loses consciousness or even dies. . . . [But] if the loser is still alive, it would mean that victory has not yet been won."³⁶ Furthermore: "A Khmer does not want any others other than himself to become more popular and cannot trust anyone else enough to let the latter soar higher than himself. He must be the supreme leader who stands over and above everyone else."³⁷ Such notions of defeat and victory help explain why factions have not always spared their enemies, for fear that the latter will seek retribution. They are insecure of their positions, expect revenge, and see competition as inherently zero-sum.

The cultural perspective alone is inadequate, however, in addition to being reductionist. It cannot explain varying degrees of violence by different factions, who presumably all share Cambodian cultural traits; nor can it account for the Khmer Rouge's changing behavior from initial cooperation through violent defiance of UNTAC authority.

Ideology. Most analysts of the UNTAC operation blame the Khmer Rouge as the most intransigent faction that was willing to manipulate the domestic political situation to gain popular support and return to extreme violence to achieve its goals.³⁸ Such behavior is often explained as rooted in the Maoist radicalism that shaped its history. After years of insurgent warfare and of close relations with Chinese communists, the faction had developed "a strongly nationalist, xenophobic, radical agrarian ideology, and a respect for Maoist tactics of guerrilla warfare."³⁹ Its stalling tactics and eventual violent recalcitrance against UNTAC, then, can be explained as a continuation of its earlier beliefs and behavior. Even after the Paris Agreement, the Khmer Rouge's goals were principally to drive ethnic

Vietnamese out of the country, to topple the SOC, and to reestablish its own exclusive rule. When it became clear that UNTAC posed an obstacle to its tactical manipulation of domestic politics, the Khmer Rouge simply changed tactics by withdrawing from the implementation game.

While this ideology-based perspective offers some insight into Khmer Rouge behavior, it too is an insufficient and even misleading explanation. Analysts who focus on Khmer Rouge ideology tend to exaggerate the faction's insubordination. The faction did not fail to abide by its commitments under the agreement to the extent that has been generally assumed. Throughout the transitional period, the Khmer Rouge leadership demonstrated a degree of cooperation and seemed prepared to participate in disarmament, demobilization, and electoral contest.⁴⁰ Janet Heininger argues similarly that: "Contrary to most predictions, and in abrupt reversal of its actions leading up to the elections, the Khmer Rouge did not engage in a sustained campaign of terror and intimidation against Cambodia's voters."⁴¹ Evidence given by Khmer Rouge members who did demobilize further "betrays any simple assertion that the PDK [Party of Democratic Kampuchea] never intended to go along with the terms of the Paris Agreements."⁴² In fact, the Khmer Rouge leaders and their troops, who never renounced the Paris Agreement, "believed themselves ready to participate in demobilization and elections."⁴³ The Khmer Rouge also, according to UNTAC force commander John Sanderson, demonstrated cooperation with UNTAC's repatriation efforts: they "were keen to assist the Repatriation component and receive large numbers of returnees into the areas under their control. . . . [T]hey also welcomed the work of other aid agencies."⁴⁴

The emphasis on Khmer Rouge noncompliance and its ideological roots also overlooks the resistance of other factions to peace proposals and implementation efforts that put it at a disadvantage. The SOC had earlier opposed the UN Security Council's call for a nationwide system of proportional representation, under which resistance forces could have obtained a sizable representation in the National Assembly. The SOC argued instead for a "winner-take-all" electoral system based on single-member constituencies, which would help it secure control over the country. The SOC wanted an election, but only one that helped it monopolize political power.

The SOC was intransigent during the transition period as well, offering stiff resistance to UNTAC's attempts to exercise control over key ministries. Documents further confirmed the SOC's escalating use of coercion, intimidation, and propaganda to try to defeat FUNCINPEC and other opposition parties at the polls.⁴⁵ General Sanderson observed that there "is a tendency to blame the [Khmer Rouge] for initiating breaches of the peace process, and their historical baggage, including the secretive nature of the party's leadership, made them easy targets for such claims." In fact, according to Sanderson, the "corruption of the peace process" began in Phnom

Penh.⁴⁶ On his return to Cambodia, Prince Sihanouk quickly attempted to form an alliance between Ranariddh (his son) and Hun Sen of the CPP. A series of clearly orchestrated demonstrations were directed against Khmer Rouge representatives arriving in Phnom Penh, and immediately the angry crowd ran them out of the city on November 27, 1991.

The SOC strategy against FUNCINPEC, in turn, was to treat it as though it were a front for the Khmer Rouge, and to frighten people into believing that the Khmer Rouge could thereby fight its way back to power. The SOC's propaganda campaign against its enemies "offered no hope of reconciliation, only the prospect of a never-ending search for 'enemies' and 'targets,' with all the violence that this implied."⁴⁷ Even after the elections, according to Sanderson, it "was not the Khmer Rouge but rather these armed forces, particularly those of the SOC, which had the capacity to undermine the election or to overturn the verdict of the people."⁴⁸

While both the SOC and the Khmer Rouge arguably shared an ideological root and an unwillingness to play the democratic game—core SOC leadership were former Khmer Rouge who had fled to Vietnam in 1978 to avoid Pol Pot's relentless purges—it is misleading to exaggerate the role their "ideology" played in thwarting UNTAC efforts to implement the peace agreement. In neither case was ideology immutable: for its part, the Khmer Rouge had already publicly renounced communism, and its leaders were willing, at least in principle, to compete in the elections. Instead, evidence indicates that ideological stance depended on factors of interest and self-preservation.

It is also difficult to determine the relationship among ideology, personality, and policy. The Khmer Rouge leadership's communist ideology did not serve the interest of either the peasantry or the working class.⁴⁹ Neither did its alleged "racialist nationalism" reveal much about Khmer Rouge behavior.⁵⁰ Throughout the 1980s, Hun Sen was identified as a "moderate"; yet before he rebelled against Pol Pot in 1978, he had allegedly been one of the dictator's most enthusiastic lieutenants in massacring Vietnamese. In a raid into a Vietnamese village in 1977, for instance, he ordered his troops to kill all the villagers, including women and children.⁵¹ Chea Sim, the top CPP leader and chairman of the National Assembly after the 1993 election, was seen as a "hard-liner." In recent years, he has enjoyed a new political status as a "moderate." Ideology is not irrelevant, but it is also not the primary driver of behavior. Finally, the role of ideology, if seen as the only obstacle to peace, cannot explain why all sides cheated on the peace process to a significant extent.⁵²

Interest and security. The central weakness of the culturalist and ideological explanations is straightforward. Neither approach offers an account of variations in spoiler behavior, either between different factions or within one faction over time. Indeed, the cultural factor itself can better be under-

stood by seeing culture in a context of military capabilities and power relations. Throughout Cambodian history, kings and political leaders have almost always rejected calls for accommodation that would diminish their power and security. Compromise was possible only when the adversaries could not destroy each other by force.

In Cambodia's highly unpredictable and factionalized political environment, interest and self-preservation mattered most. All parties tended to view peace tactically, and their ultimate objective was to maximize security and ensure survival. Even those who see Khmer Rouge radicalism and xenophobia as a primary obstacle to the peace process recognize that the faction's survival was at stake. That the SOC came second only to the Khmer Rouge in political violence only reinforces the assertion that questions of relative security best explain factional behavior.

Both cooperation and defiance can be explained by reference to security concerns. To the extent that the Khmer Rouge cooperated in implementation, for example, it did so for strategic reasons. The return of refugees to its zones of control, to take one of Sanderson's illustrations, would strengthen its local power base.

Such security-driven cooperation also highlights the likelihood of the Khmer Rouge resisting full demobilization, since it had a security interest in defending itself in the case of continued war. The Khmer Rouge faced a severe dilemma: it had agreed to a peace accord that required disarmament and demobilization, yet its nearly exclusive source of power was military might.⁵³ The faction's pre-Paris insistence on a role in a nonelected government was premised on precisely this concern, in order to help it avoid losing an electoral contest where its assets—being military—were significantly less useful. During implementation, then, once the Khmer Rouge realized how negligible were its prospects of securing *political* power, demobilization of its troops could only be seen as an act of self-destruction. Consequently, the military faction "immediately started defying UNTAC's preparations for cantonment, disarmament, and demobilization."⁵⁴

The Khmer Rouge's overall defiance of UNTAC was similarly motivated. It believed that it "could get away with stretching the political terms of the agreements to the breaking point," that the SOC and UNTAC had already seriously violated them, and that the political situation was not developing to its advantage.⁵⁵ Its leadership appeared to be divided on the question of whether to participate in the forthcoming elections. Its final decision to withdraw from the electoral process suggests that, at that stage of implementation, the Khmer Rouge no longer saw any strategic benefits from compliance with the agreement.

That the Khmer Rouge was the most destructive force may have more to do with its increasing level of vulnerability when compared with others. There seemed to be a direct relationship, for example, between increasing violence committed by SOC members and the Khmer Rouge's ongoing

defiance. The SOC's attacks on its political opponents began to intensify around November 1992, immediately after the Khmer Rouge had stalled on disarming and was believed to have infiltrated the opposition parties. The SOC's attacks on opposition parties were concentrated mostly in Khmer Rouge zones, especially in Battambang Province. Moreover, the Khmer Rouge had some reason to fear reprisals from its enemies. After the Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia earlier in 1979, when the Khmer Rouge army was retreating, villagers slaughtered former Khmer Rouge officials with sticks and axes. Some were arrested and executed.⁵⁶ According to Kevin Rowley, "some Khmer Rouge cadres admitted privately that the legacy of 1975–78 meant that their leaders could not be safe in areas of Cambodia they did not control."⁵⁷

UNTAC's Effective Loss of Neutrality

To explain the Khmer Rouge's changing behavior toward UNTAC, one also needs to examine the UN's operational limitations as well as the diplomatic coalition supporting the implementation process. Factional defiance corresponded closely to opportunities created by UNTAC's obvious inexperience in an operation of this magnitude. Such lack of experience was perhaps understandable, since the world organization had "no precise precedents from which to work."⁵⁸ Nonetheless, one can only fully explain the dynamics of noncompliance during implementation in relation to UNTAC's various operational limitations and, then, to the mission's eventual loss of effective neutrality as a result of the larger diplomatic context.

Operational limitations. UNTAC's operational problems, especially at the start-up phase of the mission, increased the factions' opportunities for noncompliance as well as decreased any embryonic confidence they might have had in the mission's capabilities. First, the United Nations did not have any real understanding of Cambodia's needs. It was not alone: other international agencies, along with potential donor countries, lacked basic knowledge about Cambodia. A UN document itself acknowledged the need for more and better information when it noted that "no effective program of national reconstruction can be initiated without detailed assessments of Cambodia's human, natural and other economic assets." The UN document added that "it will be necessary for a census to be conducted, development priorities identified, and the availability of resources, internal and external, determined."⁵⁹

After the Paris Agreement was signed, several survey and fact-finding missions were sent to the country, the first of which visited Cambodia from October 31 to November 13, 1991. This interagency humanitarian mission, led by Deputy Special Representative Dennis McNamara, aimed to assess Cambodia's immediate needs for the first six months of implementation.

The mission comprised representatives from almost every component of the UN system and examined virtually all sectors of Cambodian society: health, nutrition and sanitation, drinking water, and food and agriculture; education, vocational training, and employment; shelter and physical infrastructure; and internally displaced persons and other vulnerable groups, including flood victims.⁶⁰ An earlier survey conducted in 1990 also aimed to gather data on Cambodia, but it had focused more on the potential UN role in resolving the Cambodian conflict.⁶¹

Second, UNTAC faced numerous staffing problems. It was generally agreed that training and experience were severely lacking, and that there was a serious shortage of qualified personnel in important areas ranging from public security to civil administration. According to Sanderson, "many were selected for UNTAC and elevated to positions for which they were not equipped by either training or experience."⁶² With such an ambitious peace mission taking shape, the United Nations could not afford to be selective, and the organization essentially recruited anyone willing to work in Cambodia. The United Nations wanted quick action, so even concerns about minimum standards of discipline, sensitivity to religion, and appreciation of local customs were not top priorities.

Third, UNTAC suffered from a lack of planning and coordination, both in New York and in the field. The United Nations had been caught unprepared when the Paris Agreement was signed. As Sanderson described the situation at headquarters: "No substantial planning had taken place in anticipation and, other than on the initiative of some contributing countries, no contingents had been earmarked for the operation." Although a UN Advance Mission in Cambodia (UNAMIC) was present, it "appeared to lull the United Nations bureaucracy into a false sense of security." UNAMIC "was not organized even to look after itself" and "staggered from one crisis to another as it attempted to react to circumstances for which it was ill-prepared, leaving it unable to execute the important task of planning for UNTAC."⁶³ Within UNTAC itself, "there never was any strategic planning," and from "the beginning, each component conducted a separate survey mission and there was no coordination beforehand to determine the strategic method."⁶⁴ In the early stages of the transitional period, such dilatory planning and ambiguity about timetables made "reluctant cooperation" from the parties, especially from the Khmer Rouge, a rational response.

Civil administration, police, and peacekeeping. Factional defiance toward UNTAC became more obvious when UNTAC's key components proved unable to take effective, timely action due to belated deployment and a paucity of personnel. Regarding Civil Administration, the United Nations had "no precedents, no experience, [and] no guidelines upon which to draw," and "[in] some ways it was doomed from the start."⁶⁵ This mission component had an enormous mandate, and an extremely small staff. Roughly 170 mission staff were expected to oversee more than

100,000 Cambodian civil servants under SOC control alone, with no guidelines as to *how* they should exercise oversight. Dependent on local interpreters, they ended up learning by trial and error. Understaffed, the component was also unable to operate effectively outside of Phnom Penh. This lack of geographical reach limited UNTAC control over Khmer Rouge administration, allowed the SOC to dominate provincial administrative structures and gave SOC officials reason to complain about UNTAC's bias against them.

UNTAC's Civilian Police (CIVPOL), perhaps the least effective of all mission components, failed to fulfill its primary mandate as supervisor and controller of local police. Although UN police were given powers of investigation, arrest, and detention for the first time in UN history, they were generally ineffective. As Charles Call and William Stanley note in Chapter 11, police contributions to peace missions vary dramatically, from local cops in countries without national police forces through border guards, military police, and paramilitary forces. Rarely do they meet even such basic skill requirements as relevant language and driving ability. According to Chris Eaton, this "was particularly true of UNTAC in Cambodia and seriously debilitated the capacity of its CIVPOL component to efficiently and effectively meet its task."⁶⁶ Several of the UNTAC police posed discipline problems. Worse, no effective command system existed to support them, rendering even their better efforts less effective.⁶⁷ Moreover, local police far outnumbered them, thus limiting CIVPOL's operational effectiveness.

Although they were the largest of all UNTAC components, the Military Component of peacekeepers (MILCOM) were not fully deployed until ten months after the signing of the agreement. By April 1992, they had only 3,694 troops in Cambodia, leaving them unprepared for the cantonment, disarmament, and demobilization (second-phase operations) scheduled to begin at the end of May. Full deployment was not completed until August, two months after this most important phase had already started. This slow troop deployment proved detrimental to UN peace efforts, contributing to "an environment of instability which made all parties—particularly the skittish Khmer Rouge—reluctant to demobilize and disarm."⁶⁸ Cumber'some and inflexible procurement and budgetary processes, problems of command and control, and poor communication between New York and Phnom Penh further restricted MILCOM's ability to operate to full advantage.⁶⁹

Coalition bias. Noncompliance with the agreement on the part of the Cambodian signatories requires still another factor to be fully explained. UNTAC could not have succeeded to the extent that it did without continuing support from the external signatories of the Paris Agreement. Coordinated diplomatic support for UNTAC was provided through many channels. A group called the Extended Permanent Five (EP5) consisted of ambassadors from Indonesia, Japan, Australia, Thailand, and Germany,

alongside the five permanent members of the UN Security Council. These ten governments played a key role in instilling confidence among the Cambodian factions. The EP5 also worked closely with another group of ambassadors in New York known as the Core Group and occasionally attended meetings of the Mixed Military Working Group. Various governments also undertook specific confidence-building measures. Before the elections, for example, the United States and Thailand, both of which had been criticized for earlier inaction against the Khmer Rouge, conducted joint military exercises near the Thai-Cambodian border. Some believe this kind of military presence saved the UNTAC-organized elections.⁷⁰

Still, evidence suggests that, at the very least, factions *perceived* a lack of impartiality on the part of external sponsors of UNTAC. Although the United States had always been biased against the SOC, for instance, it also opposed the Khmer Rouge's return to power, a policy seen by the faction as working against its interests. Indeed, by the end of the 1980s, all major parties interested in the conflict, except China, agreed on the need to neutralize the Khmer Rouge, from Vietnam and ASEAN members to the United States, Britain, Japan, and other influential states.⁷¹ Nate Thayer also argues that the West was moving toward legitimizing the Vietnamese-installed SOC for fear of a militarily strong Khmer Rouge army, and even ignored internal conditions that continued to feed anti-Vietnamese resistance.⁷² Few scholars argued that the agreement would work to the Khmer Rouge's advantage. Not surprisingly, the faction was observed by at least one analyst to feel isolated and unhappy with the new political arrangement, increasing the likelihood that its leaders would create problems for UNTAC.⁷³

During the transitional period, the former resistance forces and some observers saw major external players (especially Western powers) as lacking impartiality toward the factions. Much evidence indicates that Australia, France, and the United States were far from neutral.⁷⁴ No other great power has been as active as the United States in amassing evidence of war crimes against the Khmer Rouge leadership.⁷⁵

Alternative Strategies?

The last section of this study examines whether there were alternatives for implementers in order to have ensured a greater degree of success. Should UNTAC have adopted a more coercive strategy toward noncompliance, as many observers have advocated? Was UNTAC's judgment sound when it continued with elections on schedule even after the Khmer Rouge had withdrawn? The argument here is that coercive measures, or peace enforcement, would have done more harm than good, and that leaving the Khmer Rouge behind was the second-best option.

One could argue that UNTAC's failure to enforce compliance was the

main reason for the factions' increasingly belligerent behavior. The UNTAC leadership abided by traditional peacekeeping doctrine that force be used minimally and then only in self-defense.⁷⁶ Both realist and liberal scholars view UNTAC's unwillingness to use enforcement measures in the face of noncooperation by the parties as a serious weakness.⁷⁷ Gerard Porcell, chief of UNTAC's Civil Administration, also faulted the UN for its unwillingness to force the Khmer Rouge to abide by the agreement. In his words: "We [the UN] don't have the will to apply the peace accords. This absence of firmness with the Khmer Rouge was a sort of signal for the other parties who saw there the proof of UNTAC's weakness towards the group that from the start eschewed all cooperation."⁷⁸

It is debatable, however, whether "firmness" with the Khmer Rouge would have generated more cooperation, given its security concerns. Strict enforcement would have undermined not only what legitimate authority UNTAC enjoyed in Cambodia but also its credibility internationally. A number of countries contributing troops to the mission were unwilling to engage in enforcement action. According to Michael Doyle, some of the Southeast Asian states even expressed eagerness to accommodate the Khmer Rouge, a position not shared by the other contributors.⁷⁹

UNTAC also did not have the necessary staff to conduct enforcement effectively. It did not possess an independent judiciary and had to rely on the SOC's heavily biased courts. The Cambodian police and court system did not bother to investigate and prosecute offenders, especially when the accused belonged to its party. UNTAC did establish an Office of Special Prosecutor, which had the power to arrest and detain suspects, but its efforts faltered when the Cambodian courts refused to hear the special prosecutor, who became "the only lawyer ever to be thrown out of the Phnom Penh Municipal Tribunal of Justice."⁸⁰

Military enforcement, in particular, might have done more harm than good. Enforcement action arguably would have led UNTAC into a protracted war with the Khmer Rouge. It is worth remembering that more than 100,000 heavily armed Vietnamese troops had failed to pacify the Khmer Rouge army in the 1980s. Heininger persuasively argues that "[re]frain[ing] from using force was more effective in isolating the Khmer Rouge than any overt use of force."⁸¹

This does not suggest that all forms of sanction were impossible or undesirable. Several leaders were penalized for violating the Electoral Law, for example, including Prince Norodom Chakrapong (SOC deputy prime minister), Kim Bo (SOC governor of Sihanoukville), and Prum Neakareach (Moulinaka Party). UNTAC's legal action against SOC members, however, did not threaten the party's survival. Here, firmness could be effective because it was proportionate and because the adversaries did not perceive the level of their insecurity to be too high.

Cooperation and compromise in Cambodia resulted from a rough balance of power between the parties. By contrast, hegemonic power in the country tended to discourage compromise. The UN needs to be aware of local power dynamics and, to the extent that a power balance is a necessary condition for the continued peace process, needs to try to prevent shifts in the security environment that advantage a single party.

Should the United Nations fail to sustain such an equilibrium of power, its only alternative is to make hegemonic politics stable. Hegemonic peace, meaning political stability obtained through hegemonic control or domination, should be seen as second-best to democratic peace as an outcome. Stedman touches on something very important when arguing that UNTAC's improvised strategy toward the Khmer Rouge "was imaginative and effective."⁸² The UN's change of strategy (from persuading the Khmer Rouge to stay involved, to leaving it behind) is seen as the second-best option.

According to Stedman, UNTAC's commitment to holding the elections remained unchanged, even without Khmer Rouge participation. UNTAC then worked to delegitimize the faction's demands by seeking international consensus and by changing its military role to defend the polls against Khmer Rouge attack. In the end, the strategy was "vindicated" as the Khmer Rouge leadership split and disintegrated. This was "the prototype of the departing train strategy for managing spoilers."⁸³

While UNTAC's strategy kept the SOC/CPP in the electoral process, it reinforced the opposition parties' perception that UNTAC was either unwilling or unable to create a neutral political environment for free and fair elections. UNTAC's failure to gain more control of the SOC's civilian administration further resulted in its heavy dependence on the latter's cooperation. The SOC ruled 80 percent of the country, and UNTAC did not negotiate with it.⁸⁴ A new imbalance of politico-military power between the SOC and its adversaries contributed to the SOC's willingness to allow the elections to take place, as it became convinced that it would win this time. In case it did lose, the SOC worked to ensure that it would not have to transfer power to the winner voluntarily unless the latter was willing to share power with the SOC as well as to work within the SOC-dominated political and security environment.

Why the "departing train strategy" succeeded to the extent that it did has to be put in the broader security context. UNTAC's "coercive" strategy did not increase the vulnerability of the Khmer Rouge and did not threaten its survival, thus making it acceptable for its leaders to wait for a chance to renegotiate with a new government, since its chance of winning in the elections was quite slim. As has been discussed, however, the international community rejected any inclusion of Khmer Rouge leaders in the coalition government. More notably, the post-UNTAC Khmer Rouge disintegration did not result from the application of a coercive strategy alone. It occurred

after a series of negotiations that led to the granting of amnesty and inclusion of Khmer Rouge defectors, including top guerrilla officials. This supports one of my arguments that the strategy of inclusion may provide the faction with short-term security, but may ultimately lead to its fragmentation and elimination.

The extent to which the Khmer Rouge's disintegration and the CPP's reassertion of hegemonic control in the country have affected Cambodian politics remains to be seen. Evidence, however, points to Hun Sen's increasing authoritarian behavior. Again, Stedman touches on an important point: "Time has not been so kind in evaluating UNTAC's strategy toward SOC, [whose] steadily increasing grip on power since 1993 caused several experts on Cambodia in 1996 to warn of a 'creeping coup.'"⁸⁵ Hun Sen's preemptive coup in early 1997 was possible because his military power (rebuilt and strengthened over a period of four years after the elections in 1993) was far superior to that of Ranariddh.

Aftermath: The Price of Qualified Success

Assessments of Cambodia after the UN's withdrawal have alternated between optimism and pessimism. When Yasushi Akashi left Cambodia in September 1993, he asserted that UNTAC had succeeded in laying "a firm foundation for Cambodian democracy." Former Australian foreign minister Gareth Evans, after visiting Cambodia in 1994, also voiced his "strong impression" that the country had returned to normal.⁸⁶ To others, however, the costly UN operation had largely gone to waste, since most of the enemies of this liberal democracy—corruption, warlords, Khmer Rouge terrorism, and banditry—had returned.⁸⁷ A more measured examination shows a Cambodia that has made progress, if limited, in the areas of economic development, military conflict, human rights, and democracy.

Renewed armed conflict between the new coalition government and the Khmer Rouge army initially followed the elections, though it gradually came to an end. After the government granted the Khmer Rouge amnesty and some autonomy, thousands of guerrilla troops defected en masse in late 1996, led by former Khmer Rouge minister of foreign affairs Ieng Sary. Shortly thereafter, the entire movement began to disintegrate.

Broader political developments remain discouraging, according to most analysts. Soon after the new government was established, the two dominant parties—the CPP and FUNCINPEC—began to fragment. By the end of 1994, Cambodia appeared to be entering a vicious cycle of events similar to that of the Lon Nol era.⁸⁸ One observer saw 1995 as the year in which Cambodia moved "from hope to despair" as traditional elites moved to reinforce factional hierarchy and the monarchy as well as to marginalize democratic forces.⁸⁹ Personal rivalries in the CPP and FUNCINPEC, and

popular discontent with both parties, spawned a factional realignment in 1996. Factionalism within the government surged when Ranariddh decided (in March 1996) to form a National United Front (NUF) with the BLDP and other parties in their joint struggle against the CPP. Early July 1997 was a watershed. After two days of street fighting in Phnom Penh, Hun Sen's troops swiftly defeated the royalists. The CPP leader wasted no time ousting Ranariddh.

Immediately after Ranariddh's overthrow, Hun Sen ordered his troops to push royalist remnants north toward the Thai-Cambodian border. By August, they were desperately defending their last border stronghold of O Smach. Resistance military leaders then admitted that this last possession might fall at any time, but claimed that their 3,000 troops were resolved to fight back. With both Ranariddh and his military leaders considerably weakened, royalist party members found their party up for grabs. Top officials not only competed to take over the job of the ousted Ranariddh, but also formed their own political parties.

Meanwhile, the CPP-dominated government began to prepare for the elections of July 26, 1998. The CPP won the largest number of seats (64), followed by FUNCINPEC (43) and the Sam Rainsy Party (15). Claiming that the CPP's victory had come through political intimidation and fraud, the opposition refused to accept the results and organized protests against the government. Social unrest intensified and resulted in clashes between protesters and government troops. By mid-September, the crisis remained unresolved, as the CPP refused to make concessions to the opposition. It was not until December that the CPP and FUNCINPEC agreed to form another coalition government, this time with Hun Sen as the sole premier. The election of 1998 can only be explained as a result of CPP tactics to weaken its political opponents before election day.

To be fair, any assessment of post-UNTAC human rights conditions must be placed in the historical context. To argue that there is no improvement whatsoever on this particular front is misleading. As discussed earlier, factions violated human rights, especially during and after the coup in July 1997, but the scales are nowhere comparable with the atrocities committed under the Sihanouk, Lon Nol, Khmer Rouge, and PRK/SOC regimes.⁹⁰ Some scholars may have overstated UNTAC's impact on Cambodian society, but there is nonetheless hope that measures to promote human rights education, social justice, and civil society will have a long-term positive impact on this unstable political environment.⁹¹ Moreover, apprehension about violence during the 1998 elections proved exaggerated, as the level of violence was low.

The post-UNTAC economy initially made some progress, but later became stagnant, as political instability worsened. In 1995, total exports increased ninefold from the preceding year, and the government planned to export rice for the first time in twenty-five years. Inflation rates dropped

from 26.1 percent in 1994 to only 3.5 percent in 1995 (lower than the official forecast of 5–6 percent). It is estimated that inflation rates for 1996 and 1997 would be roughly the same as that in 1995 or a bit higher. GDP growth for 1995 was about 7.5 percent. The year 1997 witnessed an economic downturn, however, with the growth rate estimated to be falling to between 0 and 2 percent.⁹² The year 1998 saw a growth rate of only 1 percent. The government remained deeply cash-strapped.

In short, UNTAC's qualified success created a number of uncertainties and has left political problems unresolved. The country's ongoing political crises have so far limited the potential for the growth of civil society, economic development, and democratic maturation. The 1993 election, while it can be characterized as "perhaps the most democratic election in Southeast Asian history,"⁹³ may not have been sufficient to break the powerful chain of violence and authoritarian rule in a war-torn society like Cambodia.

Conclusion

This study has described the uphill battle faced by UN efforts to implement the Paris Agreement. Cambodia had undergone an uninterrupted series of antidemocratic regimes, from Prince Sihanouk's paternalistic authoritarianism through Lon Nol's republican authoritarianism and Pol Pot's revolutionary totalitarianism to Hun Sen's socialist dictatorship in the 1980s. Cultural, ideological, and institutional legacies limited the UN potential to end war on a self-enforcing basis.

This chapter has examined UNTAC's partial success and has investigated why compliance was so lacking on the part of the warring factions. I have argued that security fears were central to noncompliance. Traits that can be interpreted as cultural or ideological appear to have been malleable in the Cambodian case. Former foreign minister Ieng Sary was seen as a hawkish Khmer Rouge leader (akin to Pol Pot and Ta Mok), but it was he who cooperated with the government in 1996, a move that brought down the guerrilla force. Pol Pot and Ta Mok remained hard-liners, but their position may have been shaped more by the fact that they were the main targets for prosecution. It was doubtful whether they would ever obtain the kind of amnesty Ieng Sary received. Moreover, if cultural and ideological factors are taken too seriously, international actors in war-torn countries like Cambodia risk overlooking adversaries' security fears. In contexts of fluctuating power relations, security and insecurity are far better indicators of likely spoiling or potential cooperation.

After the Paris Agreement unintentionally helped erode the rough politico-military balance of power between the CGDK and the SOC, the implementation process ran into several difficulties. The CGDK disintegrated into three different parties, thus making it much easier for the SOC

to reassert its hegemonic control in all major cities, especially the capital. This is perhaps why UNTAC had difficulty convincing the resistance factions (particularly the Khmer Rouge) that it could create a neutral political environment. UNTAC's slow deployment of its civilian, security, and military personnel further reduced their confidence. External powers also contributed to UNTAC's operational problems by not disbursing their financial contributions quickly enough, and by failing to act impartially in the eyes of the resistance forces. The Western states' primary strategy was to prevent the Khmer Rouge from returning to power; this strategy weakened the CGDK and strengthened the SOC. Even after the elections in 1993, all external actors involved in Cambodia (and donors in particular) refused to accept any inclusion of the Khmer Rouge in the new government. Meanwhile, they were either unwilling or simply unable to prevent Hun Sen from repressing his coalition partners. This is not to argue that the incumbent Hun Sen regime is less preferable than the murderous Pol Pot regime, but rather to explain UNTAC's partial success and to shed light on what more can be done to maximize the operational effectiveness of peace missions.

Liberal solutions for a country like Cambodia are elusive, especially in the short to medium term. It is up to the international community to choose between democratic peace and hegemonic stability. In either case, coercive strategies have limitations. To argue in favor of meeting all parties' security needs collides with the ethical judgment that some parties' needs are more defensible than others. After all, the Khmer Rouge regime killed more than 1 million people and its leaders may deserve different treatment. While recognizing the powerful merits of this view, it is important to keep in mind the following points: First, the Khmer Rouge "killing fields" were the by-product of political violence and war that had begun in the 1960s. The Khmer Rouge's rise to power was also a by-product of unrestrained passion against decades of foreign interference in Cambodia and injustices that had afflicted the country. Second, there is no conclusive evidence to support the argument that the Khmer Rouge leadership, because of its unchanged ideology and insatiable lust for power, was still genocide-bound. The killings during the transitional period and after resulted from the growing threat to its survival and the politics of exclusion. Last and most important, the Khmer Rouge rebellion came to an end after its leaders had received pardons and security guarantees. This indicates that the movement was far from monolithic and seemed united only by a common threat. Take this common threat away, and such a movement is more likely to collapse, which it did.

The lesson of the Cambodian case is that compromise is possible when factions reach a balance of power. Arguably, the danger of a power equilibrium is that it can also entrench civil war and perpetuate a war economy. Stalemate is far more likely to facilitate peace, by contrast, if foreign pow-

ers jointly exert pressure on adversaries to reach settlement as well as refrain from exacerbating the conflict themselves or altering the conditions that make peace possible in the first place.

Notes

1. The main schools of thought on Cambodia can be characterized as follows. "Culturalists" assume that ambitious international action is futile in a traditional society characterized by personal politics, unwillingness to compromise, and hostile factionalism. "Institutionalists" see Cambodia as a failed or failing state that cannot be transformed into a liberal democracy because warring factions relentlessly pursue power with no higher authority to regulate their behavior. "Moralists/legalists" inveigh against the agreement itself because it is seen to legitimize a barbarous party, the Khmer Rouge, whose leaders were poisonous to peace and democracy. "Liberal internationalists," however, argue that there is some utility in making peace in Cambodia. For a review of these perspectives, see Sorpong Peou, *Conflict Neutralization in the Cambodia War: From Battlefield to Ballot-Box* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997).
2. Stephen John Stedman, "Spoiler Problems in Peace Processes," *International Security* 22, no. 2 (fall 1997): 5-53.
3. See David Chandler, *Brother Number One: A Biography of Pol Pot* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1992), pp. 120, 134.
4. See Richard Thornton, "Distant Connections: Superpower Rivalry in the Middle East and Southeast Asia, 1977-1979," *Asian Affairs* 11, no. 3 (fall 1984): 1-27.
5. On the Chinese and Soviet supply of weapons and equipment to the Cambodian factions, see Russell R. Ross, ed., *Cambodia: A Country Study* (Washington, D.C.: Library of Congress, Federal Research Division, 1990), pp. 271-276; and Nayan Chanda, *Brother Enemy: The War After the War* (San Diego: Harcourt Jovanovich, 1986), pp. 348-349, 381-382.
6. Justus M. Van Der Kroef, "A New Phase in the Cambodian Conflict," *Issues and Studies* 21, no. 7 (July 1985): 109-131.
7. Tim Huxley, "Cambodia in 1986: the PRK's Eighth Year," *Southeast Asian Affairs* (1987): 161-173.
8. William Duiker, "Vietnam in 1985: Searching for Solutions," *Asian Survey* 26, no. 1 (January 1986): 102-111; and Nayan Chanda, "Cambodia in 1986: Beginning to Tire," *Asian Survey* 27, no. 1 (January 1987): 115-124.
9. Thaddee In, "Cambodia: L'Impasse?" *Politique Internationale* 43 (spring 1989): 117-128.
10. As of 1991, the combined military forces of the factions totaled around 200,000, deployed in some 650 locations; their militias totaled 250,000, operating across the country; altogether, they were armed with more than 300,000 weapons of many types and with about 80 million rounds of ammunition. UN Document S/23613, in UN, *The United Nations and Cambodia, 1991-1995*, Blue Book Series vol. 2 (New York: United Nations, 1995), p. 167.
11. *Ibid.*, p. 173.
12. Jai Bhagwan, "Khmer Rouge: The Bone of Contention in Kampuchea," *Strategic Analysis* 12, no. 8 (November 1988): 893-903. See also Sina Than, "Cambodia 1990: Towards a Peaceful Solution," *Southeast Asian Affairs* (1991): 83-104.